

Swedish Tea Rings

Swedish Tea Rings have been a tradition in Kris' family for at least 30 years that I remember. When we all lived in the Tulsa area, we (mostly the girls) would get together at Kris' Aunt Judy's house to bake tea rings. The weather was generally turning from fall to winter; the leaves were all gone from the trees by now and temperatures assured you that Christmas was on its way. Kris and Aunt Judy and Cousin JoQueta and any other aunts or cousins would all come with their contribution to the baking. It was a classic time of family spending time together and the elders of the family speaking truth and wisdom to the younger ones. This was the case whether you were inside with the ladies baking the tea rings or outside with the guys . . . though sometimes with the guys you would wonder if it was *all* truth! After a full day of fellowship and baking, the bounty would usually be 15 to 20 tea rings. The idea was to give them to other family members and friends. They would plopp their tea ring in the oven on Christmas morning so they could get down to the business of seeing what Santa had left rather than worrying about fixing something to eat.

Shopping List:

Traditional Sweet Roll Dough:

- 2 Packages active dry yeast
- ½ Cup Lukewarm milk (scalded then cooled)
- ½ Cup Warm Water (105 to 115 degrees)
- ½ Cup Sugar
- 1 Teaspoon Salt
- 2 Eggs
- ½ Cup shortening or butter, softened
- 4-1/2 to 5 Cups all-purpose flour

Swedish Tea Ring:

- 2 Tablespoon butter, softened
- ¼ Cup Brown Sugar (packed)
- ¼ Cup White Sugar
- 2 Teaspoon Cinnamon
- ¼ Cup Raisins
- ¼ Cup Golden Raisins
- ¼ Cup Chopped Date Pieces
- ¼ Cup Whole Pecans
- 1 Red Cherry
- 1 Green Cherry

Sweet Icing:

- 1 Cup Confectioners' Sugar
- 1 Tablespoon Plain Condensed Canned Milk
- ½ Teaspoon Vanilla

Dissolve yeast in warm water. Stir in milk, sugar, salt, eggs, shortening and 2-1/2 cups of the flour. Beat until smooth. Mix in enough remaining flour to make dough easy to handle.

Turn dough onto lightly floured board; knead until smooth and elastic, about 5 minutes. Place in greased bowl; turn greased side up. (At this point, dough can be refrigerated 3 to 4 days.) Cover; let rise in warm place until double, about 1-1/2 hours. (Dough is ready if impression remains when touched.)

Punch down dough. Roll dough into rectangle, 15 X 9 inches. Spread with butter and sprinkle with sugar, cinnamon, chopped date pieces, raisins and golden raisins. Roll up, beginning as wide side. Pinch edge of dough into roll to seal well. Stretch roll to make even.

With sealed edge down, shape into ring on lightly greased baking sheet or round cake pan. Pinch ends together. With scissors, make cuts 2/3 of the way through ring at 1-1/2 – 2 inch intervals. Turn each section on its side. Let rise until double.

Bake 20 to 25 minutes at 375°. Decorate with Nuts and Cherries and Frost warm with Sweet Icing.

Sweet Icing:

Mix 1 cup confectioners' sugar, 1 tablespoon Plain Condensed canned milk and ½ teaspoon vanilla until smooth. Drizzle Icing with a fork.

Food for the Road:

We did freeze the pastry/bread type things in anticipation of the trip to the mountains. We thawed and reheated them the morning of the brunch. Reheating pastries and keeping them warm for any length of time usually results in a much less than satisfactory result . . . soggy, or hard and tough rolls and muffins. This is why we waited until the morning of, to do it.



