

Chinese Steamed Buns (Bao Buns)

Yield: 10 serves | **Prep:** 1 hr 25 min | **Cook:** 10 min | **Source:** thestranger.online

Bao means Buns so it is somehow odd that they are universally known as Bun Buns so to speak.

Bao Buns, pronounced “bow”, but also known as ‘steamed buns’ or ‘baozi’ are a deliciously, warm, fluffy treat of filling wrapped inside a sweet, white dough. Made with a mix of flour, yeast, sugar, baking powder, milk and oil, the bao is a tad sweeter than its closely related cousin, the dumpling.

It is a type of filled bun or bread-like dumpling that originates from Chinese cuisine and can take on many different shapes, they can be eaten by themselves or more commonly filled with either a sweet or savoury filling.

Ingredients

- 7 g yeast (dried)
- 450 g flour (bread, extra for dusting)
- 50 g sugar (caster)
- 300 ml water (warm)
- 5 ml baking powder

Notes

These buns can be frozen without cooking. Transfer to an airtight plastic container and freeze for up to 3 months. To serve, defrost thoroughly overnight in the fridge. To cook wrap the buns in foil and cook in a moderate oven for 20 to 25 minutes.



Instructions

1. In a jug thoroughly whisk the yeast and water.
2. Take a large bowl and combine the flour, the salt, sugar and baking powder. Add the yeast mixture to the dry ingredients, and mix with a wooden spoon to form a dough.
3. Transfer the mixture onto a floured work surface and knead for approximately 10 minutes until smooth and elastic in consistency. Slightly oil the bowl and return the dough. Cover tightly with cling film and leave to rest in a warm place for about 60 to 90 minutes or until doubled in size.
4. Remove the dough and roll into a sausage shape on a lightly floured surface. Cut the dough into 10 even sized pieces, each one circa the size of a golf ball.
5. Flatten the balls into an oval shape with a rolling pin, brush them with oil then fold in half over the handle of a wooden spoon, leaving the dough slightly open. Remove the wooden spoon, as you do so move the handle around so that you increase the size of the gap.
6. Transfer to a lined baking tray and cover with cling film before leaving them to rest in a warm place for approximately 30 minutes.
7. Set a wooden steamer lined with baking parchment in a large saucepan or wok filled with a little water. Place each piece of dough onto the paper. Steam the buns in batches for 10 to 12 minutes, or until they are puffy and soft, and cooked all the way through.
8. As an option serve the buns filled with slow cooked Korean style pulled beef brisket topped with finely chopped spring onions. I've gone for pork belly here with smashed crackling and coriander but equally a sweet filling meets the challenge head on.