

International Cooking

Pan Dulce: A Sweet, Flavorful Way To Commemorate Mexican History

(NAPS)—To many Americans, Cinco de Mayo is a holiday of fuzzy origins, but a great reason to sip margaritas and Mexican beer, and to savor spicy hors d'oeuvres called *botanas*. Although a holiday in Mexico, Cinco de Mayo is most enthusiastically celebrated in Puebla, where the battle for which it is named took place. In the United States, it has spread from the border regions to become a widespread celebration of Mexican food, culture and music.

Cinco de Mayo, or "Fifth of May," marks the birth of Mexican nationalism, pride and self-esteem. On that day in 1862, the Zacapoxtla Indians of the Sierra de Puebla mountains fought alongside Mexican army troops to defeat Napoleon III's army.

At the end of a day of celebrating the Cinco de Mayo holiday with parades and neighborhood fiestas, people return to their homes, where families share the traditional Mexican night-time treat *pan dulce*, or sweet bread. *Pan dulce* is enjoyed by everyone from young children to parents and grandparents.

There are several versions of the recipe for *pan dulce*. The version offered by Fleischmann's Yeast features a cinnamon-flavored cocoa topping clinging to a sweet and tender roll. The topping is slashed in a pattern resembling a seashell, giving this particular sweet bread the name *concha*, or seashell.

Pan Dulce Makes 12 rolls

3 to 3½ cups all-purpose flour

½ cup sugar

1 envelope Fleischmann's RapidRise Yeast



Rich cocoa-cinnamon topping clings to sweet and tender rolls in the traditional Cinco de Mayo sweet bread known as *pan dulce*.

1 teaspoon salt
½ cup water
¼ cup milk
¼ cup butter or margarine
1 large egg
Cocoa Topping (recipe follows)

In a large bowl, combine 1 cup flour, sugar, undissolved yeast and salt. Heat water, milk and butter until very warm (120° to 130°F). Gradually add to flour mixture. Beat 2 minutes at medium speed of electric mixer, scraping bowl occasionally. Add egg and ½ cup flour; beat 2 minutes at high speed. Stir in enough remaining flour to make a soft dough. Knead on lightly floured surface until smooth and elastic, about 8 to 10 minutes. Cover; let rest 10 minutes.

Divide dough into 12 equal pieces; shape into smooth balls. Place balls on greased baking sheet. Flatten each ball

slightly.

Cut Cocoa Topping into 12 equal portions; flatten each portion to 2½-inch round. Place 1 round on each dough ball. With sharp knife, make cuts ¼-inch deep on rolls, to resemble seashells. Cover; let rise in warm, draft-free place until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

Bake at 375°F for 20 minutes or until done. Remove from sheet; cool on wire rack.

Cocoa Topping: In medium bowl, cut ½ cup butter or margarine into ¾ cup powdered sugar and ¾ cup all-purpose flour with pastry blender until crumbly. Stir in 2 tablespoons cocoa powder, 1 teaspoon cinnamon and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract. Using both hands, lump mixture together firmly; shape into a log. Cover; refrigerate at least 30 minutes.

For more recipe ideas, visit the Fleischmann's Yeast Web site at www.breadworld.com.