

Steamed Buns

A Basic Recipe for DELICIOUS Asian Steamed Buns. Get Your Dim Sum on

One of my aaaaabsolute favorite appetizers (or dim sum items) to eat at an Asian restaurant is soft, tender ultra moist... steamed buns. They are known as "Bao" Buns and can be eaten plain (like in this recipe) or with any filling you can imagine. Traditional fillings include BBQ pork, chicken, or sweet red bean paste, though the possibilities are endless. Consider them the sexy foreign exchange student from 'Hot Pockets' University, Asia. This is a base-recipe, without filling.

Servings Info.:	Points:	1 serving =	2	2	2
Yield: 8 buns		2 servings =	4	4	4
Serving Size: 1 bun		3 servings =	6	6	6
		4 servings =	8	8	8

Ingredients:

- 2-1/2 tsp active dry yeast
- 2-1/4 tsp granulated sugar (you can't use sweetener)
- 1/3 cup water (MUST be between 100-110 degrees)
- 1 cup PLUS 1-1/2 tsp all purpose flour.
- 1 Tbsp 0 point natural sweetener o' choice
- 1 tsp oil (vegetable or canola)
- Cooking Spray, 6-8 second spray
- 1/4 tsp salt
- additional warm water, as necessary (1 Tbsp at a time)
- (for dusting) Baking powder.... instead of flour. Trust me.

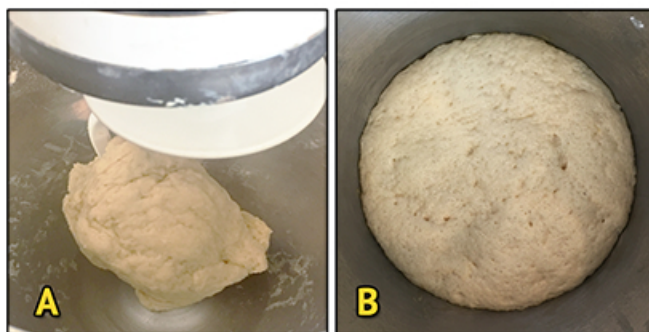
Directions:



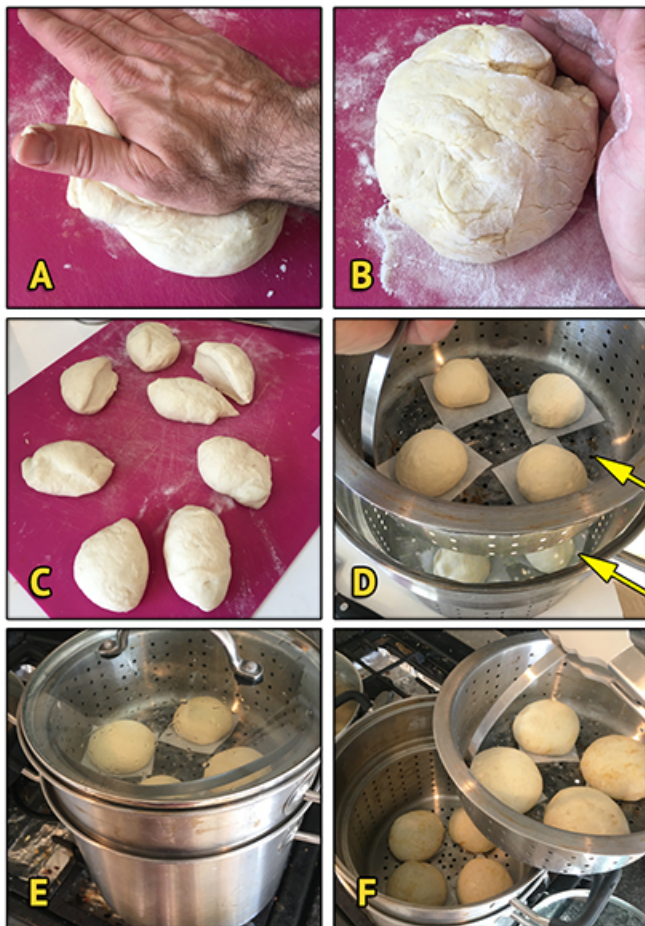
1. Scoop the active dry yeast and sugar into a tall container or cup. I know it sounds food-snooty, but it's VERY important... stir in 1/3 cup of 100-110 degree water. Use a thermometer if you have one, you need it to be between 100-110 degrees. Stir the water gently till mixed, then allow to sit, untouched, for 15 minutes.



