

## Caroline's King Cake

Makes 2 King Cakes

### For the Pastry:

- 1 cup whole milk
- 1/4 cup butter
- 2 packages active dry yeast (active, not quick rising)
- 2/3 cup warm water
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg (jar is fine)
- 5 ½ cups all-purpose flour

### For the Filling:

- 2 packages cream cheese softened
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 large egg

### For the Creamy Vanilla Glaze:

- 3 cups confectioners' sugar
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3 tablespoons whole milk, or more as needed, I think I used about 5-6
- purple, green, and yellow sparkling sugars (can purchase at Michaels, Party City or Hobby Lobby)

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Scald milk, remove from heat and stir in 1/4 cup of butter. Allow mixture to cool to room temperature. In a large bowl, dissolve yeast in the warm water with 1 tablespoon of the white sugar. Let stand until creamy, about 10 minutes.
2. When yeast mixture is bubbling, add the cooled milk mixture. Whisk in the eggs. Stir in the remaining white sugar, salt and nutmeg. Beat the flour into the milk/egg mixture 1 cup at a time. When the dough has pulled together, turn it out onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth and elastic, about 8 to 10 minutes.
3. Lightly oil a large bowl, place the dough in the bowl and turn to coat with oil. Cover with a damp cloth or plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place until doubled in volume, about 2 hours.
4. Gently punch dough down; divide in half. Roll 1 portion out into a 22x12-inch rectangle on a lightly floured surface. Keep the other portion covered. Spread 1/2 of the filling over rectangle, leaving a 1-inch border. Carefully roll up, starting from a long edge.
5. Place roll, seam-side down, on a large parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Bring ends of roll together to form a ring. Moisten ends with water; pinch together to seal. Repeat with remaining dough and filling. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk, 45 minutes to 1 hour.
6. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Uncover dough rings.
7. Bake in the preheated oven until cakes are a deep golden brown, about 25 minutes. Cool cakes completely on wire racks, about 1 1/2 hours.
8. Stir confectioners' sugar, melted butter, and vanilla extract together to make the glaze. Stir in 3 tablespoons milk. Add additional milk, 1 teaspoon at a time, until pourable but still opaque. Pour evenly over cakes. Sprinkle with sparkling sugars, alternating colors to form bands.