

Strawberry Scone Loaf

By Melissa Clark

YIELD 8 servings

TIME 1 hour

Bits of dried strawberry form jammy pockets in the tender crumb of this golden, crunchy-topped treat. Baking it as a loaf instead of individual scones keeps the interior particularly moist, while the edges bake up craggy and brown. Serve it dolloped with softened butter or clotted cream. And while adding jam might seem like overkill, it's only in the best possible way.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup/125 grams dried strawberries or pitted dates (not freeze-dried; see Tip)

2 cups boiling water

2 cups/250 grams all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting the work surface

¼ to ⅓ cup/50 to 66 grams granulated sugar, plus more for sprinkling

1 tablespoon baking powder

¾ teaspoon fine sea salt

¼ teaspoon baking soda

½ cup/113 grams very cold unsalted butter

⅓ cup buttermilk, plus more for brushing

1 large egg, beaten

Butter and clotted cream, for serving

PREPARATION

Step 1

Heat oven to 375 degrees with a rack in the upper third. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Step 2

Place strawberries in a bowl and cover with boiling water. Let sit until soft and pliable, 5 to 10 minutes. Drain, pat dry and coarsely chop.

Step 3

Place the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and baking soda in a large bowl and whisk to combine. Using the large holes of a box grater, grate the butter into the bowl, then toss until mixture resembles oatmeal. Alternatively, pulse all the dry ingredients together in a food processor. Cube the butter, add to the processor, and pulse until the mixture looks like oatmeal. Transfer mixture to a large bowl.

Step 4

Add strawberries and toss well.

Step 5

In a small bowl, whisk together buttermilk and egg. Add buttermilk mixture to flour mixture. Using a wooden spoon, stir until all the dry flour bits are incorporated, but the dough is still shaggy. Using your hands, knead and press the dough a few times while it's still in the bowl until the dough just holds together.

Step 6

Dump the dough out onto the prepared sheet pan. Pat the dough into a round loaf about 8 inches in diameter. Using a sharp knife, deeply score the loaf into 8 wedges (but don't cut all the way through). Brush the loaf all over with buttermilk and sprinkle generously with sugar.

Step 7

Bake until golden brown, 25 to 35 minutes. Let cool slightly. Cut or break into wedges and serve warm with butter and clotted cream.

Tip

If you can't find dried strawberries, pitted dates will give you a similar texture and level of sweetness. But you can also substitute other dried fruit.

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