



ANSON MILLS

Don't Call Me Angel Biscuits

Yield

27 (2¼-inch) biscuits

Time

Three 15- to 20-minute rounds of hands-on work separated by 30-minute rest intervals to make the dough; 10 minutes to roll and stamp out; 45 minutes to rise; and 15 minutes to bake

Baking Notes

The foundation dough of this recipe is so miraculous to work with we're not even recommending an electric mixer to put it together. It's a joy to knead by hand, quickly moving beyond straggly and sticky into soft and claylike with a talcous finish.

Expect this dough to seem a little messy at the first set of turns, after the initial sheeting of butter. Don't panic. Relax and have faith that with additional turns the butter will be sandwiched into ever-thinner sheets between the flour layers and the dough will become increasingly easier to work with each rest-and-rise period.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe you, will need a digital scale, a small saucepan, a medium mixing bowl, a rolling pin, a stand mixer with a flat-beater attachment, a rubber spatula, a bench knife, two or three baking sheets, parchment paper, a pizza stone, a 2¼-inch (give or take) biscuit cutter, and a pastry brush.

Ingredients

24 ounces (1½ cups) whole milk, plus additional for brushing the biscuits before baking

1½ teaspoons instant yeast

18.8 ounces (about 4 cups) Anson Mills Colonial Style Fine Cloth-Bolted Pastry Flour, plus additional for dusting

1 teaspoon fine sea salt

8 ounces (16 tablespoons) unsalted European-style butter, cool room temperature

Directions

- 1.** Warm the milk in a small saucepan over medium heat until small bubbles appear around the edges. Remove from the heat and let cool to the temperature of a hot bath. Sprinkle the yeast over the surface of the milk, let soften for a minute or two, and then stir to dissolve.
- 2.** Turn all but 2 tablespoons of the flour and the salt into a medium mixing bowl. Add the milk-yeast mixture and stir with your fingers to combine. Begin kneading directly in the bowl, and then turn the dough out onto a clean, dry work surface. (Use the dough ball as an adhesive to bring along any flour still clinging to the sides of the bowl.) Knead briefly just to combine. Invert the bowl over the shaggy dough ball and let the dough rest for 20 minutes.

3. While the dough is resting, cream the butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the flat-beater attachment until light and fluffy. Detach the bowl from the mixer and, using a rubber spatula, scrape the butter from the sides of the bowl into a ragged heap in the center of the bowl. Set the bowl aside.

4. Knead the dough on the work surface until it is smooth, supple, and elastic, 10 to 15 minutes, adding the reserved 2 tablespoons of flour as needed if the dough is very sticky. If the dough feels tough or if you have difficulty working in any dry bits, wet your hands with water and continue kneading (and wetting your hands), until the dough becomes more supple. Lightly dust the work surface with flour, set the dough on top of the flour, lightly flour the top of the dough, then roll the dough into a rectangle about 10 inches wide by 15 inches long (its length should be perpendicular to the edge of your work surface). Spread the butter over the dough. Fold the top third of the dough down and the bottom third of the dough up to create a rectangle measuring about 5 inches by 9 inches. Turn the rectangle so that the shorter sides are on the top and bottom and the open edge of the dough is facing right, like a book. Use a bench knife to block the sides of the dough. You have completed one turn. Set the dough on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

5. After 30 minutes, the dough will have risen substantially. Lightly flour the work surface, set the dough on the work surface with the spine of the book on the left, and again roll the dough into a rectangle about 10 inches wide by 15 inches long. Fold the top third of the dough down and the bottom third of the dough up to create a rectangle measuring about 5 inches by 9 inches. Rotate the rectangle one-quarter turn so that the spine of the book is on the left. Repeat the rolling and folding process. You have completed three turns. Use a bench knife to block the sides of the dough. Return the dough to the parchment-lined baking sheet, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Repeat the double rolling and folding process one more time. You will have given the dough a total of five turns. Refrigerate the dough 30 minutes.

6. Adjust the oven racks to the lowest and upper-middle positions. Place a pizza stone on the lower rack and heat the oven to 425 degrees.

7. Sprinkle flour evenly over a fresh sheet of parchment paper. Remove the dough from the refrigerator, lift off the plastic wrap, and invert the dough onto the floured parchment. Lightly flour the top of the dough and roll it into a 12-inch square. Loosen the dough from the parchment and lay it back down. Drape a sheet of plastic wrap over the dough and let it rise at room temperature until soft and spongy, about 30 minutes.

8. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Using a 2¼-inch round biscuit cutter dipped in flour, stamp out 15 biscuits without twisting the cutter as you push it through the dough. Set the rounds on a prepared baking sheet. Gently reshape the remaining dough and re-roll it until about ¾ inch thick. Stamp out more rounds with the flour-dipped biscuit cutter. Repeat until you have 27 biscuits. Brush the tops of the biscuits with milk and let them 5 to 10 minutes to allow them to recover from the trauma of being stamped out. One baking sheet at a time, bake the biscuits on the pizza stone for 15 minutes until nicely risen, then transfer to the upper rack and continue to bake until golden brown, about 5 minutes longer. Serve hot with anything.