



ANSON MILLS

Calas (Rice Beignets)

Yield

About 2 dozen 2-inch calas

Time

Overnight to soak the rice, plus 2½ to 3 hours to prepare the batter, let it rise, and fry the calas

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a digital kitchen scale, a small bowl, a fine-mesh sieve or colander, a small saucepan, a medium mixing bowl, a rubber spatula, a wire rack, a rimmed baking sheet, a medium heavy-bottomed saucepan (or a Fry Daddy), an instant-read or deep-fry thermometer, a couple of soup spoons, and a wire skimmer.

Ingredients

2.5 ounces (⅓ cup) Anson Mills Carolina Gold Rice
1½ cups whole milk
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
1 ounce (2 tablespoons) unsalted European-style butter, cut into 2 or 3 pieces, room temperature
1½ tablespoons hot tap water
¾ teaspoon instant yeast
1 tablespoon sugar, plus more for coating the beignets
2 large eggs
⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4.5 ounces (¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons) Anson Mills Colonial Style Fine Cloth-Bolted Pastry Flour
Peanut oil for frying

Directions

- 1.** The night before you plan to make the calas, turn the rice into a small bowl, add water to cover by about 1 inch, and let it soak it overnight in the refrigerator.
- 2.** Drain the rice. In a small saucepan, bring the milk and ¼ teaspoon of the salt to a simmer over medium-high heat. Add the rice, stir well, and allow the mixture to return to a simmer. Turn down the heat to maintain a gentle but persistent bubbling, partially cover the pot, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the rice is tender, 15 to 17 minutes; stir more frequently near the end of cooking to ensure that the rice on the bottom of the pot does not scorch. The cooked rice will be thick and creamy and resemble rice pudding.

- 3.** Off heat, vigorously stir the cooked rice with a spoon, breaking up the grains until the mixture resembles small-curd cottage cheese, and then stir in the butter until melted and fully incorporated. Transfer the rice to a medium mixing bowl and let cool for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, put the hot tap water in a small bowl, sprinkle the yeast over the top, and let stand until the yeast dissolves. Stir the dissolved yeast and the sugar into the rice. Cover the bowl and let the mixture rise at room temperature until doubled in volume, about 1 hour.
- 4.** Beat the eggs in a small bowl, and then stir them into the rice mixture along with the nutmeg, vanilla, and remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt. Add the flour and stir lightly with a rubber spatula to incorporate. Cover and let the batter rise at room temperature until once again doubled in volume, about 1 hour.
- 5.** When the batter has almost doubled in volume, scoop about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sugar into a small bowl for coating the calas. Set a wire rack on a rimmed baking sheet and line the rack with a triple thickness of paper toweling. Pour oil to a depth of about $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches into a medium heavy-bottomed saucepan and heat over medium-high heat until the oil registers 365 to 370 degrees on an instant-read or deep-fry thermometer. (Alternatively, if you have a Fry Daddy, feel free to use it.) Using a soup spoon, scoop up a generous tablespoon or so of batter and use a second soup spoon to push the batter off the spoon into the hot oil (don't let the batter create a splash!). Repeat this process to fry four or five calas at a time, but do not overcrowd the pot. Fry the calas, turning them occasionally, until deeply browned on all sides, about 3 minutes total. Using a wire skimmer, transfer the calas to the prepared wire rack. Allow the oil to come back up to temperature before adding more batter. While you fry the next batch, toss the previous batch in the sugar until coated on all sides. Let cool slightly and serve.