



ANSON MILLS

Raised Buckwheat Cakes (Buckwheat Blini)

Yield

About 3 dozen 4-inch cakes or about 4 dozen 3-inch cakes

Time

30 minutes to prepare (including a 20-minute rise for the sponge), followed by an overnight rise for the finished batter; 10 minutes to cook

Cooking Remarks

We wrote this recipe for a slow, cool overnight fermentation to give the batter maximum flavor impact and a jump on breakfast in the morning. If you want to cook and serve the cakes later in the day, make the batter in the morning and give it a good 6- to 8-hour rise in the refrigerator. You can make the cakes a few hours ahead and reheat them, uncovered, in a 200-degree oven for 20 minutes, but they will not be as fine.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a digital kitchen scale, two smallish saucepans, two medium mixing bowls, a whisk, a rubber spatula, a stand or hand mixer, a 1-ounce ladle or tablespoon measure, a heatproof basting brush, a well-seasoned 9- or 10-inch cast-iron skillet or similarly sized cast-iron griddle, and a metal spatula.

Ingredients

for the sponge

1 cup whole milk

½ teaspoon instant yeast

2.6 ounces (½ cup) Anson Mills Rustic Aromatic Buckwheat Flour

2.5 ounces (½ cup) Anson Mills French Mediterranean White Bread Flour or strong white wheat flour, such as King Arthur Organic Bread Flour or King Arthur European-Style Artisan Bread Flour

for the batter

8 ounces (16 tablespoons) unsalted European-style butter

3 large eggs, separated, whites reserved

2 tablespoons dark brown sugar

Scant 1 teaspoon fine sea salt

½ cup brown ale or dark beer, room temperature

5.2 ounces (1 cup) Anson Mills Rustic Aromatic Buckwheat Flour

Pinch cream of tartar

for the orange butter

3 ounces (6 tablespoons) European-style unsalted butter, room temperature
2 tablespoons orange blossom honey
1 teaspoon grated orange zest
1 teaspoon orange-flower water
1/8 teaspoon fine sea salt

Directions

- 1. Make the sponge:** Heat the milk in a small saucepan until bubbles appear around the edges and a plume of vapor rises from the top. Pour it into a medium bowl and let cool to body temperature. Sprinkle the yeast over the top. Wait 5 minutes, and then stir. Whisk the flours into the milk and beat until smooth. Cover with plastic wrap and let the sponge rest until puffy and fragrant, about 30 minutes.
- 2. Make the batter:** Melt the butter in a small saucepan over low heat. Part the foam with a spoon and skim off 2 tablespoons of clear butterfat; reserve. Heat the remaining butter over low heat without stirring until it turns nutty brown, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool to lukewarm.
- 3.** Whisk the egg yolks together in a medium bowl, add the brown butter, sugar, and salt, and whisk to combine. Whisk in the ale. Using a rubber spatula, scrape the sponge into the liquid ingredients and whisk until smooth. Whisk in the buckwheat flour. The batter should have the consistency of a thick, satiny cake batter. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.
- 4.** The following day, remove the batter from the refrigerator (it should be pitted with small bubbles and issue a pleasantly fermented aroma) and allow it to come to room temperature. Remove the reserved egg whites from the refrigerator as well and allow them to come to room temperature.
- 5. Make the orange butter:** Combine all the ingredients in a small bowl and mix with a rubber spatula until evenly combined.
- 6.** Set a well-seasoned 9- or 10-inch cast-iron skillet or similarly sized cast-iron griddle over medium-low heat and let it heat for about 10 minutes. The skillet is hot enough when droplets of water flicked onto its surface sizzle on contact. Melt the 2 tablespoons reserved butterfat.
- 7.** To finish the batter, turn the egg whites into the clean bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment or into a clean mixing bowl. Beat the egg whites on low speed until foamy, then add the cream of tartar. Increase the speed to medium-high and beat until they form soft peaks but are not styrofoam-like, about 60 seconds. Remove the bowl from the mixer. Stir one-quarter of the whites into the batter with a whisk. Fold in the remaining whites.
- 8.** To cook the cakes, dip a heatproof basting brush or wadded paper towel into the melted butterfat and brush it across the surface of the hot skillet. Drop the cakes one at a time into the pan, using a 1-ounce ladle for larger cakes or a tablespoon measure for smaller. When the

pancakes are nicely browned on the bottom and have begun to bubble on the top, 2 to 3 minutes, flip them with a metal spatula and brown the other sides, 1 to 2 minutes longer.

9. Transfer the pancakes to a plate and gloss them with orange butter. Give them to someone to eat. Regrease the skillet and cook the next batch of cakes.