



ANSON MILLS

Carolina Gold Rice Grits Cakes

Yield

15 to 20 small cakes

Time

1 hour to make the rice grits, at least 1 hour of cooling time, and about 25 minutes to fry the cakes

Cooking Remarks

You could go crazy and put a bound breading (flour, egg wash, bread crumbs) on these rice cakes, then fry them just as we describe below. They would be perfectly delicious in this incarnation. But the Pickled Shrimp, for which we developed the rice grits cakes recipe in the first place, asked that the cakes stay fairly plain. The grains in rice grits are smaller than grains of whole rice, but curiously, they take longer to cook. We use straightforward risotto proportions as well as the risotto cooking method, and stretch the timing to accommodate the grain. The hot grits are poured onto a baking sheet, spread to a depth of about $\frac{3}{8}$ inch, and cooled. They firm up on their own. They may then be stamped out into rounds and fried.

If you're making these rice grits cakes to serve with Pickled Shrimp, we suggest you make a shrimp-infused broth to use in lieu of plain vegetable stock. To do so, save the shells from Pickled Shrimp. Simmer the reserved shrimp shells and 5 cups of Ultimate Vegetable Broth, covered, in a saucepan, for 45 minutes, then strain. Use the infused broth as you would the regular vegetable stock.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a heavy-bottomed 2-quart saucepan; a heavy-bottomed 3-quart saucepan; a wooden spoon; a 6- or 8-ounce ladle; a 13 by 9-inch rimmed baking sheet, about 1 inch deep (or a similarly sized shallow baking dish); parchment paper; an offset spatula; a small saucepan; a shallow bowl or baking dish; a 2-inch round cookie cutter; a large well-seasoned cast-iron or other heavy-bottomed skillet; and a regular metal spatula.

Ingredients

1 quart Ultimate Vegetable Stock, or if you are making these cakes to go with Pickled Shrimp,
 1 quart shrimp-infused vegetable broth (see the note above)
5 ounces (10 tablespoons) unsalted butter
2 shallots, minced (about 3 tablespoons)
7 ounces (1 cup) Anson Mills Carolina Gold Rice Grits
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dry white wine or vermouth
1 Turkish bay leaf
Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
1.3 ounces finely grated Parmesan Reggiano (about $\frac{1}{3}$ cup)
5 ounces (1 cup) unbleached all-purpose flour

Directions

- 1.** Bring the broth to a simmer in a heavy-bottomed 2-quart saucepan over medium heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover the pan, and keep the broth just below a simmer as you cook the rice grits.
- 2.** Melt 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) of the butter in a heavy-bottomed 3-quart saucepan over medium-low heat until it foams. Add the shallots and cook, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon, until the shallots are soft, translucent, and have nearly melted into the butter, about 5 minutes. Add the rice grits, increase the heat to medium and cook, stirring constantly, until the grains are coated with butter and have turned opaque, about 2 minutes. Stir in the wine, reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer until reduced to a glaze. Add 1 cup of hot broth, the bay leaf, ½ teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper, and stir once to make sure the grains are covered with liquid. Cook the grits uncovered at the barest simmer, stirring occasionally; when the liquid has been almost entirely absorbed and the grits begin to look dry, add about 1 cup of hot broth, stir, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the liquid is absorbed and the grits again begin to look dry. Continue to cook the grits in this fashion until the grains have expanded, appear fairly dry, and no longer have hard, starchy centers, 45 to 50 minutes. Discard the bay leaf, stir in the Parmesan, and taste for seasoning.
- 3.** While the grits are cooking, line a 13 by 9-inch rimmed baking sheet or a similarly sized baking dish with parchment paper.
- 4.** When the grits are done, pour them immediately onto the prepared baking sheet and, using an offset spatula, smooth them into an even 3/8-inch-thick layer. Let cool to room temperature.
- 5.** Meanwhile, melt the remaining 4 ounces (8 tablespoons) butter in a small saucepan over low heat. Remove the pan from the heat, tilt it gently, and, using a spoon, skim off and discard the foam from the surface. Spoon the clear yellow butterfat into a small bowl, leaving the watery milk solids in the pan. Discard the milk solids.
- 6.** Place the flour in a shallow bowl or baking dish. When the grits are firm and cooled, use a 2-inch round cookie cutter to stamp out as many grits cakes as you can (you should be able to stamp out 15 to 20). Remove the rice grits scraps from around the cakes. Gently dredge the cakes in the flour, knock off the excess, and return them to the baking sheet.
- 7.** Heat a large well-seasoned cast-iron or other heavy-bottomed skillet over medium-high heat. When the skillet is nice and hot, add about half of the clarified butter and allow the butter to heat. Drop a grits cake into the skillet—it should sizzle. If the skillet is hot enough, add as many cakes as will comfortably fit in a single layer. Fry until the cakes are crisp and browned, 5 to 6 minutes. Using a metal spatula, flip the cakes, add additional butter if necessary, and fry until the second sides are crisp and browned. Remove the cakes from the skillet and drain on paper towels. If you have additional cakes to fry, add butter to the skillet and repeat. The cakes may be held in a 250-degree oven for up to 15 minutes. Serve them hot with Pickled Shrimp or almost anything: crab, lobster, roasted vegetables, little dollops of a meaty ragu, or a vinegary corn relish.

