

Devin Alexander

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Photo: Lisa Cohen

Cinnabon: Classic Cinnamon Roll

From *“Fast Food Fix”*

Save: 371 calories, 26 g fat, 5 g sat. fat

Truth be told, this recipe is probably the most time-consuming recipe in this book (with the Pizza Hut Meat Lover’s Hand-Tossed Style Pizza coming in second). But after the first bite, every person who’s made it swears that they’d make it again . . . especially knowing the Drive-Thru option (see page 197). Even my friend Heather, who later revealed that she had never before made anything requiring yeast, swore it was much easier than she suspected it would be and worth the effort (we’re close enough that she would have told me the truth).

Plus, it’s the only recipe that I’ll probably never admit how much I’ve actually eaten . . . they’re just so good. Oops.

My version of the Cinnabon has also become the recipe in the book that I’ve used to prove to skeptics that, in fact, these recipes can be duplicated to satisfy cravings with a fraction of the fat and calories of their original counterparts. Though I believe many of the recipes truly duel the originals, this one happens to travel much better than many since it doesn’t need to be hot. The rolls are just fine if they sit at room temperature for several hours. Imagine what a star you’ll be if you show up at a brunch with a batch of these Cinnamon Rolls as your offering. (I’d recommend following the “Even Better” suggestions, see page 197, so they’re more user-friendly and can be shared more easily.)

- Butter-flavored cooking spray
- 2 tablespoons light butter from a stick, divided
- 1 cup fat-free milk
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup artificially sweetened fat-free vanilla yogurt
- 1 egg + 1 egg white
- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
- 4 cups unbleached flour, divided + additional for work surface
- 1 teaspoon + 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons corn syrup
- 3 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 recipe Cinnabon Frosting

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LIGHTLY mist a large bowl with cooking spray. Set aside 1 tablespoon butter to soften.

In a large microwaveable measuring cup or a medium microwaveable bowl, combine the milk, granulated sugar and the remaining 1 tablespoon butter. Microwave on high power for 2 minutes, or until the milk is hot (130°F). Add the yogurt. Whisk until the sugar dissolves (some small lumps of yogurt may be visible). Add the egg and egg white. Whisk to beat well. Add the yeast. Whisk until dissolved.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook(s) or in a large mixing bowl, combine 2 cups flour, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, and the salt. Mix or stir by hand with a wooden spoon to blend. Add the milk mixture. Mix on medium power or stir vigorously to blend. The mixture will be very sticky. Add the remaining 2 cups flour, mixing or stirring until absorbed.

Turn the dough onto a floured work surface. (A plastic dough scraper or brittle plastic spatula is helpful for getting out all the dough and starting the kneading.) Knead for about 5 minutes, or until smooth and elastic. Add scant amounts of flour as needed. The dough should be soft but not sticky. Place in the reserved bowl. Lightly mist with cooking spray. Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap. Allow to rise for about 1 hour, or until doubled in size. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine the corn syrup, brown sugar, the remaining 1 tablespoon cinnamon, and the vanilla. Stir to blend well. Set aside.

When the dough has doubled, gently punch it down and place it on the lightly floured surface. Knead for about 1 minute. Dust lightly with flour. Cover and allow to rest for 10 minutes.

Lightly mist an 11-inch by 7-inch nonstick baking dish with cooking spray. Set aside.

Using your hands or a floured rolling pin, press or roll the dough into an 18-inch by 12-inch rectangle. With a butter knife, evenly spread the softened butter over the dough. Drizzle on the filling. With a knife or spatula, spread it evenly to the edges. Starting at one shorter side, roll the dough, jellyroll fashion, into a tube, ending seam-side down. Cut into 8 equal pieces. Place, spiral-side up, in the reserved dish.

Cover the dish with a damp kitchen towel and place in a warm spot. Let the rolls rise another 30 minutes.

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Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake for 22 to 28 minutes, or until very lightly browned but slightly doughy in the center.

With a spatula, transfer one roll to a plate. Using a butter knife, spread 1-1/2 tablespoons of frosting over the top and 1/2” down the sides. Repeat with the other 7 rolls.

Makes 8

Each roll: 442 calories, 10 g protein, 88 g carbohydrates, 6 g fat, 3 g sat. fat, 3 g fiber

Original Cinnabon Classic Roll: 813 calories, 15 g protein, 117 g carbohydrates, 32 g fat, 8 g saturated fat, 4 g fiber

DRIVE-THRU: To enjoy fresh rolls first thing in the morning, assemble the rolls the night before and then cover them loosely with plastic wrap instead of a damp towel. Refrigerate overnight and the rolls will rise while you sleep, so you can bake as soon as the oven is warm.

Or if you’d like to have the luxury of eating them whenever the mood strikes, consider making a batch or two and freezing them after baking and cooling. (Freeze the frosting separately.) Pack in an airtight plastic container. When you crave one, wrap it in aluminum foil and bake it in a preheated 250°F oven for 20 to 25 minutes, or until it is warmed through.

EVEN BETTER: Make the dough following the recipe directions, but roll the dough out into a larger rectangle about 22 1/2" x 11". Roll the dough starting with one of the longer ends. You’ll end up with a roll that is 22 1/2" long. Cut into 15 equal pieces. Place the rolls in a 13" x 9" nonstick baking dish. Bake for 18 to 22 minutes. You’ll have 15 standard-size cinnamon rolls. Spoon 2 teaspoons of the frosting on top of each. Each roll will have 235 calories, 6 g protein, 47 g carbohydrates, 3 g fat, 2 g sat. fat, 1 g fiber. You’ll save 578 calories, 29 g fat, 6 g sat. fat.

BEFORE YOU START: Though this recipe requires a time span of several hours, only part of that is hands-on. They’re the perfect lazy-weekend project, especially with kids in the kitchen. Each time you make the recipe, you’ll develop more of a “feel” for the yeast dough. Or if you have a bread machine that can handle 2-pound loaves with a sweet-dough setting, prepare the dough in it by adding the ingredients in the manufacturer’s suggested order.

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CINNABON FROSTING

- 1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 3 tablespoons reduced-fat (Neufchâtel) cream cheese from a block
- 3 tablespoons light butter from a stick, softened
- 1/2 tablespoon fat-free milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

In a mixing bowl, combine the sugar, cream cheese, butter, milk, and vanilla. Mix on low speed with an electric mixer fitted with beaters or stir with a spoon for about 1 minute, or until combined. If using a mixer, increase the speed to high. Beat or stir vigorously for about 30 seconds or until smooth. Allow the frosting to set for at least 10 minutes. Place in an airtight plastic container. Refrigerate for up to 3 days. Just before using, stir well with a spoon.

MAKES ABOUT 3/4 CUP, ENOUGH FOR 8 RESTAURANT-SIZE ROLLS OR 15 STANDARD-SIZE ROLLS

Each serving has: 119 calories, 1 g protein, 23 g carbohydrates, 3 g fat, 2 g sat. fat, trace fiber

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