



## ANSON MILLS

### **Beer-Battered Onion Rings**

#### **Yield**

4 portions

#### **Time**

About 1½ hours start to finish

#### **Cooking Remarks**

Don't be concerned about trying to find the perfect sweet juicy onion. A storage onion with a strong personality works just as well, maybe better. Shopping for onions is kind of dicey, anyway. You rarely know quite what you're getting. We fried both white and yellow onions and couldn't handicap either based strictly on the shade of their skins or flesh.

Some onions become demure when the rings are battered and fried. Adding a little onion or shallot powder along with a touch of garlic powder to the beer batter did wonders for shoring up the allium notes. For our ranch dipping sauce to accompany the onion rings, we make shallot and garlic powders from scratch, and you'll have enough left to put into the batter. If you're skipping the sauce, don't skip the additional alliums—use onion and garlic powders from a jar.

If the onions you've sliced show a willingness to offer up their thin inner skins for removal, by all means remove them. Occasionally these inner membranes tighten upon frying and cause the onion to loosen from its shell.

Many recipes recommend ale as the best beer for batter, but the ale we happened to choose conveyed a bitter back-taste when the onion was fried. By accident, we ended up quite liking Kölsch, but the beer you ultimately choose may simply be the beer you drink (not *your* beer, please, Guinness fans). Around our parts, Kölsch comes in tall cans. Otherwise go for a 12-ounce bottle.

If the plastic bag style shake 'n bake method we recommend for flouring the onions is distasteful to you, a medium bowl for flour works just as well.

When dipped in batter and dropped into oil, any one onion ring will instinctively draw toward another. This unhealthy attachment can be avoided if the frying vessel is broad and the movement of onions in oil supervised. Chose a Dutch oven with a diameter of 10 to 12 inches.

You will discover that the batter grows stouter in consistency as successive batches of onion rings are dipped. If this happens, thin the batter with a splash of beer.

Fish out stray bits of fried batter in the oil before proceeding with another batch and check that the oil has returned to temp.

## Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a digital kitchen scale, a 1-gallon zipper-lock bag or medium bowl; a whisk; three large bowls; a colander; a large Dutch oven; an instant-read or deep-fry thermometer; two wire racks set in two rimmed baking sheets; and a fine-mesh skimmer.

## Ingredients

10 ounces Anson Mills Thirteen Colony Rice Waffle Flour  
Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1 ounce Anson Mills Fine Yellow Cornmeal  
1 teaspoon paprika  
2 teaspoons onion powder or shallot powder (see Cooking Remarks)  
½ teaspoon garlic powder  
2 (8-ounce) yellow onions  
12 ounces Kölsch or other beer (see Cooking Remarks)  
1½ quarts peanut oil, for frying  
A Good All-Purpose Ranch Dipping Sauce, for serving

## Directions

1. Measure 4 ounces of the waffle flour into a 1-gallon zipper-lock bag or medium bowl and add 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon salt and 1 teaspoon pepper. Shake the bag or whisk to combine the ingredients, then set aside for dredging the onions. In a large, wide bowl, whisk together the remaining 6 ounces waffle flour, the cornmeal, paprika, onion powder, garlic powder, 2 teaspoons salt, and ¾ teaspoon pepper; set aside.
2. Trim off the top of each onion, peel them, then slice them into ½- to ⅝-inch rounds. Carefully separate layers of the onion rounds, discarding the small, innermost rings and those that are broken, or unevenly cut; set the onions aside.
3. Pour the oil into a large Dutch oven (with a diameter of 10 to 12 inches) and heat over medium-high until the oil registers 370 to 375 degrees on a digital instant-read or deep-fry thermometer. Meanwhile, set two wire racks in two rimmed baking sheets and line the racks with a double layer of paper toweling; set near the stove. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 200 degrees. Pour 11 ounces of the beer into the dry ingredients in the bowl and whisk gently until the batter is smooth; it will be slightly thinner than standard pancake batter. Fill another large bowl with 2 to 3 cups ice and some water, then position the bowl of batter in the ice bath to keep the batter cold. In a third large bowl, make another ice bath by combining 1 quart of water and 2 cups ice. Submerge half of the onion rings in the ice water and let stand for about 1 minute. Drain the onions in a colander set in the sink and pluck out the ice cubes. In the now-empty bowl, make a fresh ice-water bath; set it aside for chilling the remaining onions as you fry the last of the first batch.
4. Drop a handful of the drained onion rings, still damp with water, into the flour dredge and toss them until evenly coated. One at a time, remove the rings, shaking off the excess dredge, and drop them into the batter. Push them into the batter or turn to coat on all sides. When the oil has come up to temperature, remove the rings one at a time from the batter, let the excess

drip off, and gently drop them into the hot oil, making sure not to crowd the pot and that the rings don't touch (or they will stick together). Fry the onion rings, occasionally turning them, until golden brown all around, about 4 minutes. As they are done, remove them from the oil, allowing the excess to drain off, and transfer to the prepared rack. Immediately sprinkle them with salt. As space permits in the pot, dredge, batter, and fry additional onion rings. Occasionally use a fine-mesh skimmer to scoop out and discard any stray bits of batter. While the last onion rings of the first batch bubble away in the oil, drop the remaining onions into ice bath, let them chill for 1 minute, then drain and pluck out the ice cubes. Dredge, batter, and fry them. When the first rack is filled, slide it into the oven to keep the onion rings warm while you fry the remainder. The batter will gradually become thicker as more onions are coated; add the remaining beer as needed to thin it. Serve the onion rings warm with the dipping sauce.