

Vraic Buns Gâches à Vrai

If you are tempted to go out foraging for seaweed, you may like to prepare these Vraic Buns, to take with you, just like our ancestors use to do.

In the days when whole families used to collect seaweed (vraic) as a fertiliser or fuel, they would need to work hard and quickly to get it all cut from the rocks and up from the beach before the tide came in. To keep up their strength they had yeast and raisin buns to eat - twice the size of normal buns - washed down by cider. Hence the name 'Vraic buns' - from the occasion, not the ingredients! When baking these buns, or any bread for that matter, it was traditional in some households to put the sign of the cross on them before putting them in the oven.

Ingredients

Makes about 6-8 large buns

- 1 lb strong plain flour
- ½ oz dried yeast
- 2 oz caster sugar
- ¼ pint milk and water(mixed)
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 4 oz Jersey Butter, melted
- 6 oz large raisins
- Large pinch of grated nutmeg
- Pinch of salt

Method

- Sieve the flour into a large bowl with the nutmeg and warm.
- Dissolve the yeast and sugar in a small basin with half the warmed liquid.
- Make a well in the centre of the flour, add yeast mixture, sprinkle a little flour on top and leave for 20 minutes, covered with a cloth, until the yeast ferments (bubbles).
- Lightly flour the raisins to stop then sticking together
- Add the beaten eggs and remaining ingredients - Raisins, Nutmeg, Eggs, remaining milk/water.
- Knead well to form a firm dough.
- Shape into large buns and leave to 'prove' for 10 minutes in a warm place, covered with a cloth.
- Bake on a greased tray in a hot oven, Gas mark 6, 200°C /Fan oven 180°C (400°F) for 20 minutes.

