

Buttermilk Biscuits with Country Ham and Preserves

Tree House for Grown-Ups | April 2008



PREP: 20 MINUTES BAKE: 10 MINUTES OVEN: 500°

- 5 CUPS SIFTED WHITE LILY FLOUR OR BLEACHED ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR (MEASURED AFTER SIFTING)
- 1 TBSP. PLUS 1/2 TSP. HOMEMADE BAKING POWDER
- 1 TBSP. KOSHER SALT
- 1/2 CUP (1/4 LB.) PACKED LARD, CHILLED
- 1 1/2 CUPS BUTTERMILK
- 3 TBSP. UNSALTED BUTTER, MELTED
UNSALTED BUTTER
- 8 OZ. GOOD-QUALITY COUNTRY HAM, THINLY SLICED
BLACKBERRY PRESERVES (ABOUT 1 CUP)

Combine the flour, *Homemade Baking Powder*, and salt in a mixing bowl; whisk well to blend thoroughly. Add lard and, working quickly, coat it in flour and rub between your fingertips until approximately half of the lard is finely blended and the other half remains in large pieces, about 1/2 inch in size. Pour in the buttermilk, and stir quickly just until the dough is blended and begins to mass.

Turn out the dough immediately onto a floured surface; with floured hands knead briskly 8 to 10 times until dough becomes cohesive.

Gently flatten the dough with your hands into a disk of even thickness; then, using a floured rolling pin, roll it out to a uniform thickness of 1/2 inch. With a dinner fork dipped in flour, pierce the dough completely through at 1/2-inch intervals. Lightly flour a 1 1/2- or 2-inch biscuit cutter and stamp out rounds without twisting the cutter in the dough. Cut the biscuits from the dough as close together as you can for maximum yield. Transfer them to a parchment-lined baking sheet, placing so biscuits just barely kiss. Don't reroll the scraps—bake them for a cook's treat.

Put the baking sheet immediately on center rack in a preheated 500° oven. Bake 10 to 12 minutes, checking after 6 minutes and turning pan if needed for even baking. When the biscuits are golden brown, remove from the oven and brush the tops with melted butter.

To serve, spread split cooled biscuits with additional unsalted butter. Fill with ham. Serve with blackberry preserves. Makes about 30 biscuits.

Per serving: 182 cal., 8 g total fat (4 g sat. fat), 16 mg chol., 355 mg sodium, 24 g carbo., 1 g dietary fiber, 4 g protein.

HOMEMADE BAKING POWDER: Sift together 1/4 cup cream of tartar and 2 tablespoons baking soda 3 times. Store in a clean, tight-sealing jar at room temperature, away from sunlight, for up to 6 weeks.