

Pinca - Croatian Easter Bread



Author: Monika Topolko

Makes two 23cm loaves

Prep time: 4h 15min

Cook time: 25min

Total time: 4h 40min

Difficulty: Intermediate

Category: Croatian cuisine, Sweet breads

Cuisine: Croatian

Pinca is not at all complicated to make and most of the prep time is actually rising time. Pinca is best eaten warm, but remains fresh for for a couple of days. Just wrap it in some plastic foil and cover with kitchen towel. It's great for breakfast and goes really well with a cup of coffee or tea.

Ingredients

20g fresh yeast
1 tablespoon sugar
200ml tepid milk
500g all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
75g butter, melted
3 egg yolks
1 egg, for egg wash
75g sugar
2 tablespoon vanilla sugar
zest of 1 lemon
zest of 1/2 orange
60g raisins
1 tablespoon dark rum

Directions

In a small bowl combine half of the milk with 1 teaspoon of sugar and yeast. Stir and leave to proof in a warm place until it doubles in volume and becomes frothy. In the meantime, pour rum over raisins and set aside to soak.

Using a stand mixer, combine the flour and salt. Add the yeast mixture, melted butter, remaining milk, egg yolks, sugar, vanilla sugar, lemon and orange zest. Mix on medium speed using a hook attachment until the dough comes together into a ball. Add the raisins and rum and continue mixing on slow speed for 4-5 minutes or until you get a firm dough. Shape into a ball and transfer to a large clean bowl, cover with plastic wrap and a kitchen towel and let it rise for 2 hours in a warm and draft free place.

Transfer the risen dough to a lightly floured working surface and punch out the air. Cut the dough in half and form each half into a ball. Transfer the dough balls onto a baking sheet covered with parchment paper. Brush both loaves with egg wash and let them rise in a warm place for 1 hour. After an hour brush the loaves again with egg wash and let them rise for another hour.

Preheat the oven to 180°C. After 1 hour, brush the loaves with egg wash again. Using a very sharp knife or scissors, make three deep cuts in the surface of each loaf (similar to a cross).

Bake for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on a wire rack and keep at room temperature

wrapped in a kitchen towel.