2. While your yeast is 'blooming', add the flour, sweetener, oil and salt into a mixing bowl. Using cooking spray, spray into the bowl for 6 to 8 seconds (0 point amount, per your brand). Then after the yeast has 'bloomed' for 15 minutes, pour the yeast-liquid over the flour.



3. (A) Begin mixing the dry and wet ingredients together. The mixture will be dry, but that's ok. Use a rubber spatula to scrape down the sides and continue mixing. Add additional water, 1 Tbsp at a time. You want to make it the consistency of very soft 'Play Doh'. (B) When the dough reaches the soft play dough feel, quickly spritz the sides of the bowl with cooking spray, then walk away for 1 hour. It will double/triple in size.



4. Fill a large pot (that comes with steamer inserts) with a few inches of water. Bring to a very low boil, cover with lid. Cut 8 squares of parchment paper and set aside. (A) Instead of flour, sprinkle some baking powder onto a cutting board, then scrape the dough onto the board. Sprinkle more baking powder, to tighten the dough up, if needed, and gently knead/fold it for 1 minute. (B) Form it into a ball, then (C) Cut into 1/8 sections, then fold each one again for 30 seconds. Roll them each into round dough balls, then place each ball onto a square of parchment, seam side down. (D) Place the balls into the top and bottom of your steamer inserts and let rise for 15 minutes. (E) Place inserts into the pot of boiling water and cover. Steam over a rolling boil for 16 minutes. (F) Remove lid, turn off heat, then remove buns. Done.



You can also roll each round of dough around a filling of your choosing, to make stuffed, steamed buns. You could also slice the buns in half and use as 'slider' buns for Asian sliders, like a smaller version of my 'Bahn Mi' burgers.

Notes:

- **EVEN EASIER WAY:** Though it's obviously not as awesome, there's a much faster and easier way to make a similar bun. Make a batch of 2 ingredient dough, with 2 additional teaspoons of baking powder added into the self rising flour. You don't need to do any of the yeast, rising times, or any of that stuff. Just make the 2ID with the extra baking powder and the 1 Tbsp of sweetener (optional), form a dough ball, section into 1/8 portions, then steam as directed. It cuts a good hour off of the prep time. The buns aren't as light and fluffy inside, don't get as big, but it definitely works. They end up about the size of a standard 'slider' bun. If you want them bigger, use 1/4 dough sections of 2 ingredient dough, but adjust points.
- **GLUTEN FREE OPTION:** Bob's Red Mill makes a very good "1 to 1 Baking Flour" that is 100% certified gluten free. It works pretty decent for these, though obviously not 100% as well as all purpose flour.
- **FILLINGS:** There are TONS of ways you can fill these, use your imagination. If you'd like to watch how, look on youtube for 'how to stuff Asian steamed buns'. Though don't forget to type 'STEAMED' in your search.... you don't want to have to explain your search history to your spouse. lol
- **SNAZZY DESIGNS:** There are neat patterns and designs that you can make on the top of your steamed buns. Again, look online for simple video tutorials.
- Make these into larger 1/4 sections and they make FANTASTIC full sized steamed burger buns for Asian style sandwiches.
- Don't have a big, fancy double layer steamer basket? Can you only steam 4 of these at a time? Sure, simply halve the recipe.
- Will this work with a rice cooker's 'steamer' tray? I don't know, *shrugs*. Give it a shot and let me know. Use what you have.

