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BLUEBERRY SCONES

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Makes 8. Published July 1, 2007.

It is important to work the dough as little as possible—work quickly and knead and fold the dough only the number of times called for. The butter should be frozen solid before grating. In hot or humid environments, chill the flour mixture and workbowls before use. While the recipe calls for 2 whole sticks of butter, only 10 tablespoons are actually used (see step 1). If fresh berries are unavailable, an equal amount of frozen berries (do not defrost) can be substituted. An equal amount of raspberries, blackberries, or strawberries can be used in place of the blueberries. Cut larger berries into 1/4- to 1/2-inch pieces before incorporating. Refrigerate or freeze leftover scones, wrapped in foil, in an airtight container. To serve, remove foil and place scones on a baking sheet in a 375-degree oven. Heat until warmed through and recrisped, 8 to 10 minutes if refrigerated, 16 to 20 minutes if frozen. See final step for information on making the scone dough in advance.

INGREDIENTS

- 16** tablespoons unsalted butter (2 sticks), frozen whole (see note above)
- 1 1/2** cups fresh blueberries (about 7 1/2 ounces), picked over (see note)
- 1/2** cup whole milk
- 1/2** cup sour cream
- 2** cups **unbleached all-purpose flour** (10 ounces), plus additional for work surface
- 1/2** cup sugar (3 1/2 ounces), plus 1 tablespoon for sprinkling
- 2** teaspoons **baking powder**
- 1/4** teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2** teaspoon **table salt**
- 1** teaspoon grated lemon zest

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 425 degrees. Score and remove half of wrapper from each stick of frozen butter. Following photo at left, grate unwrapped ends on large holes of box grater (you should grate total of 8 tablespoons). Place grated butter in freezer until needed. Melt 2 tablespoons of remaining ungrated butter and set aside. Save remaining 6 tablespoons butter for another use. Place blueberries in freezer until needed.
2. Whisk together milk and sour cream in medium bowl; refrigerate until needed. Whisk flour, 1/2 cup sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and lemon zest in medium bowl. Add frozen butter to flour mixture and toss with fingers until thoroughly coated.
3. Add milk mixture to flour mixture; fold with spatula until just combined. With rubber spatula, transfer dough to liberally floured work surface. Dust surface of dough with flour; with floured hands, knead dough 6 to 8 times, until it just holds together in ragged ball, adding flour as needed to prevent sticking.
4. Roll dough into approximate 12-inch square. Following illustrations, fold dough into thirds like a business letter, using bench scraper or metal spatula to release dough if it sticks to countertop. Lift short ends of dough and fold into thirds again to form approximate 4-inch square. Transfer dough to plate lightly dusted with flour and chill in freezer 5 minutes.
5. Transfer dough to floured work surface and roll into approximate 12-inch square again. Sprinkle blueberries evenly over surface of dough, then press down so they are slightly embedded in dough. Using bench scraper or thin metal spatula, loosen dough from work surface. Roll dough, pressing to form tight log. Lay seam-side down and press log into 12 by 4-inch rectangle. Using sharp, floured knife, cut rectangle crosswise into 4 equal rectangles. Cut each rectangle diagonally to form 2 triangles and transfer to parchment-lined baking sheet.
6. Brush tops with melted butter and sprinkle with remaining tablespoon sugar. Bake until tops and bottoms are golden brown, 18 to 25 minutes. Transfer to wire rack and let cool 10 minutes before serving.

To Make Ahead:

After placing the scones on the baking sheet, either refrigerate them overnight or freeze. When ready to bake, for refrigerated scones, heat oven to 425 degrees and follow directions in step 6. For frozen scones, heat oven to 375 degrees, follow directions in

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TECHNIQUE

Grating Butter

Use the wrapper to hold the frozen butter while grating it on the large holes of a box grater. Grate 4 tablespoons from each stick of butter.

STEP-BY-STEP

Folding and Shaping the Scones

1. Fold dough into thirds (like a business letter).



2. Fold in ends of dough to form 4-inch square. Chill dough.



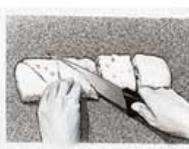
3. Reroll dough into 12-inch square. Press berries into dough.



4. Roll dough into jellyroll-like log to incorporate blueberries.



5. Lay log seam-side down and press into even 12 by 4-inch rectangle.



6. Cut dough into 8 triangular pieces.

RECIPE TESTING

Scone Confusion

Americans have embraced scones, but something has been lost in translation.



TRADITIONAL: The British original is lean, dry, and barely sweetened. Spoonfuls of jam and clotted cream are a must.



ARTIFICIALLY SWEET: This scone is shellacked with icing and has tiny flecks of artificial blueberries that add color but not flavor.



BIG BLOB: This scone is too large and amorphous to cook through, leaving the center doughy and unbaked.