Lussekatter - Swedish Saffron Buns

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Makes 40 buns
Prep time: 40min
Cook time: 10min
Total time: 50min + dough rising time
Difficulty: Intermediate

Category: Breakfast, Yeasted breads
Cuisine: Swedish

Lussekatter are traditionally eaten in Sweden on Saint Lucia's Day, also known as the Festival of Light. Saint Lucia's Day is celebrated on December 13, but I reckon these buttery saffron buns make fantastic year-round treats. The recipe was slightly adapted from Call me cupcake blog.

Ingredients

200g butter
1g saffron
300ml milk
200ml heavy cream
14g (2 sachets) dried yeast (or 50g fresh yeast)
1 large egg
180g sugar
1/2 tsp salt
1kg flour
1 lightly beaten egg, for egg wash
raisins for decoration

Directions

Melt the butter, add saffron, milk and cream and heat until barely warm to the touch. Put the dried yeast into a large mixing bowl . If using fresh yeast, crumble it into a bowl. Add some of the liquid to the yeast and stir until it has dissolved, then add the rest of the liquid. Add the egg, sugar and salt and stir until the egg is incorporated. Add most of the flour (keep some for later) and work into a smooth dough. It should still be a little bit sticky, but manageable. Cover the bowl with a clean cloth and let it rise for 45-60 minutes. It should double in size.

When the dough has risen, work in the remaining flour if needed. Divide the dough into 40 equal portions and roll each one into a snake using the palms of your hands. Curl the ends in opposite directions, forming an "S" with spirals at each end. Put the buns onto parchment paper lined baking sheets. Leave some space between them as they will rise even more. Cover with a cloth and leave to rise for 30-45 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 250°C. Brush each bun with a beaten egg and put two raisins in the centers of "S" spirals. Bake for 7-10 minutes, depending on their size. They are best eaten the same day. If you have any leftovers, you can easily freeze them.