

JOY OF BAKING

The Newsletter

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"Dedicated to Reviving the Lost Art of Baking"

This newsletter is the result of feedback received during the six months

WWW.JOYOFBAKING.COM has been online. I have found that people are interested not only in tasting a good product but also how it is accomplished. Baking involves not only a good workable recipe, but also using top quality ingredients and knowing the procedures to follow to achieve success. This has been my goal for my website and now this newsletter.

The huge demand on my website for scone recipes prompted me to devote my first newsletter to this topic. In creating these recipes I have tried to use different flavor combinations in making both sweet and savory scones. Hopefully, you will enjoy, as I have, both baking and eating these scones.
Bon Appetit.

Stephanie



"There are few hours in life more agreeable than the hour dedicated to the ceremony known as afternoon tea"

- Henry James

ALL ABOUT SCONES

Scones, quintessentially English. The origin of the word scone is debatable.

Some say it comes from the Dutch word *schoonbrot* (beautiful bread) and others say it comes from Stone (Scone) of Destiny, where the Kings of Scotland were crowned. Scone was the name given for a Scottish bread that was made with oats and cooked either on a griddle or open fire. They were originally triangular-shaped. Golden brown in color with a soft inside, they were cut in half and served warm with butter and jam or lemon curd.

Times have changed. They are no longer just a biscuit that the English serve with afternoon tea. Scones can be found in coffeeshops and bakeries all over the world.

Generally made using milk, scones now contain cream, buttermilk, sour cream, or yogurt depending on the richness and sweetness you desire. Sultanas (raisins), dried or fresh fruit, chocolate, herbs, cheese and vegetables are samples of what you now see added to scones. Different flours (both white and whole wheat), cornmeal and oatmeal can be used. The combinations are endless.

As a child visiting England I remember going to a hotel restaurant and having scones with Devonshire cream (clotted cream) and jam. It was a special occasion and we dressed up and went with my grandparents. We felt so grown up having our tea and scones. I couldn't believe scones and cream could taste so delicious, and I ate as many as I was allowed. The sweetness of the scones, combined with the thick cream and jam was delightful. Having scones was a special treat and it never occurred to me that you could make and enjoy these delicacies at home. Growing up in Canada, scones were nowhere to be seen or heard of. They quickly became a fond memory of my vacations in England.

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TIPS ON MAKING SCONES

Scones are not difficult or time consuming to make and with a little effort, you will be rewarded with a light flaky scone. The most important rule in making scones is to **HANDLE THE DOUGH AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE**. I do not recommend using an electric mixer since there is a tendency to overmix. Overworking the dough causes a heavy, dense and tough scone.

Scones follow the basic method of mixing your dry ingredients together, cutting in the butter, and then adding the liquid ingredients. The butter should be cold, but the other ingredients (including the liquid) should be at room temperature. Start by mixing the dry ingredients together in a large bowl, using either a wire whisk (this aerates the flour) or wooden spoon. The butter (only use butter as it enhances flavor, tenderness, and flakiness) must be cold and cut into 1/2 inch (1.25) cubes. Using a pastry blender, two knives, or your fingertips, cut the butter into the dry ingredients until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Just make sure you use a light touch and don't overmix. At this point add any fruit, nuts or chocolate you may be using. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and pour in your liquid, using a wooden spoon to combine. When the dough forms moist clumps, gather the dough into a ball, using your hands, and transfer to a lightly floured surface. The dough will be sticky. Use as little flour as possible when rolling out the dough, as too much flour produces a tough scone.

Knead very lightly until the dough forms a ball and is smooth (about 10 seconds). Pat the dough into a 7 inch (17.5 cm) circle. Using a sharp knife, cut the circle into 8 triangles. Alternatively, use a cookie cutter dipped in flour (this prevents the dough from sticking to the cutter) to cut out scones. Gently knead together any leftover scraps, and cut out remaining scones. With a pastry brush, brush off any excess flour on the scones and place on prepared baking sheet.

When baking scones I use a 12 x 16 inch (30 x 40 cm) baking pan lined with parchment paper. Parchment paper makes clean up easier and also prevents the scones from overbrowning on the bottom. Instead of parchment paper, you can lightly spray your pan with a non-stick vegetable oil.

