

# Vegan Santa Lucia Buns with Saffron and Cardamom

## Ingredients

- 1 cup soymilk plus 1 tbsp. (or other plant milk), divided
- ½ cup raisins, plus 24 additional ones, divided
- ½ tsp. saffron threads
- 1 tsp. ground cardamom
- 1 tbsp. active dry yeast
- 4 ½ cups (565g) all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup (62g) potato flour
- 1/3 cup (67g) granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ cup coconut oil or vegan butter, melted
- 1 can of chickpeas, only the liquid (aquafaba) needed
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- Vegetable oil, for greasing
- 1 tsp. agave nectar

## Steps

1. Combine 1 cup soymilk, ½ cup raisins, saffron threads, and cardamom in a small saucepan. Heat, stirring frequently, until the milk begins to steam but don't let it boil. Remove from the heat and allow to steep for 5 minutes, before adding all the milk, spices, and raisins in a blender and blending until smooth. Use a mesh strainer to strain the milk, pushing as much through the strainer as possible. You'll want to have about a cup of flavored soymilk. To that, add your yeast and set aside.

2. Place the all-purpose flour, potato flour, sugar, and salt in a stand mixer and combine. While it's running, add the flavored soymilk, melted butter, ½ cup of chickpea aquafaba (this is the liquid inside the can of chickpeas), and vanilla extract. Once it's all come together, use a dough hook attachment to kneed your dough for about 10 minutes (or kneed by hand if you prefer/want a workout).

3. Grease a large bowl with a small amount of vegetable oil, and place the dough in the bowl to rise in a warm place for an hour (I set my oven to 100°F and let it rise in there). It likely won't double in size, but that's fine. After 60 minutes, punch down the dough and divide into even pieces on a clean countertop. This recipe makes 12 buns, each weighing about 95 grams. Make them into small log-shaped pieces, and then set aside for 10 minutes to let the gluten relax.



4. Shape the buns by rolling one of the logs out into a rope, around 15 inches long. Take each end of the rope in both hands and twist on opposite sides to create an “S” shape. Take two raisins, and press them gently into the center of each side of the “S”, and transfer the shaped bun onto a baking sheet (either greased or lined with a silicone mat). Repeat with all of the dough

5. Place the baking sheet on top of the oven, and preheat it to 375°F (190°C). While the oven preheats, mix the remaining tablespoon of plant-based milk and the agave in a small bowl, microwave for a few seconds, and mix together. Brush the soymilk agave over the buns right before you place them in the oven. Bake for 18 minutes or so, remove from the oven, and let cool a couple minutes before eating. Store in an air-tight container, and eat ASAP. If eating the day after or longer, reheat for 20 seconds in the microwave before eating.