

Cinnamon Star Bread

Tips for your best Cinnamon Star Bread

- * Don't stress over rolling the four dough circles exactly round, or exactly the same size. Any aberrations will disappear after shaping and baking.
- * Yes, there's a lot of filling; use all of it. This copious amount of filling makes bread that's wonderfully moist and cinnamon-y.
- * Don't let the bread over-rise; its star shape will become less distinct.
- * Make the bread up to a couple of days ahead, if desired. Just before serving, lightly tent with foil and reheat for 15 minutes in a 350° F oven.



So you think you can't make this bread? Think again. If I, a woman without a single "crafty" gene (e.g. sewing, scrimshaw carving, making porcupines out of pretzel sticks and kiwi fruit) can make this bread – so can you.

Gather your confidence, and your ingredients:

- 2 cups (8 ½ ounces) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 1/4 cup potato flour or 1/2 cup instant mashed potato flakes
- 1/4 cup Baker's Special Dry Milk or nonfat dry milk
- 3/4 cup to 1 cup lukewarm water, enough to make a soft smooth dough
- 1/4 cup (4 tablespoons) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract or Buttery Sweet Dough Flavor
- 2 teaspoons instant yeast
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt

First, measure the flour by gently spooning it into a cup, then sweeping off any excess. Or even easier, weigh it (you'll see its weight in the list above).

Next, sift the flour, potato flour, and dry milk through a strainer; this is an important step to prevent lumps in the dough. (If you're using instant mashed potatoes rather than potato flour you can skip this sifting step.)

Combine all of the dough ingredients and mix and knead – by hand, mixer, or bread machine – to make a soft smooth dough.



Divide the dough into four equal pieces. Shape each piece into a ball, cover the balls, and allow them to rest for 15 minutes.



Meanwhile, gather your filling ingredients:

- 1 large egg, beaten
 - 1/2 cup sugar*
 - 1 tablespoon cinnamon*
- *Or substitute 1/2 cup Cinnamon-Sugar Plus

On a lightly greased or floured work surface (or piece of parchment), roll one piece of dough into a 10" circle. As I said don't worry about making the circle exactly 10" wide or even totally round. Just do your best; rising and baking will cover any shaping faux pas.



Place the circle on a piece of parchment. Brush a thin coat of beaten egg on the surface.

Evenly sprinkle with one-third of the cinnamon-sugar, leaving 1/4" of bare dough around the perimeter.

Roll out a second circle the same size as the first, and place it on top of the filling-covered circle. Repeat the layering process — egg, cinnamon sugar, dough circle — leaving the top circle bare.

Reserve a bit of the beaten egg to brush over the star once it's shaped.



Place a 2 1/2" to 3" round cutter in the center of the dough circle as a guide. With a bench knife or sharp knife, cut the circle into 16 equal strips, from the cutter to the edge, through all the layers.



Using two hands, pick up two adjacent strips and twist them away from each other twice so that the top side is facing up again. Repeat with the remaining strips of dough so that you end up with eight pairs of strips.



Pinch the pairs of strips together to create a star-like shape with eight points. Remove the cutter.



Transfer the star on the parchment to a baking sheet. Cover the star and let it rise until it becomes noticeably puffy, about 45 minutes.



While the star is rising, preheat the oven to 400°F.

Brush the star with a thin coat of the beaten egg. Bake it for 12 to 15 minutes, until it's nicely golden with dark brown cinnamon streaks; the center should register 200°F on a digital thermometer.



Remove the loaf from the oven and allow it to cool for about 10 minutes before serving. Dust with confectioners' sugar and serve warm or at room temperature.

Store any leftover bread, well wrapped in plastic, at room temperature for several days. Freeze for longer storage.