The prepared scones are now ready for glazing. Glazing means brushing the tops of the scones with egg mixed with milk, cream or water. This not only gives the scones a shiny, crisp and golden top, but also removes any excess flour from the scones. A hot oven causes the scones to rise quickly, thus producing a light flaky scone.

If you desire scones with crusty tops and bottoms, but soft sides, place the scones close together on your baking sheet. This produces straight scones as they give each other support as they rise. Scones that are placed a few inches apart have crusty tops and sides but do have a tendency to topple over (so don't worry if this happens). After baking, remove the scones from the oven and cool on a wire rack. If soft scones are desired, then leave the scones on the baking sheet and lightly cover with a clean dish towel.

Scones are best eaten the same day as baked but they can be frozen. Freeze in a sealed plastic bag for up to two months. Reheat in the microwave oven or in a 350 °F (180 °C) oven.

Before you begin baking make sure you read over your recipe several times in order to get familiar with the procedures. Premeasure all your ingredients before you begin as this prevents you from leaving out an ingredient. Preheat your oven to the desired temperature and have your baking pan prepared. Combine your glaze ingredients and set aside.

When making scones I use bleached all-purpose white flour (T55). You can substitute unbleached all-purpose white flour for the bleached flour. Whole wheat flour makes a heavier, more dense scone. To get the best results only substitute whole wheat flour for one-quarter of the white flour amount in the scone recipes.

There is no substitute for the flavor of butter. Butter makes scones light and flaky. I prefer to use unsalted butter and then add my own salt in the recipe. Make sure the butter is cold and cut into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) pieces. You can use margarine or shortening but you will taste the difference.

Some recipes call for heavy whipping cream. This refers to the cream's butterfat content which is between 35% and 40% for heavy whipping cream. Half and half cream contains half cream and half milk and is about 10% butterfat. Buttermilk is called for in some recipes and it can be simply made by combining one cup (250 ml) milk with 1 tablespoon (12 grams) lemon juice or cider vinegar. Let this mixture sit for five minutes before using.



CREAM SCONES

A rich, cakelike scone that is perfect anytime. This is a great basic recipe in which dried fruits, zest, chocolate chips, or poppyseeds can also be added. Feel free to experiment with different flavors and extracts.

2 cups (280 grams) all-purpose flour
1/3 cup (66 grams) granulated sugar
2 teaspoons (8 grams) baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, chilled and cut into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) pieces
1 large egg, beaten
1 teaspoon (4 grams) pure vanilla extract
1/2 cup (125 ml) heavy whipping cream

Glaze:

1 large egg, beaten
1 tablespoon (14 grams) heavy cream

Preheat oven to 375 °F (190 °C) with rack in center of oven. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or lightly spray with a non-stick vegetable oil. To make the glaze, mix together the beaten egg with the cream. Set aside.

In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Cut the butter into small pieces and blend into the flour mixture with a pastry blender, two knives, or fingertips. This mixture should look like coarse crumbs. In a small measuring cup, combine the whipping cream, beaten egg and vanilla. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and add the liquid, stirring with a wooden spoon until the batter forms moist clumps. The batter will be sticky. Do not overmix.

Gather dough together with your hands and transfer to a lightly floured surface. Gently knead for about 10 seconds until dough forms a ball and is smooth. Pat dough

into a 7 inch (17.5 cm) circle that is about 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick. Using a sharp knife, cut circle into 8 triangular sections. With a pastry brush, brush off excess flour from scones, and place scones on prepared baking sheet. Brush the tops of scones with the glaze and sprinkle lightly with sugar (if desired).

Bake for approximately 15 minutes, until lightly browned, or a toothpick inserted in the middle of the scone comes out clean. Remove from oven. Transfer to a wire rack to cool. Makes 8 scones.

Variation: (Add these ingredients after you have cut-in the butter to the dry ingredients and just before adding the liquid ingredients.)

- * Add 1/3 cup (42 grams) dried red tart cherries, blueberries, or 1/3 cup (66 grams) chocolate chips.
- * Add 1/3 cup (42 grams) dried cranberries plus 1 tablespoon (6 grams) grated orange zest.
- * Add 1 tablespoon (8 grams) poppy seeds and 1 teaspoon (4 grams) pure almond extract (use instead of vanilla extract). Sprinkle tops of scones with sliced almonds before baking.
- * Add 1 tablespoon (6 grams) grated lemon zest and 1 tablespoon (8 grams) poppy seeds.

