Buttery Pull-Apart Parker House Rolls

Golden, buttery, and ridiculously fluffy, these homemade pull-apart rolls deserve a permanent spot on your holiday table. A simple cooked flour paste is the secret to their incredibly soft texture, while melted butter, flaky sea salt, and fresh rosemary make them even more irresistible.

I've been wanting to make these since watching Jeff Mauro make them on *The Kitchen*, my favorite show. With Thanksgiving around the corner, I finally had the perfect excuse. And I fear I've ruined store-bought dinner rolls for myself.

If you want to watch Jeff make these himself (and see where I got my inspiration), you can find his full demo and original recipe for Pull-Apart Parker House Rolls on Food Network. I actually used 00 flour and added my own finishing touches with melted butter, flaky sea salt, and fresh rosemary. He also makes two flavored butters to serve alongside them though, which I'm definitely trying next time!

Servings: 12 rolls
Prep Time: 30 minutes
Rise & Rest Time: Approximately 2 hours
Cook Time: 25 minutes
Total Time: Approximately 3 hours

Ingredients

Flour Paste

- 3 tbsp bread flour or 00 flour
- ½ cup water

Dough

- ½ cup cold milk if using bread flour, or ⅓ cup if using 00 flour, plus more as needed
- 1 large egg
- 2 cups bread flour or 00 flour, plus more for dusting
- 1½ tsp instant yeast
- 2 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 7 tbsp unsalted butter, melted and divided

- Additional butter for greasing the skillet

For Finishing

- 1–2 tbsp melted unsalted butter
- Flaky sea salt, to taste
- 2–3 sprigs fresh rosemary

Instructions

1. Make the Flour Paste

Combine the water and flour in a small saucepan over medium-low heat. Whisk continuously until the mixture thickens to a pudding-like consistency. Set aside to cool.

2. Prepare the Dough

Whisk the cold milk and egg into the flour paste. If using bread flour, use the full ½ cup of milk. If using 00 flour, start with ⅓ cup of milk and gradually add more as needed.

Using a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook, incorporate the flour and yeast. Mix on low for 1–2 minutes, then let the dough rest for 15 minutes.

3. Knead & Let Rise

Add the sugar and salt and mix on medium-low speed for 5 minutes. Incorporate 4 tablespoons of melted butter and continue kneading for another 5 minutes.

The dough should be soft, smooth, and slightly tacky. If it feels too dry, add a little more milk, one tablespoon at a time. If it's excessively sticky after kneading, add a little more flour as needed.

Form the dough into a ball and place it in a greased bowl. Cover and leave somewhere warm until doubled in size, approximately 1 hour.

4. Shape the Rolls

Gently deflate the dough and stretch it into a 9 x 10-inch rectangle. Divide into 12 equal pieces. Flatten each piece into an 8 x 2-inch strip, then roll it up starting from one of the shorter sides.

5. Let Rise Again

Generously butter a 12-inch cast-iron skillet. Arrange rolls around the perimeter and in the center. Cover and allow them to double in size, approximately 45 minutes.

6. Bake

Preheat the oven to 375°F with the oven rack in its lowest position.

Brush the rolls with the remaining 3 tablespoons of melted butter and sprinkle with flaky sea salt. Bake for approximately 25 minutes, or until beautifully golden.

7. Finish & Serve

Let the rolls cool for 5 minutes before brushing with additional melted butter and garnishing with fresh rosemary sprigs. Add another pinch of flaky sea salt if desired.

Serve warm, directly from the skillet, and let everyone pull apart their own roll.

Tips & Notes

- **Bread flour vs. 00 flour:** Jeff's original recipe calls for bread flour, but I used Polselli Classica Tipo 00 flour, and my rolls turned out incredibly soft and fluffy! If using 00 flour, start with ⅓ cup of milk instead of ½ cup, gradually adding more as needed. Different flours absorb liquid differently, so aim for a soft, smooth, slightly tacky dough. All other ingredient measurements remain the same.
- **Don't skip the flour paste:** This technique, known as tangzhong, helps the dough retain moisture and gives the rolls their incredibly soft, fluffy texture.
- **Go by the dough, not the clock:** Rising times will vary depending on the temperature of your kitchen.
- **Don't let the total time intimidate you:** Most of this recipe is hands-off. There's plenty of time to get other holiday preparations done (or make a quick trip to Marshalls for some very necessary Christmas mugs).
- **Try a flavored butter:** Jeff's original recipe includes honey butter and garlic-herb butter. I skipped both this time and kept mine simple with melted butter, flaky sea salt, and rosemary, but I'll definitely be trying them next time!
- **Make them ahead:** Bake earlier in the day and gently reheat before serving. Finish with fresh melted butter just before bringing them to the table.
- **Storage:** Store leftover rolls in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 days, or freeze for longer storage. Reheat before serving for the best texture.