

## Lussekatter (St. Lucia Buns)

*slightly adapted from The Swedish Table by Helene Henderson*

This recipe can be made ahead through the shaping step and left in the refrigerator to rise overnight. Do not put the egg wash on until you are ready to bake. You must use *fresh* (i.e. plump) raisins. If you use hard, dried out ones, they won't stick to the dough as well, and they may fall off in the baking - ask me how I know. If all you've got is dried out raisins, though, simply soak them in boiling water for 10 minutes to plump them up before you shape the buns, and you'll be good to go. Oh, and whatever you do: don't. skip. the. saffron!

Yield: 16 buns, can be doubled

*1 T sugar*  
*¼ c. warm water*  
*2 ¼ t. dry yeast*  
*½ c. salted butter*  
*¾ c. milk*  
*1 t. saffron threads, ground in a mortar and pestle*  
*3 c. flour*  
*½ c. sugar*  
*1 T vegetable oil (to grease bowl)*  
*2 egg yolks, beaten with 1 T water*  
*raisins*

In the bowl of an electric mixer, combine the tablespoon of sugar, yeast, and warm water. Let stand 10 minutes.

In a small saucepan, heat the butter, milk, and saffron until the butter has melted, but do not let it boil. Remove from heat and allow to cool about 8 minutes, or until the temperature falls below 110F. Add the milk mixture to the yeast mixture. Then, add the flour and remaining ½ c. sugar.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 1 minute. Transfer to an oiled bowl, cover loosely with plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm place for 1 hour. The dough will be dense and will not rise much.

Divide the dough into 16 pieces. Roll each piece into a 6" long strip. Coil ends in opposite directions, forming a tightly curled S-shape. Place on parchment lined baking sheet, covered with plastic wrap, and let rise 1 hour more. Refrigerate overnight.

In the morning, allow the buns to rest on the counter while you preheat the oven to 400F. Brush buns with beaten egg yolk mixed with water and place 1 raisin in the center of each curl, 2 per bun. Bake buns 10-15 minutes until golden brown. Serve warm with coffee, hot chocolate, and *pepparkakor* (recipe can be found at [bakinghumblepie.com/pepparkakor](http://bakinghumblepie.com/pepparkakor)).