ENGLISH SCONE

This is a classic scone that the English serve at afternoon tea with cream, jam, or lemon curd. Raisins (Sultanas) (1/4 cup or 30 grams) and grated lemon or orange zest (1 tablespoon or 6 grams) can be added.



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2 cups (280 grams) all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons (8 grams) baking powder
2 tablespoons (28 grams) granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon (3 grams) salt
1/3 cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, chilled and cut into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) pieces
1/2 cup (125 ml) milk
1 large egg, beaten

Glaze:

1 large egg, beaten
1 tablespoon (14 grams) milk

Preheat oven to 400 °F (205 °C) and place rack in center of oven. Line a baking pan with parchment paper or lightly spray with a non-stick vegetable oil. For the glaze, mix together the beaten egg with the milk and set aside.

In a large bowl whisk together flour, baking powder, sugar and salt. In a measuring cup combine the milk with the beaten egg. With a pastry blender, two knives, or your fingertips, rub the butter into the flour mixture until it resembles coarse crumbs. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and add the liquid. Mix together with a wooden spoon, making sure you do not overwork the dough. Just mix until dough forms moist clumps.

Gather dough together and transfer to a lightly floured surface. Gently knead dough until it forms a ball (10 seconds). Roll out dough until it is 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick. With a floured 2 1/2 inch (6 cm) cutter, cut out rounds and place on prepared baking pan. Knead together scraps and cut out remaining scones. Brush scones with glaze and bake for 15 minutes or until lightly brown on top. Remove from oven and cool on wire rack. Makes 8 scones.

TIP: A large egg weighs 2 ounces (56.7 grams) in the shell, or 1.75 ounces (50 grams) without the shell.

ESPRESSO CHOCOLATE SCONES

Loaded with chocolate chips and dried cherries, they look wonderful drizzled with melted white chocolate.

1 2/3 cups (234 grams) all-purpose flour
1/3 cup (28 grams) cocoa powder
1/3 cup (66 grams) granulated sugar
2 teaspoons (8 grams) baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon (4 grams) instant espresso powder
1/3 cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, chilled and cut into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) pieces
1 large egg, beaten
1 teaspoon (4 grams) pure vanilla extract
1/2 cup (125 ml) heavy whipping cream
1/3 cup (66 grams) chocolate chips
1/3 cup (42 grams) dried cherries

Glaze:

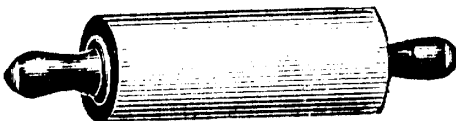
1 large egg, beaten
1 tablespoon (14 grams) heavy cream

Preheat oven to 400 °F (205 °C) with rack placed in center of oven. Line a baking pan with parchment paper or spray with a non-stick vegetable oil. In a small bowl combine beaten egg with cream for glaze. Set aside.

In a large bowl whisk together the flour, cocoa powder, sugar, baking powder, salt and espresso powder. Cut the butter in small pieces and blend into the flour mixture with a pastry blender, two knives, or fingertips. The mixture should resemble coarse crumbs. Add chocolate chips and dried cherries to dry ingredients. In a small measuring cup, combine the whipping cream, beaten egg and vanilla extract. Using a wooden spoon, add liquid to dry ingredients, mixing until dough

forms moist clumps. Gather up dough with hands and transfer to a lightly floured surface. Gently knead until dough forms a ball and is smooth (10 seconds). Pat the dough into a 7 inch (17.5 cm) circle and cut into 8 triangles using a sharp knife. Place the scones on the prepared baking pan and brush tops of scones with glaze. Bake for approximately 15 minutes (the outside of the scone will be firm and the middle soft). Remove from oven and transfer to wire rack to cool. Makes 8 scones.

TIP: TO DRIZZLE WITH MELTED WHITE CHOCOLATE: In the top of a double boiler over simmering water, melt 3 ounces (85 grams) of chopped white chocolate with 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vegetable shortening. Transfer melted chocolate to a parchment cone or plastic bag with one end cut and drizzle over cooled scones.



