

## BAKING POWDER BISCUITS

(16 BISCUITS)

Light-gold and crusty outside, moist and fine-textured inside.

2 cups flour	1 tablespoon sugar
½ teaspoon salt	½ cup vegetable shortening
4 teaspoons baking powder	⅔ cup milk

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Grease two 8-inch cake pans. Put the flour, salt, baking powder, and sugar in a bowl. Cut the shortening into the flour with two knives or a pastry blender until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Add the milk all at once and stir just until the dough forms a ball around the fork. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured board and knead 14 times. Pat until ½ inch thick. Cut into rounds with a 2-inch cookie cutter. Place touching each other in the cake pans and bake for 15–20 minutes.

**Crusty Baking Powder Biscuits.** Roll biscuits to ¼ inch thick and place 1 inch apart. Bake in a 450°F oven for 12 minutes. This will yield almost twice as many biscuits.

**Buttermilk Biscuits.** Use ⅔ cup buttermilk instead of sweet milk and ½ teaspoon baking soda, cutting the amount of baking powder in half, to 2 teaspoons.

**Cheese Biscuits.** Add ½ cup grated sharp Cheddar cheese to the dry ingredients.

**Drop Biscuits.** Add an additional ⅓ cup milk and drop by teaspoonfuls onto a buttered baking sheet.

### Note:

Use butter instead of shortening for more flavor.

## CREAM BISCUITS \*

(12 BISCUITS)

In the summer cooking classes James Beard conducted for many years in Seaside, Oregon, this is the biscuit we often made to go with either the marvelous fresh berries or the chicken dishes. Light, buttery, and so simple to make, they were loved by everyone.

2 cups flour	1–1½ cups heavy cream
1 teaspoon salt	6 tablespoons butter, melted (about
1 tablespoon baking powder	⅓ cup)
2 teaspoons sugar	

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Use an ungreased baking sheet. Combine the flour, salt, baking powder, and sugar in a mixing bowl. Stir the dry ingredients with a fork to blend and lighten. Slowly add 1 cup of the cream to the mixture, stirring constantly. Gather the dough together; when it holds together and feels tender, it is ready to knead. But if it seems shaggy and pieces are dry and falling away, then slowly add enough additional cream to make the dough hold together. Place the dough on a lightly floured board and knead the dough for 1 minute. Pat the dough into a square about ½ inch thick. Cut into twelve squares and dip each into the melted butter so all sides are coated. Place the biscuits 2 inches apart on the baking sheet. Bake for about 15 minutes, or until they are lightly browned. Serve hot.

## HOMINY GEMS

(12 MUFFINS)

To make these old-fashioned gems, use the cereal hominy that comes in a box, also known as grits.