



Spice 'n Easy Autumn Scones

Bursting butter bits make them light and tender

- 3 cups all-purpose flour, divided
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 grated orange zest
- 3/4 cup cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 cup dried traditional or cherry flavored cranberries, halved
- 1 teaspoon (each) vanilla extract; almond extract
- 1/2 teaspoon orange bakery emulsion, optional
- 1 cup heavy cream or evaporated milk

Topping:

1 egg, lightly beaten

1 Tablespoon water

2 to 3 teaspoons coarse white decorating sugar

Confectioners' sugar as desired

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper or non-stick baking sheets.

In a large bowl, combine 2-3/4 cups flour, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, cloves, salt, and orange zest.

Cut cold butter into cubes; blend butter into flour mixture with pastry blender or fingers to form crumbly mixture. Add cranberries.

Mix vanilla extract, almond extract, and orange emulsion (if using the flavoring) with heavy cream; stir into flour mixture. (Do not use a mixer.) Mix to form soft dough. If dough is very sticky, slowly add 1/4 cup all-purpose flour by Tablespoons only until able to handle.

Divide dough in half. Place 1 half of dough on pastry sheet; pat into a 6-inch circle for thicker scones and 7 to 8-inch circle for thinner scones, Mark 8 wedges but do not cut through the dough. Transfer to baking sheet several inches apart.

In small container, mix egg with water; brush over scones; sprinkle with coarse sugar. Bake in 375-degree F oven for 25 to 30 minutes. Cool 10 to 15 minutes; cut into wedges. Place on cooling rack with waxed paper underneath. Sprinkle generously with confectioners' sugar if desired before serving. Serve warm or room temperature Yield:16 scones

Recipe Inspired by: Cuisine at Home, June 2004

Cook's Note: The cherry flavored cranberries are a delightful autumn surprise. It's important not to overmix the dough for a light buttery texture. I added an orange bakery emulsion, which is a baking product, where the flavor is suspended in water rather than alcohol and doesn't bake out like the alcohol extracts do. This gives the product an enhanced flavor.

About the Recipe: Warm scones make breakfast extra special. These pastries have a sweet crunch on the outside and are angel-tender inside. The bright citrus and cherry flavored cranberries are highlighted by sweet spicy cinnamon. What a wonderful way to say, “Good Morning!”