CINNAMON SCONES

Similar to cinnamon buns (rolls) but easier to make as there is no yeast. Drizzle the baked scones with a powdered sugared glaze.

English Scone Dough (page 3)

Cinnamon Mixture:

1/3 cup (72 grams) light brown sugar
1/4 cup (56 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
1 teaspoon (2 grams) cinnamon

Preheat oven to 400 °F (205 °C) and place rack in center of oven. Grease a 9 inch (23 cm) cake pan with butter or spray with a non-stick vegetable oil. Set aside.

On a lightly floured surface roll out English Scone dough using a floured rolling pin or your hands. Spread into a 16 by 10 inch (40 by 25 cm) rectangle. Let dough rest for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, combine cinnamon mixture ingredients in a small bowl. With a metal spatula or knife evenly spread the cinnamon mixture over the dough. Starting at the short side roll up the dough into a cylinder, brushing off excess flour as you roll. With a sharp knife cut cylinder in half, and then in half again (you will have 4 equal pieces). Cut each quarter into 3 equal pieces (12 pieces altogether). Place slices, cut side up, in the cake pan, evenly spaced. Gently brush tops of scones with 1 tablespoon (14 grams) milk or cream. Bake in preheated oven for 17 to 19 minutes, or until lightly browned, or toothpick inserted in center of scone comes out clean. Remove from oven and cool on wire rack for 5 minutes. Invert onto a wire rack, and then reinvert onto another wire rack (scones are right side up).

Combine 1/2 cup (58 grams) powdered (confectioners or icing) sugar, 1/2 teaspoon light corn syrup, 1/8 teaspoon vanilla extract and enough half-and-half cream [1-2 tablespoons (14-28 grams)] to make the glaze thin enough to drizzle over cinnamon scones.

Makes 12 scones

TIP: To warm eggs up quickly to room temperature, place in a bowl of warm water for about five minutes.
TIP: To warm liquids to room temperature quickly, microwave for about 10 seconds.



CRANBERRY-ORANGE WHOLE WHEAT SCONES

These scones are bursting with cranberries and orange zest. Fresh, frozen, or dried cranberries or raspberries can be used.

1 1/3 cups (188 grams) all-purpose white flour
2/3 cups (90 grams) whole wheat flour
1/4 cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
1 1/4 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, chilled and cut into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) pieces
3/4 cup (190 ml) buttermilk, room temperature
1/3 cup (42 grams) dried cranberries
1 tablespoon (6 grams) grated orange zest

For Glaze:

1 large egg, beaten
1 tablespoon (14 grams) cream

Preheat oven to 400 °F (205 °C) and place rack in center of oven. Line a baking pan with parchment paper or lightly spray with a non-stick vegetable oil. In a small bowl combine the beaten egg with cream for glaze. Set aside.

In a large bowl combine the flours, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Cut butter into 1/2 inch pieces (1.25 cm) and with a pastry blender, two knives, or your fingertips rub the butter into the flour mixture until it resembles coarse crumbs. Add the cranberries and gently toss to coat. In a measuring cup combine the buttermilk with the orange zest. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and add the liquid. Gently stir with a wooden spoon until moist clumps form. The dough will be sticky.

Gather dough up with hands and transfer to a lightly floured surface. Gently knead dough until it forms a ball and is smooth. Pat dough into a 7 inch (17.5 cm) circle and cut into 8 triangles using a sharp knife. Place scones on prepared baking pan and brush with glaze.

Bake in preheated oven for 15 minutes or until lightly browned (toothpick inserted in center of scone comes out clean). Remove from oven and cool on wire rack. Makes 8 scones

TIP: If using fresh cranberries or unsweetened frozen raspberries cut in half and toss with 1 tablespoon (14 grams) of sugar. Let stand for 5 minutes before using.

TIP: To make your own buttermilk combine 1 cup (250 ml) milk with 1 tablespoon (28 grams) lemon juice or cider vinegar. Let mixture stand for 5 minutes before using.

GINGERBREAD SCONES

If you like gingerbread cookies, then these will become a favorite. These are great drizzled with a powdered sugar glaze.

