

Christmas Cheese Buns

- 18 sourdough rolls (from Fresh Market)
- 2 lbs. sharp cheddar cheese, grated
- (1) 8 oz. can of tomato sauce
- 1 small Vidalia onion, minced
- 1 medium or large green bell pepper, minced
- (2) 3.8 oz. cans sliced black olives drained well
- 1 cube butter, melted

Just when you thought cheese couldn't taste any better — it suddenly does! Enhanced with butter, this recipe has been a family treasure for 4 generations.

- Prepare the rolls as you would a hollowed-out pumpkin with a small “lid”. Hollow the roll without tearing the floor or walls (otherwise cheese will ooze out). I use the removed sourdough to make garlic-cayenne croutons for topping soups or salads, and these croutons are a must for the Christmas Cream of Chicken Soup (see recipe).
- Combine grated cheese in a large bowl with all the other ingredients. Refrigerate the cheese mixture overnight to develop the flavors (either before stuffing the cheese mixture into the buns or after they're stuffed).
- Fill the rolls by firmly packing the cheese mixture into them while being careful to not tear the floor or walls of the roll, otherwise cheese mixture will melt through and escape. I will even slightly mound up the cheese mixture

to be sure the rolls are full because once the cheese melts it shrinks in volume. Replace the lids and refrigerate.

- Bake the rolls on a cookie sheet in a pre-heated 350° oven. They take about 25 minutes if they come straight from the refrigerator, but 18 – 20 minutes if you allow them to come to room temp first. If you froze the cheese buns, allow them to thaw before baking.
- Before removing them from the oven, check inside the rolls to be sure that the cheese is totally melted. Serve immediately. Try to bake only what you will need. They are still very tasty re-heated the next day, but not quite as perfect!
- We recently served these at one of our Culinary Workshops. With the very first bite, there were groans of delight around the table! Nobody could speak; there was only crunching and savoring the recipe that has been treasured by four generations in my family!