



Mini Savory Scones with Bacon, Cheddar & Chives

Makes 16 mini scones

Scones don't have to be sweet -- savory scones are such a treat, and easier to make than you might think! Bacon, cheddar, and chives are a winning flavor combination. We love how evenly these baked in a mini-scone pan and can't resist enjoying one (or two) for an afternoon snack or breakfast.

Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, extra cold and grated
1/3 cup bacon crumbles, cooked and finely crumbled (about 6 slices)
1 cup cheddar cheese, grated
3 tablespoons chives, sliced
1 cup cream
2 large eggs (one egg for the scone dough, one egg whisked to brush on the tops of the scones)

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Measure all of the dry ingredients (flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cayenne) together in a medium bowl. Mix the dry ingredients well so that all elements are evenly distributed across the mixture. If mixing the scones by hand, a whisk or broad spatula will accomplish the job easily. If mixing with a food processor, pulse the dry ingredients a couple of times to mix the dry components.
3. Grate very cold butter with a coarse grater. If mixing scones by hand, the butter may be incorporated into the flour by (1) using a pastry blender, (2) employing two knives in a scissors motion, or (3) by hand with quick pressing motion. If mixing with a food processor, add the grated butter to the flour mixture in the work bowl. Pulse a few times until a coarse crumb results.
4. Add the bacon, cheddar cheese, and chives to the dry mixture, and stir until evenly distributed.
5. In a separate, small bowl, whisk the cream and egg together. From this point forward, we suggest mixing the scones by hand. Add the liquid all at once to the dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Mix using a folding motion with a large spatula. Do not over mix; the dough will be shaggy in character. Turn the dough and scraps out onto a lightly-floured working surface.

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6. Using a light touch, bring the dough and loose scraps together, and gently gather into a single mass. Push the dough around a bit, folding it over 5-6 times. That's it, no more. Too much kneading will activate the gluten in the flour and result in a tougher scone. Use just enough flour to keep things from sticking, but as little as possible.

7. Prepare the mini scone pan by brushing with shortening. Divide and evenly pat the dough into a mini scone pan. Brush the scones with an egg wash. Place the scone pan on the middle rack of the oven – if too low, the bottoms may darken; if too high, the tops may brown too quickly. Bake for 13-15 minutes.

8. Serve warm! These scones are best eaten when still slightly warm. Time the baking step to coincide with when you plan to eat.