1 3/4 cups (245 grams) all-purpose flour
1/4 cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
3/4 cup (62 grams) old fashioned or quick cooking oatmeal (Quaker Oats)
1 teaspoon (2 grams) ginger
1 teaspoon (2 grams) cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon cloves
2 teaspoons (8 grams) baking powder
1/2 teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, chilled and cut into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) cubes
1/2 cup (125 ml) buttermilk
2 tablespoons (44 grams) molasses
1/3 cup (42 grams) dried cherries or cranberries
1/4 cup (30 grams) currants

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Glaze

1 large egg, beaten
1 tablespoon (14 grams) cream

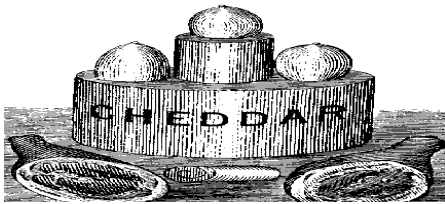
Preheat oven to 400 °F (205 °C) and place rack in center of oven. Line a baking pan with parchment paper or lightly spray with a non-stick vegetable oil. In a small bowl make glaze by combining beaten egg with cream. Set aside.

In a large bowl combine flour, sugar, oatmeal, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, salt, baking powder and baking soda. Cut the butter into small pieces and with a pastry blender, two knives, or your fingertips rub the butter into the flour mixture until it resembles coarse oatmeal. Add dried cherries and currants. In a measuring cup combine buttermilk and molasses. Add liquid to dry ingredients and stir, with a wooden spoon, until it forms moist clumps. Gather dough together and transfer to a lightly floured surface. Gently knead dough until it forms a ball. Shape into a 7 inch (17.5 cm) circle and, using a sharp knife, cut into 8 triangles. Place on prepared baking pan and brush with glaze.

Bake in oven for approximately 14 minutes or until firm and golden brown (toothpick inserted in center of scone comes out clean). Remove from oven and cool on wire rack.

To make a glaze for scones combine 1/2 cup (58 grams) powdered (icing or confectioners) sugar, 1/2 teaspoon light corn syrup, 1/8 teaspoon pure vanilla extract, and 1-2 tablespoons (14-28 grams) cream. Drizzle over scones and serve. Makes 8 scones.

TIP: To keep spices fresh, store in a cool, dark, dry space and replace every year.



CHEESE, BACON & CHIVE SCONES

These are excellent with soups or stews. Sharp Cheddar or Edam Cheese can be used.

2 cups (280 grams) all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon (14 grams) granulated sugar
2 teaspoon (8 grams) baking powder
1/2 teaspoon (3 grams) salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
Pinch of cayenne pepper (optional)
1/3 cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, chilled and cut into 12 pieces
3/4 cup (188 ml) milk, room temperature
1 cup (54 grams) grated sharp cheddar cheese or edam cheese
4 slices [1/3 cup (26 grams)] cooked bacon, cooled and chopped into small pieces
1 tablespoon (2 grams) finely chopped chives (green onions)

Glaze:

1 large egg, beaten
1 tablespoon (14 grams) milk

Preheat oven to 400 °F (205 °C) and place rack in center of oven. Line a baking pan with parchment paper or lightly spray with a non-stick vegetable oil. Make glaze by combining beaten egg with milk. Set aside.

In a large bowl whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and pepper. Cut butter into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) cubes and rub butter into flour mixture using a pastry blender, two knives, or your fingertips, until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add the grated cheese, chopped cooked bacon and chives to the dry ingredients. Make a well in the cen-

ter of the dry ingredients, add the milk, and stir gently with a wooden spoon, until mixture just forms a ball. Do not overmix.

Place the dough on a lightly floured surface and knead (10 seconds) until smooth. Roll or pat dough 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick and using a floured 2 1/2 inch (6 cm) cutter, cut out rounds. Place on the prepared baking pan and brush with glaze. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of grated cheddar cheese on the top of each scone (if desired). Bake in preheated oven for 15 minutes or until lightly browned on top and cheese has melted (toothpick inserted in center of scone comes out clean). Cool on wire rack.

Makes 8 scones.

TEX-MEX SCONES



This recipe comes from a little book called *Simply Scones* by Leslie Weiner and Barbara Albright. This scone contains cornmeal, cheese, chilies and spices that is great topped with Taco Spread (page 7) and served with a bowl of chili.

