

Bacon and Cheddar Cornmeal Johnnycakes

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

1 tbl. canola oil
4 thick slices applewood-smoked bacon, coarsely chopped
1 2/3 cups white cornmeal, preferably stone-ground
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp. sugar
1 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. fine salt
1 ½ cups whole milk
2 large eggs
1 cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
Room temperature butter, for serving
Maple syrup , for serving

Preheat the oven to 200° and have ready a rimmed baking sheet. In a large frying pan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the bacon and cook, stirring, until crisp and golden, about 6 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the bacon to paper towels to drain. Pour off and reserve the fat, leaving a film of fat in the pan.

In a large bowl, whisk together the cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. In a medium bowl, whisk together the milk, eggs, and 2 tbl. of the reserved bacon fat. Pour the milk mixture into the flour mixture and whisk until just combined. Fold in the bacon and cheese.

Reheat the frying pan over medium heat until hot. For each johnnycake, pour about ¼ cup of the batter into the pan and cook until bubbles form on the surface, about 1 ½ minutes. Flip and cook the other sides until golden, about 1 minute more. Transfer to the baking sheet and keep warm in the oven. Repeat until all the batter is used, greasing the pan with more reserved fat, as needed. Serve the johnnycakes piping hot, with plenty of butter and maple syrup.

Cook's Note: For a spicier version of these johnnycakes, stir 1 seeded and minced jalapeno chile into the batter.

Credit: Williams-Sonoma