**Auntie Anne’s Copycat Cinnamon Sugar Pretzel Bites**

Prep Time: 45 minutes Cook Time: 10 minute Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients

1 (1/4 oz.) pkg. active dry yeast

1 cup warm water, 110 degrees (microwave water in measuring cup for about 1-2 minutes until it feels like a warm shower after dipping a finger into it)

2 Tbsp. granulated sugar

2 Tbsp. packed light-brown sugar

1 Tbsp. vegetable oil

1 tsp. salt

1 1/2 cups bread flour

1 to 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting

3 cups hot water (microwave on high for about 2-3 minutes to boil)

1/4 cup baking soda

Coating

\*1/3 cup butter, melted \*1/2 cup granulated sugar \*1 Tbsp. ground cinnamon

Directions- Day 1

1. In the bowl of an electric stand mixer with whisk attachment, combine 1 cup warm water, yeast and 1/2 tsp. granulated sugar, whisk to dissolve and allow to rest 10 minutes. Then, mix in remaining granulated sugar (1 Tbsp. + 2 1/2 tsp.), brown sugar, vegetable oil and salt.
2. With mixer set on low speed, slowly add in bread flour and mix until well blended. Switch attachment to the hook attachment and slowly add in all-purpose flour.
3. Knead mixture with dough hook on low speed until smooth and elastic, adding up to an additional 1/4 cup flour as needed (you want a soft dough and it may seem slightly sticky). Transfer to a lightly greased bowl, cover with plastic wrap and allow to rest in a warm place until doubled in size (I like to let mine rest in the oven with the light on), 1 1/2 hours.
4. Make cream cheese dipping sauce (below). Cover and refrigerate for Day 2.

Day 2:

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Punch dough down and divide into 6 equal portions.
2. Cover the portions you aren't currently rolling loosely with plastic wrap loosely (to prevent drying).
3. Roll each portion into a rope about 12 to 16-inches long (you can do this by rolling or the method of pulling on each side and flicking upward like a jump rope while slapping onto the countertop). Pretend that you work at Auntie Anne’s!
4. Cut into bite size pieces (about 1 1/4-inches each) with kitchen shears or paring knife. Pour hot water and baking soda into a mixing bowl and whisk to dissolve.
5. Using a slotted spoon, dip several pieces of dough into the water mixture, then lift and allow excess water to drip off, then transfer to a greased baking sheet.
6. Repeat process working in batches and using two baking sheets, and rewarm water in microwave until hot between batches.
7. Bake in preheated oven 7-9 minutes until tops are nicely golden brown. Meanwhile in a small mixing bowl, whisk together granulated sugar and cinnamon until well blended. Remove from oven and using a slotted spoon, dip into melted butter, toss to evenly coat then lift and shake off excess.
8. Dip butter coated pretzels into cinnamon sugar and toss to evenly coat.
9. Serve warm with cream cheese dipping sauce (these are best served warm so I'd recommend rewarming them once they've cooled. To do so microwave on a plate for 10 - 20 seconds.

Fluffy Cream Cheese Dipping Sauce

Ingredients

2 oz. cream cheese, softened

1 Tbsp. butter, softened

1/2 cup powdered sugar

1/4 tsp. vanilla extract (optional)

1 Tbsp. heavy cream

Directions

In a mixing bowl using an electric mixer, whip cream cheese and butter until smooth and fluffy. Stir in powdered sugar and vanilla and mix until combined. Add heavy cream and whip until fluffy, about 2 minutes longer. Cover and store in refrigerator.