1 1/2 cups (210 grams) all-purpose flour
1/2 cup (84 grams) yellow cornmeal
1 tablespoon (14 grams) granulated sugar
2 teaspoons (8 grams) baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon chili powder
1/8 teaspoon ground cumin
1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper (optional)
1/3 cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, chilled and cut into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) pieces
1 large egg
3 tablespoons (42 grams) milk
3 tablespoons (42 grams) undrained chopped, canned green chilies
1/2 cup (27 grams) grated sharp Cheddar Cheese

Glaze:

1 large egg, beaten
1 tablespoon (14 grams) milk

Preheat oven to 375 °F (190 °C) and place rack in center of oven. Line a baking pan with parchment paper or spray with a non-stick vegetable oil. In a small bowl combine the beaten egg with milk for glaze. Set aside.

In a large bowl whisk together the flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder, salt, chili powder, cumin and pepper. Cut the butter into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) cubes and rub into flour mixture using a pastry blender, two knives, or fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add the grated cheese to the dry ingredients. In a small bowl stir together the egg, milk and chilies. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and add the egg mixture, stirring with a wooden spoon. With lightly floured hands, gather up the dough and knead gently to bring dough together.

Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface and pat dough into a 8 inch (20 cm) circle. Cut circle into 8 triangles using a sharp knife, and transfer to prepared baking pan. Brush tops and sides of scones with the glaze. Bake on the middle rack of oven for 18 minutes or until the top is lightly browned and a toothpick inserted into the center of the scone comes out clean. Cool scones on a wire rack. Makes 8 scones.

TIP: Use double-acting baking powder in your scone recipes. Baking powder should be stored in a cool dry place and replaced every six months. To test to see if your baking powder is still good, combine 1/2 cup (125 ml) hot water with 1 teaspoon (4 grams) baking powder. This mixture should bubble.

PESTO, FETA CHEESE, AND SUN-DRIED TOMATO SCONES

Here I have taken the basic scone recipe and filled it with pesto, sun-dried tomatoes, and feta cheese. Great with soups. You can use purchased pesto or make your own.

2 cups (280 grams) all-purpose flour
 1 tablespoon (14 grams) granulated sugar
 2 teaspoons (8 grams) baking powder
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/3 cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, cut into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) cubes
 3/4 cup (188 ml) milk, room temperature
 3 tablespoons (36 grams) Pesto (purchased or homemade)
 1/3 cup (48 grams) Feta Cheese, cut into small cubes
 1 1/2 tablespoons (10 grams) oil packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained and chopped

Glaze:

1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
 2 teaspoons (8 grams) freshly grated parmesan cheese

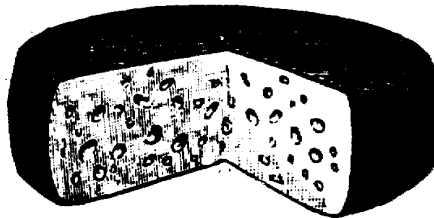
Preheat oven to 400 °F (205 °C) and place rack in center of oven. Butter or lightly spray a 9 inch (23 cm) cake pan with a non-stick vegetable oil. Set aside.

In a large bowl whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt until combined. Cut butter into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) cubes and rub butter into flour mixture using a pastry blender, two knives, or your fingertips until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients, add the milk, and stir gently with a wooden spoon until mixture forms moist clumps. Do not overmix.

Gather dough together with hands and place on a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth (10 seconds). Roll dough with a floured rolling pin into a 16x 10 inch (40x25 cm) rectangle. With a knife or metal spatula evenly spread pesto over dough. Sprinkle with feta cheese and sun-dried tomatoes. Starting at the short end roll dough into a cylinder, brushing off any excess flour as you roll. With a sharp knife, cut dough in half, and then in half again (you will have 4 pieces). Cut each quarter into 3 equal pieces (12 pieces altogether) and place in the prepared pan, cut-side up. Brush lightly with olive oil and sprinkle with freshly grated parmesan cheese. Bake in preheated oven for 15 minutes or until lightly browned on top (toothpick inserted in center of scone comes out clean). Cool on wire rack. Makes 12 scones.

