

Festive filled brioche centrepiece with baked camembert.

✖ Ingredients

4 large eggs

20ml milk

350g strong white bread flour

7g sachet fast-action dried yeast

30g caster sugar

5g salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp mixed spice

200g unsalted butter, cubed and softened

1 egg, beaten with a pinch of salt

scattering of poppy seed

1 whole 250g Camembert in a wooden, stapled carton

2-3 sprigs thyme

For the fillings

1 garlic bulb

1 tbsp quince paste (membrillo), mashed

5 cooked chestnut halves

$\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp dried, chopped cranberry mixed with $\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp cranberry sauce

1 tbsp mushroom pâté

For the decoration

30g fresh cranberries

rosemary springs or bay leaves

Day before: whisk together the eggs and milk in a jug. Put the flour, yeast, sugar, salt and spice in the bowl of a kitchen mixer fitted with a dough hook. Stir to combine.

On a medium setting, slowly pour in the egg mixture in a

steady stream, continuing to stir until incorporated into a very soft, wet dough. Add the butter and increase the speed, kneading for 8-10 minutes. The dough will be ready when it clings around the dough hook. At this stage it will look more like a thick cake batter than bread dough. Cover with cling film and refrigerate overnight.

You can also roast the garlic the day before: heat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Line a baking sheet with foil. Remove any loose outer skins from the garlic bulbs. With a sharp knife, cut off the stem and uppermost part of the cloves. Place on the foil, drizzle over a little olive oil and season. Bring up the edges of the foil and seal to form a fairly tight parcel. Bake in the top of the oven for 35-45 minutes. Remove from the oven and leave the parcel sealed until the garlic is cool enough to handle. Remove the cloves by either squeezing the bulb upwards from the base or by teasing them out with a toothpick. Mash the garlic with a fork. Wrap well (to avoid the garlic smell transferring to other foods) and refrigerate. On the day: line a baking tray with baking parchment. Remove the cheese from its wooden carton and put the cheese back in the fridge until later. Put the carton in the centre of the lined tray.

Tip the dough out onto a well-floured surface. Divide into 5 large equal-sized pieces – it can help to roll the dough into an even sausage shape and mark with a knife first to get equal pieces.

Take one piece and divide into 5 again. One at a time, roll each of these 5 pieces gently into a ball, flour your index finger and make a small, deep indent in the middle. Fill with half a teaspoon of the roasted garlic, pinching the dough over the top to seal and placing the sealed side down onto the floured surface. Cup your hand over the bun and rotate a little to get an even shape. Repeat until you have filled all 5.

Repeat step 6 using the remaining 4 fillings.

Arrange the buns around the wooden carton, you'll need 10 for the inner ring and 15 for the outer ring. Leave around 0.5cm

between each bun, giving them room to rise. Cover with oiled cling film and leave in a warm place for 30-40 minutes or until nearly doubled in size.

Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Remove any plastic wrapping or stickers from the cheese. With a small knife, make an incision in the top rim and remove the top layer of rind. Sprinkle with thyme leaves and place in the carton, cut side up. Brush the buns with the beaten egg and scatter with poppy seeds. Bake for 15-20 minutes until golden brown. Slide onto a serving platter. Decorate with the herbs and fresh cranberries. Serve the extra cheese alongside if using.

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