**Pan de Muerto, "Bread of the Dead"**

In celebration of Mexico's Day of the Dead, this bread is often shaped into skulls or round loaves with strips of dough rolled out and attached to resemble bones.

Ingredients:

* 1/2 cup butter
* 1/2 cup milk
* 1/2 cup water
* 5 to 5-1/2 cups flour
* 2 packages dry yeast
* 1 teaspoon salt
* 1 tablespoon whole anise seed
* 1/2 cup sugar
* 4 eggs

In a saucepan over medium flame, heat the butter, milk and water until very warm but not boiling.

Meanwhile, measure out 1-1/2 cups flour and set the rest aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine the 1-1/2 cups flour, yeast, salt, anise seed and sugar. Beat in the warm liquid until well combined. Add the eggs and beat in another 1 cup of flour. Continue adding more flour until dough is soft but not sticky. Knead on lightly floured board for ten minutes until smooth and elastic.

Lightly grease a bowl and place dough in it, cover with plastic wrap and let rise in warm place until doubled in bulk, about 1-1/2 hours. Punch the dough down and shape into loaves resembling skulls, skeletons or round loaves with "bones" placed ornamentally around the top. Let these loaves rise for 1 hour.

Bake in a preheated 350 F degree oven for 40 minutes. Remove from oven and paint on glaze.

**Glaze**

* 1/2 cup sugar
* 1/3 cup fresh orange juice
* 2 tablespoons grated orange zest

Bring to a boil for 2 minutes, then apply to bread with a pastry brush.

If desired, sprinkle on colored sugar while glaze is still damp.