TIP: TO MAKE YOUR OWN PESTO:

In a food processor combine 1 clove garlic, 1/4 cup (32 grams) pine nuts, and 2 cups (472 ml) fresh basil leaves. Process for 10 seconds. With motor running add 3/4 cup (190 ml) extra virgin olive oil and 1/2 cup (60 grams) freshly grated parmesan cheese. Add salt to taste. Makes approximately one cup (250 ml) Pesto.



TIP: When using Parmesan cheese buy the best that you can (Parmigiano Reggiano). When grating, first remove the outer rind and grate using a fine hand grater. You can also grate the cheese using a food processor fitted with a metal blade.



SPREADS FOR SCONES

Your scone tea tray can be enhanced with not only a variety of fruit preserves or jams, but also Devonshire Cream and/or Lemon Curd.

TACO SPREAD

This is a great spread to have on Tex-Mex or Plain Scones. If you want the spread to be spicier add more chili powder and/or hot taco sauce.

4 ounces (112 grams) cream cheese, softened
 2 tablespoons (28 grams) undrained chopped, canned green chilies
 3 tablespoons (42 grams) medium taco sauce (salsa)
 1/8 teaspoon granulated sugar
 1/4 teaspoon chili powder
 1/4 teaspoon cumin

In a food processor, fitted with a metal blade, place the cream cheese, chilies, taco sauce, sugar, chili powder and cumin. Process for 20 seconds or until smooth. Scrape down the sides of bowl as needed. Refrigerate if not serving immediately. Makes 3/4 cup.

TIP: Make sure you use a good quality taco sauce or else make your own.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

Devonshire or Clotted Cream is a rich, thick cream that is produced by skimming the thick cream that forms on the top of unpasteurized whole milk when heated. It is found primarily in England, but Double Devon Cream (made in England) can be found in a lot of specialty food stores.

½ cup (110 grams) mascarpone* (or cream cheese)
½ cup (125 ml) heavy whipping cream
2 tablespoons (12 grams) confectioners (powdered or icing) sugar

Place mixing bowl and beaters in the freezer for 10 minutes. Combine all the ingredients in mixing bowl and beat on medium-high speed until stiff peaks form. Serve immediately or refrigerate for a few hours. This cream does not hold very well so if refrigerating, rewhip cream before serving. Makes one cup.

*Mascarpone is a thick, sweet Italian cream cheese that has the texture of sour cream. It can be found in specialty food stores.

If fruit-flavored Cream is desired, add 3-4 tablespoons (36-48 grams) strawberry or raspberry puree (or 2-3 tablespoons strawberry preserves). If using a puree, whip with other ingredients. If using preserves, add to the cream once it is whipped.

LEMON CURD



Lemon Curd is a thick lemon-flavored cream that contains eggs, butter, sugar, lemon juice and lemon zest. It is cooked and when cooled, is used as a spread for scones. If you have any leftover lemon curd, it can be used to fill prebaked tart shells.

3 large eggs
1/3 cup (80 ml) fresh lemon juice (approximately 3 lemons)
1 tablespoon (6 grams) finely grated lemon zest
3/4 cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
1/3 cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, cut into small chunks

In the top of a double boiler over medium heat combine the eggs, sugar, lemon juice and zest. With a wire whisk, whisk the mixture constantly until it thickens and starts to boil. Remove from heat and pour into a heatproof bowl. Cut the butter into small pieces and whisk into mixture until the butter is melted. Lightly sprinkle sugar over the top of the lemon curd (this prevents a skin from forming) and cover with plastic wrap. (The lemon curd will thicken as it cools.) The lemon curd will keep for several days refrigerated. Makes one cup.

TIP: If you find that the eggs have curdled a bit when cooking and the mixture is not smooth, simply strain the mixture before adding the butter. It is important that you whisk the egg mixture constantly when cooking. This will prevent the eggs from curdling.

Lemons at room temperature have more juice when squeezing. After squeezing, strain the juice to remove all the pulp. When grating lemons for zest, make sure you only grate the peel and not the white part. When lemons are cold they are much easier to grate. Grate lemons just before using as the zest will lose moisture if it sits too long.

Resources:

- Bloom, Carole. The International Dictionary of Desserts, Pastries, and Confections. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1995.
- Weiner, Leslie & Albright, Barbara. Simply Scones. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988.

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