

Title:

Exploring The World Of Cornbread

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Summary:

We're partial to cornbread. We like its rustic texture and chewy goodness. We like its versatility—it works for breakfast, lunch or dinner. It complements eggs in the morning, a hearty soup for lunch, or a dinner meal such as pork chops or chicken. Cornbread always reminds us of the South and some of the best cornbread is the result of wonderful Southern bakers.

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Article Body:

We're partial to cornbread. We like its rustic texture and chewy goodness. We like its versatility—it works for breakfast, lunch or dinner. It complements eggs in the morning, a hearty soup for lunch, or a dinner meal such as pork chops or chicken. Cornbread always reminds us of the South and some of the best cornbread is the result of wonderful Southern bakers.

There's a wonderful world of cornbread to explore. The cornbreads that we have made the most are balanced with equal parts flour and cornmeal to make a lighter bread with a couple eggs to give it structure and hold it together. But cornbread doesn't have to follow this traditional formula. We often make cornbread that has no flour and is so rich in eggs it's approaching a soufflé. (Because it has no flour, it is a great choice for those who are gluten intolerant.) One of our favorite cornbreads is on the other end of the spectrum—made in a yeast bread with whole kernel corn.

Cornbread makes a wonderful vehicle for a variety of additions. Try adding ham, bacon bits, or even cheese to your cornbread. One of our favorite additions is drained, whole kernel corn as mentioned previously. Vegetables such as green peppers, onions, or celery work well in cornbread.

Today, we thought we would explore some of these recipes with you. Here you

will find a flourless skillet cornbread, a traditional cornbread, and a yeasted cornbread. Modify them as you like.

### Texas Chili Corn Bread

If you would like to try an egg-rich, flourless cornbread recipe, try this one!

This is made with cheese, green chilies, red bell peppers, and garlic powder instead of clove garlic but feel free to experiment.

### Ingredients

1 cup yellow cornmeal  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
3 large eggs  
1 cup milk  
1/2 red bell pepper, chopped and diced  
1/2 medium sized onion, chopped and diced  
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder  
1 4-oz can diced green chilies, drained (less if you prefer a less spicy bread)  
1 cup corn kernels--fresh, frozen, or canned  
1 1/2 cups grated cheese, cheddar or jack

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Grease a ten-inch skillet and place it on the middle shelf in the oven.

### Directions

1. In a large bowl, stir together the cornmeal, baking powder, sugar, and salt. In a medium bowl, whisk the eggs then stir in the rest of the ingredients, reserving 1/2 cup of the grated cheese.
2. Form a well in the dry ingredients and pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients. Mix with a spatula until well combined.
3. Carefully remove the hot pan from the oven and immediately pour the batter into the pan. Sprinkle the remaining cheese on top and return to the oven.
4. Let bake for 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center of the pan comes out clean. The top will be a rich, golden brown. Let cool for

ten minutes before unmolding.

### Amish Cornbread

This is one of many "standard" cornbread recipes. Note that the amount of cornmeal is equal to the amount of flour. Since this recipe calls for 1/4 cup sugar, it will be slightly sweet. For a less sweet cornbread, reduce the sugar to two tablespoons.

If you prefer butter to shortening, use 1/4 cup butter. If you use salted butter, reduce the salt in the recipe to 1/2 teaspoon.

### Ingredients

1 cup sifted flour  
1/4 cup sugar  
1 tbsp. baking powder  
3/4 teaspoon salt  
1 cup yellow cornmeal  
1 egg, well beaten  
1 cup milk  
1/3 cup shortening melted and cooled

### Directions

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees

1. Sift the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt together. Mix in cornmeal.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk the egg, milk, shortening together. Add to dry ingredients and beat until smooth.
3. Grease the bottom of an 8 x 8 x 2-inch pan. Scrape the batter into the pan. Bake 400 degrees for 20 minutes.

### Southern Yeasted Cornbread

A yeasted cornbread is different—almost like anadama bread. Because the kneading develops the gluten, it is more bread-like and less crumbly than traditional cornbread. Oh, and this bread would make great Thanksgiving dressing.

### Ingredients

1 (7 gram) package active dry yeast  
1 cups warm water (100 to 110 degrees)  
4 1/3 cups all-purpose or bread flour (more or less)  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 2/3 cup cornmeal  
4 tablespoons melted butter  
1/4 cup honey  
2 large eggs  
1 can whole kernel corn, drained  
2 tablespoons cornmeal  
1 egg for egg wash (optional)

#### Directions

1. In the bowl of a stand-type mixer, dissolve the yeast in the warm water.
2. Add half of the flour and mix with a dough hook. Add the salt, cornmeal, butter, honey, two eggs, and drained corn and continue mixing.
3. While continuing to mix, add the flour needed to bring the dough to a bread-dough type consistency. The amount of flour needed will vary largely on how well drained the corn was.
4. Knead as you would for other yeast breads and then remove the dough to a greased bowl. Turn once to oil both sides. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise until doubled.
5. Once doubled, divide the dough into two equal parts for two loaves. Form the loaves. If you are going to make free standing artisan loaves, grease a baking sheet and sprinkle the sheet with part of the remaining cornmeal. Place the loaves on the sheet. If you are making sandwich loaves, grease the baking pans well--the bread tends to stick to the pans--and sprinkle cornmeal in the pans. Let the bread rise until doubled again.
6. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. If you choose, just before baking, whisk the remaining egg with one tablespoon water and brush the egg wash on the loaf. Sprinkle the loaf with cornmeal. Bake the bread for about 30 minutes or until the bread is golden brown and tests done. Remove the bread from the pans and cool on racks. Freeze any extra bread or save the bread for croutons.

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