



ANSON MILLS

Charleston Scotch Cake (Shortbread)

Yield

16 wedges

Time

10 minutes to put together, about 1 hour to bake

Baking Notes

Nothing demands more integrity of its ingredients than shortbread. There are only four, so make them count: the flour should be fresh, unbleached, and all-purpose; the sugar should be superfine; the rice flour should come from Anson Mills. But let's face it: great shortbread is ultimately about butter—the other ingredients are in play to help create a texture that delivers full butter flavor in final cookie form. It follows that the butter be fresh and of highest quality. We favor European butter or domestically produced European-style butter, which has a lower water content and a higher butterfat content than typical supermarket butters and also offers increased elasticity in handling.

This shortbread keeps and travels well, making it a superb holiday cookie.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a digital kitchen scale; a food processor; a 9-inch round cake pan; a small offset spatula; a thin, sharp knife; a long wooden skewer or round toothpick; and a wire cooling rack.

Ingredients

7.5 ounces (1½ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour or an equal amount *by weight* of Anson Mills Colonial Style Fine Cloth-Bolted Pastry Flour
2.5 ounces (½ cup) Anson Mills Carolina Gold Rice Flour
3.6 ounces (½ cup) plus 1 tablespoon superfine sugar
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
5 ounces (10 tablespoons) cold unsalted European-style butter, cut into pieces

Directions

1. Adjust the oven racks to the lower and upper third positions and heat the oven to 325 degrees. Turn the flours, ½ cup sugar, and salt into a food processor bowl and pulse to combine.
2. Distribute the butter over the dry ingredients in the food processor and pulse until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Run the processor without pulsing until the dough is very fine, about 10 seconds more. Turn the mixture into an ungreased 9-inch round cake pan and press down firmly and evenly with a small offset spatula or the back of a spoon to compress and compact the dough. Place the pan on the lower oven rack and bake for 20 minutes.

3. Remove the pan from the oven. Working quickly, score the shortbread into 16 wedges with a thin, sharp knife, and then pierce a design into each wedge with a wooden skewer. (Don't cut or pierce completely through the cookie's thickness.) Return the pan to the lower oven rack and bake for 10 minutes more. Transfer the pan to the upper oven rack and continue to bake until the shortbread is toasty brown, 30 to 40 minutes longer. Remove from the oven and set the pan on a wire rack. While the shortbread is still hot and in the pan, sprinkle the 1 tablespoon sugar over the surface and gently cut through the score marks with the knife. Let cool completely. Remove the wedges from the pan with a small offset spatula. Well wrapped, the shortbread will keep for up to 2 weeks at room temperature.