

BIG OL' MAPLE CINNAMON ROLL

INGREDIENTS

2 and 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
3 Tablespoons granulated sugar
1 teaspoon salt
3 teaspoon active dry yeast
1/2 cup water
1/4 cup whole milk
3 Tablespoons unsalted butter
1 large egg, at room temperature
6 tablespoons maple syrup

DIRECTIONS

Make the dough: Set aside 1/2 cup of flour. In a large bowl, toss the 2 and 1/4 cups flour, the sugar, salt, and yeast together until evenly dispersed. Set aside.

Heat the water, milk, and butter together in the microwave until the butter is melted and the mixture is hot to touch. About 100-110F degrees. Stir the butter mixture into the flour mixture. Add the egg and only enough of the reserved flour to make a soft dough (you might not need the full reserved 1/2 cup). Dough will be ready when it gently pulls away from the side of the bowl and has an elastic consistency. On a lightly floured surface, knead the dough for about 3-4 minutes. Form a ball and place in a lightly greased bowl (I used non-stick spray). Cover tightly and let rest for 30 minutes. The dough will slightly rise.

Make the filling: After 30 minutes, roll the dough out in a 15x12 inch rectangle. Spread the softened butter on top. Mix together the cinnamon and sugar and sprinkle it all over the dough. Spray a 9-inch round pan with nonstick spray. Set aside.

Using a very sharp knife or a pizza cutter, cut the dough into eight 1 to 1 1/2-inch wide strips. Loosely roll up one strip and place it in the center of the pan. You're rolling it up loosely so the dough has some give as it rises. Coil the remaining 5 strips around the center roll, starting each strip at the end of the previous one to make one large rolled cake. Some of the filling may spill out as you pick up the strips, but I just sprinkled that on top of the cake after I was finished spiraling. Loosely cover the cake with plastic wrap and allow to rise in a warm, draft-free place for 45-60 minutes.

After the cake's dough has nearly doubled in size, preheat the oven to 350F. Bake for 30-35 minutes until lightly browned. I covered the rolls with aluminum foil after 15 minutes to avoid heavy browning. While the cake is baking, some spots may rise up more than other spots. That's completely normal and well, quite expected! I pressed down on the sides with the back of a spatula that were rising more than others.

Remove cake from the oven when it's done. Allow the cake to cool for about 10 minutes. Then, right before serving, drizzle with the maple syrup. Best served immediately, but will stay fresh for a couple of days (it won't last that long!)