

HOT CROSS BUNS AND EASTER CAKES

THERE is nothing very difficult in the making of hot cross buns, and they are very delicious. Use the compressed yeast, and follow this reliable recipe, which makes about three dozen. The ingredients are 1oz. of yeast, 5oz. of butter, 1 teaspoon of ground cinnamon, $\frac{1}{2}$ level teaspoon grated nutmeg, $\frac{1}{4}$ level teaspoon ground cloves, $\frac{1}{4}$ level teaspoon ground ginger; $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. currants, 1 egg, 5oz. of castor sugar, $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. flour, $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. mixed peel, $\frac{3}{4}$ pint of milk.

Put the yeast into a small basin. Add one teaspoon of sugar to it, and mix them together until they liquefy. Make luke-warm $\frac{1}{4}$ pint of milk and add it to them. Sift 4oz. of flour into a large basin. Strain in the yeast mixture, and mix to a smooth batter. Throw a cloth over the basin, and stand in a warm place 30 to 45 minutes. Meanwhile, wash, pick over, and dry the fruit, also shred the peel. Sift the remainder of the flour into another basin with spices. Rub in the butter, add the sugar and the prepared fruit, and mix them well together. When the yeast mixture is ready, gradually stir into it other prepared ingredients, adding also the beaten egg and the remainder of the milk made warm. Mix them all together, and beat well. Then throw a cloth over the basin, and put mixture into a warm place to rise until it swells to double its bulk. Will take about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. When the dough is ready, turn on to a floured board, and divide it into 36 portions. Work each portion in smooth bun shape. Place buns on lightly greased and floured baking sheets, leaving space between each to allow to rise. Mark a cross on the buns. Cover them lightly with a cloth and stand in a warm place about twenty minutes, or until they are double their size. Put them in a fairly hot oven to bake. They will take about

20 minutes to cook. For a glaze, use 1 dessertspoon of castor sugar, and 2 dessertspoons of milk.

Simnel Cake

Although this traditional cake was originally supposed to be eaten on Mid-Lent Sunday, or Mothering Sunday, yet it has come to be one of the favourite Easter cakes, because it is fairly rich, keeps well, and is a "pretty" cake, if decorated in the orthodox way with a

SPECIAL APPLE RECIPE (Apple Charlotte)

Ingredients: $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. butter, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar, 1 large cup flour, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 1 egg, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla. Beat butter and sugar to a cream, add egg and other ingredients. Roll out and put in a flat dish with cooked apple between the mixture. When cool, cut in squares and sprinkle with icing sugar

few little eggs of marzipan, and a fluffy toy chicken or two. The miniature Simnels are immensely popular with the children — they love being able to have a whole one each!

You know the old legend about Simnels, I expect: how Simon and Nellie were husband and wife, who wanted to have a cake for the Easter festival. So a cake was made, after which an argument arose as to the cooking; Simon said it had to be baked, and Nellie said it had to be boiled. As they could come to no final agreement, they decided to halve the mixture, boil one half, and bake the other. When both halves were cooked, Nellie was rather sad about the two cakes; so, as a gesture of goodwill towards her husband, she decided to make it into one cake, by putting the baked and boiled halves together with a marzipan centre; and finally she decided to make the peace by naming the cake with the first part of each of the Christian names, Sim and Nel. Simnel cakes in Sussex are still made in the same way.

THE RECIPE: Half a pound of flour, 6oz. of butter, $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. of sultanas, 6oz. of sugar, 4 eggs. $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of mixed spice, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of baking powder. Beat the butter and sugar to a cream, add the eggs separately, and then the rest of the ingredients.

Mix half a pound of ground almonds with $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of castor sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ a teaspoon of almond essence, and the yolks of two eggs.

Put half the cake mixture into a round tin, then the almond paste rolled out to the correct size, and then the rest of

the cake mixture. Bake in a moderate oven for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours, approximately. The almond paste in the middle, being cooked with the cake, gives an almond flavour all through. When the cake is cold, form some more almond paste into a roll and place it like a border all round the cake. Rough it over with the point of a knife or fork and return it to the oven to brown a little, covering the centre with a thick round of paper. It is nice to glaze this border of paste by painting it over with milk. When this is again cooled, pour soft icing into the centre, and when almost set, decorate it with a pretty chicken or two, and some wee marzipan eggs, which you may have tinted with colouring.

The Almond Paste

Six ounces of ground almonds, $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. each of icing and of castor sugar, a squeeze of lemon juice, a few drops of almond essence, and a lightly beaten egg to mix. Make it into a stiff paste, and cover the bowl with a damp cloth, leaving it to stand a while.

Mock Almond Paste

This is a little cheaper than using ground almonds. Crush up half a pound of round wine biscuits (leave two out) with a rolling-pin. Add half a pound of icing sugar, and mix with 2 beaten eggs and about 2 teaspoons of almond flavouring.

You can make one, too, by sifting equal parts of icing sugar and ground rice; and working to a paste with a beaten egg, about two teaspoons of almond flavouring and a little lemon juice. It is best to mix a small amount first, and test the flavouring.

Miniature Simnels

These can be made of a little plainer mixture than the big Simnel cake, but could have a little spice and some cur-

RECIPE BOOK

We have received a copy of a handy little recipe book which is being distributed with a view to assisting mothers and housewives to serve apples in many new and appetite-tempting ways. For further information see advertisement on back page.

nants. Bake them in paper cases, without any middle layer of paste, but put the wide edge of paste, like a little roll, and marked with a fork, round the outside of each. Brush it with egg or milk and brown it under the grill, then fill the centre with icing and tiny eggs of paste. These are very popular with the kiddies.

FROM THE MAIL BAG

How to Smoke Fish

Dear Aunt Daisy,

You were asking the other day for information about how to smoke fish. I missed part of your talk, but I hope the enclosed is what you wanted. My father is a very keen fisherman, and when he goes camping he always smokes the fish he catches while in camp. Of course, he is a trout fisherman, but the recipe would suit sea fish also.—"Mona," of Dunedin.

First catch your fish. Thoroughly clean the fish and remove all blood. Cut off the head and spilt the fish alongside the backbone and down to the tail; or better still, remove the backbone altogether by cutting down both sides. A sharp knife is a necessity. The removal of the backbone may be found rather difficult at first, but after a little practice it is surprising how neatly and quickly this can be done; but don't forget, the knife must be sharp.

On removal of the backbone, perforate with the point of the knife just behind the first fins, and through the shoulders of the fish—these perforations are to take a wood skewer which holds the fish open when it is hung up for drying out and smoking. Then thread the skewer through these holes and put an S. hook in the middle round the skewer, so that it may be hung up.

In preparing fish for salting and smoking wash them as little as possible—a wipe with a damp cloth is all that is required. Next sprinkle the fish liberally with salt, and stack them in a clean box one on top of the other. Leave for 24 hours, then hang them up to dry out. The period of drying depends upon how long the fish are to be kept before using. The drier the fish the longer they will keep, and the better they will carry.

Next hang the fish in the smokehouse and smoke from twenty to twenty-four hours. If in camp a temporary smokehouse can be made of sacks set up on a wooden frame, or a small sod house can be built. Build a fireplace about fifteen feet away from the smokehouse and lead the smoke in by a trench covered with flat stones or old iron or timber. Build the fireplace on a lower level than the smokehouse, otherwise the flue or trench may not draw well. Select a dry site as the smoke must be dry and free from moisture. It is better to put a fire in a new smoker to dry it out before using it for the fish.

Use dry sawdust. Red pine or birch is quite satisfactory. Do not allow too much draught through the fireplace, otherwise

(Continued on next page)

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