



West Virginia Pepperoni Rolls

(From Cook's Country / America's Test Kitchen)

4 (7- to 8-ounce) sticks of pepperoni, 8 inches long
1-½ cups water
1 cup whole milk
2 Tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons sugar
6-2/3 cups (33-1/3 ounces) plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour, plus extra as needed
1 tablespoon instant or rapid-rise yeast
2 teaspoons salt
1 large egg, beaten with 1 tablespoon water
4 teaspoons sesame seeds

1. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.

Cut pepperoni sticks in half crosswise, then cut each half in half lengthwise. Slice each quarter lengthwise into four 4-inch-long wedges. (You should have 64 wedges.)

Place pepperoni in a large bowl and microwave until fat is rendered, about 3 minutes. Using tongs, transfer pepperoni to paper towel-lined plate; reserve 3 tablespoons pepperoni oil. Do not wash bowl.

2. Combine water, milk, and sugar in a 4-cup liquid measuring cup. Microwave until temperature registers 110 degrees, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in reserved pepperoni oil.

3. Using a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook, mix 6-2/3 cups flour, yeast and salt on low speed until combined, about 30 seconds. With mixer running, slowly add water mixture until incorporated. Increase speed to medium and mix until dough is shiny and smooth and pulls away from sides of bowl, about 8 minutes. (If dough appears wet, add additional flour 1 tablespoon at a time.)

Turn out dough onto lightly floured counter and knead briefly to form a cohesive ball. Transfer dough to reserved bowl and turn to coat with residual pepperoni oil in bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size, 50 to 60 minutes.

4. Transfer dough to a lightly floured counter and divide into 16 equal (3 ½-ounce) pieces. Working with 1 piece at a time (keep remaining pieces covered with plastic), form dough into balls, cover with plastic, and let rest 5 minutes.

5. Toss pepperoni wedges with remaining 1 tablespoon flour to coat. Working with 1 dough ball at a time, use hands to press ball into a 6-by 4-inch rectangle. Starting along short side of rectangle, lay 4 pieces of pepperoni side by side, ½ inch apart, and roll into a tight cylinder, pinching seam to seal. Leave ends of rolls open.

Arrange rolls seam side down on prepared baking sheet, end to end, ½ inch apart, and 4 per row. Cover with plastic and let rise until doubled in size, 50 to 60 minutes.

Adjust oven rack to middle position and preheat oven to 375 degrees.

6. Brush rolls with egg mixture and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Bake in preheated oven until golden brown, 24 to 30 minutes.

Transfer baking sheet to a wire rack and let cool at least 15 minutes. Serve.

(Baked and cooled rolls can be wrapped in plastic, placed in a zipper-lock bag, and frozen for up to 1 month. To reheat, adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Remove plastic and wrap each roll in foil. Bake directly on oven rack until heated through, 35 to 45 minutes.)