



## **ULTIMATE CREAM CHEESE Cinnamon Rolls**

Make a batch of Sweet Potato Milk Bread Dough (page 106) on the Tuesday or Wednesday before Thanksgiving or any big celebratory weekend. Shape half of the dough into the Pull-Apart Dinner Rolls (page 108) for a dinner centerpiece, and use the other half to prep these cinnamon rolls to serve for breakfast the next morning. No hangover can resist the power of cream cheese frosting, I promise.

MAKES 9 ROLLS

**4 tablespoons (½ stick) very soft unsalted butter, plus more for the pan**  
**½ recipe Sweet Potato Milk Bread Dough (recipe follows), at room temperature**  
**Neutral oil or butter, for the work surface**  
**¾ cup packed light brown sugar**  
**2 tablespoons ground cinnamon**

### **ICING**

**6 tablespoons cream cheese, at room temperature**  
**4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature**  
**1½ cups confectioners' sugar**  
**½ teaspoon vanilla extract**

Butter a 9-inch square cake pan. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.

Put the dough on a lightly oiled work surface and pat it into a rectangle with a long side near you. Using a rolling pin, roll the dough into a rectangle that is about 18 × 12 inches and ¼ inch thick; it is more important that the dough be ¼ inch thick than an exact-size rectangle.

In a small bowl, combine the brown sugar and cinnamon. Using an offset spatula or the back of a spoon, spread the soft butter in a thin, even layer over the surface of the dough. Sprinkle the brown sugar–cinnamon mixture over the butter.

Beginning with the long side nearest you, lift up the edge of the dough and roll it away from you into a tight coil. Pinch the edge to seal, and then place the roll on the prepared baking sheet. Pop it into the freezer for 10 minutes.

Using a long serrated knife, cut the chilled log of dough into 2-inch-thick rounds. Arrange the rounds, cut-side up, in the prepared cake pan, snuggling them together as needed. Cover the pan loosely with plastic wrap. Proof the dough at room temperature until puffy, 45 minutes to 1 hour. (Alternatively, let it proof slowly in the refrigerator overnight. Let the dough come to room temperature before baking.)

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

**Make the icing:** In a medium bowl, beat the cream cheese and butter together until smooth. Add the confectioners' sugar and vanilla, and beat again until smooth and fluffy, about 1 minute. Icing can be kept at room temperature for up to 1 hour; cover and chill for up to 3 days.

Bake the rolls until golden and cooked through, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven and immediately spread the rolls with the icing. Let cool for at least 15 minutes before eating. Serve warm or at room temperature.

**TIP:** Make extra and freeze them: Shape the cinnamon rolls and arrange them 1 inch apart on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Freeze until frozen solid, then transfer to a gallon-size plastic zip-top bag. The day before baking, arrange them in a buttered 9-inch square cake pan, cover with plastic wrap, and defrost in the fridge. Let stand at room temperature until puffy, about 2 hours, before baking as instructed.

### **SWEET POTATO Milk Bread dough**

This versatile dough is endlessly adaptable. Use it in the many variations in the following pages.

MAKES 3½ POUNDS DOUGH

**Enough for two loaves, 32 rolls, or 24 hot dog buns**

**1 cup whole milk, warmed, plus more for brushing**

**5 tablespoons sugar**

**2¼ teaspoons active dry yeast (¼-ounce envelope)**

**1½ cups Sweet Potato Puree (page 25; start with 1 pound orange-fleshed sweet potatoes)**

**2 large eggs**

**4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter, melted, plus more for the bowl and the pans**

**1 tablespoon kosher salt**

**6 cups (27 ounces) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting**

In the bowl of a stand mixer or a large bowl, gently stir together the 1 cup warm milk, 1 tablespoon of the sugar, and the yeast. Let stand until the mixture becomes foamy, about 5 minutes.

Add the sweet potato puree, the remaining 4 tablespoons sugar, the eggs, butter, and salt to the yeast mixture. Fit the machine with the hook attachment and mix the ingredients on low speed until smooth, about 1 minute. With the machine running, add the flour, 1 cup at a time. When all of the flour has been added, increase the speed to medium and knead the dough until it is silky smooth, about 10 minutes. The dough should be smooth, soft, and a little sticky. (Alternatively, to make the dough by hand, whisk the sweet potato, the remaining 4 tablespoons sugar, the eggs, butter, and salt into the yeast mixture until smooth. Place the flour in a large bowl and make a well in the center. Pour the sweet potato mixture into the well and begin incorporating the flour with a wooden spoon. Continue stirring until the dough is too stiff to mix with the spoon. Lightly butter your hands and knead the dough in the bowl until it is smooth, about 10 minutes.)

Brush a large, clean bowl with some melted butter. Shape the dough into a ball and set it in the bowl, seam-side down. Cover the bowl loosely with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm spot until almost doubled in volume, about 1 hour. Punch the dough down and use immediately or refrigerate for up to 24 hours.

**TIP:** You'll notice that the flour amounts are given in both volume and weight. Measuring either way is fine, but I find that, when baking, knowing the weight of flour is helpful, since it is a more accurate measurement.