

Hedgehog bread rolls

Invented in honour of Alice's Day but popular all year round

Lewis Carroll first told the story of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland during a rowing trip along the Thames 150 years ago. Celebrate the anniversary one Saturday in July by packing an Alice themed picnic and head for Oxford's Botanic Garden, where a fabulous afternoon is assured

This recipe is a fun way of adding something original to the picnic basket. You can actually buy delicious ready-made hedgehog rolls, for just 50 pence each, from the Natural Bread shop in Eynsham, or you can have great fun encouraging children to make their own as hedgehogs are an integral part of the Alice story.

"When Alice discovered that live hedgehogs were used as croquet balls and flamingos acted as mallets in the Queen of Hearts croquet match, she thought it was all very curious".

To make 8 rolls you will need

- 8oz (225g) strong white flour
- 1 tspn salt
- 1oz (25g) soft butter
- 1½ tspns easy blend dried yeast
- 1 tspn caster sugar
- Approx ¼ pt (150ml) warm milk

Method

- Place all ingredients except the water into a large warmed bowl and rub in the butter.
- Make a well in the middle and gently add the warmed milk, until you have a soft dough.
- Turn onto a floured surface and knead for about 10 minutes or until smooth and elastic. Pat into a large round, cover with a clean cloth and leave to rise for about half an hour.
- Knock back and cut into 8 pieces. Roll each piece into an oblong shape, then shape the head by squeezing the dough gently at one end.
- Place the rolls on an oiled tray
- Add two raisins for eyes and using a pair of clean kitchen scissors make cuts on the surface to create the prickles.
- Cover again until the rolls have doubled in size and cook in a preheated oven at 220°C / 425°F or gas mark 7 for 20 minutes or until light brown.