Swedish St. Lucia Buns

**Ingredients**

- 1 cup milk
- ¾ cup white sugar
- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp crumbled saffron threads
- 2 (.25 oz) packages active dry yeast
- ¾ cup warm water (110 to 115 degrees F/43 to 46 degrees C)
- 6 ½ cups all-purpose flour, divided
- 2 eggs
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 Tbsp water
- 1 Tbsp raisins, or as needed

**Instructions**

1. Heat milk in a small saucepan over medium heat until bubbles form around the edge of the pan, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Add sugar, butter, salt, and saffron, stirring until butter is melted. Let cool to lukewarm temperature, about 2 minutes.
2. Sprinkle yeast over warm water in large bowl, stirring until dissolved. Stir in milk mixture and 3 ½ cups flour until smooth, about 2 minutes. Stir in eggs. Add remaining flour gradually, mixing in the last by hand until dough leaves the sides of the bowl and is very soft.
3. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Cover with a bowl and let rest of 10 minutes.
4. Knead dough with additional flour as needed, about 5 minutes. Place dough in a lightly greased large bowl; flip dough to grease both sides. Cover with a towel and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size, 60 to 90 minutes.
5. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease a baking sheet.
6. Punch down dough. Take golf ball-sized bits of dough and roll out into snakes. Roll each end in opposite directions to create ‘S’ forms. Place buns on the prepared baking sheets.
7. Combine egg yolk and water in a bowl with a whisk. Brush over buns.
8. Bake for 6 minutes. Remove from oven, leave oven on. Quickly place 1 raisin in the center of each ‘S’ curve.
9. Return to the oven and continue to bake until golden and cooked through, about 6 more minutes. Let cool on a wire rack before serving.

Recipe offered by Jan Pedden