



James Beard's Cream Biscuits

Crisp yet soft and full of butter flavor

1-3/4 to 2 cups all purpose flour

1 teaspoon salt

1 Tablespoon baking powder

2 teaspoons granulated sugar

1 cup heavy cream

Melted butter, about 1 ounce

- Sift the dry ingredients together and fold in the heavy cream until it makes soft dough that can be easily handled.
- Turn out on a floured board. Knead for one minute; then pat to a thickness about 1/2 to 3/4 inch. Cut in 3-inch rounds or squares;
- Dip in melted butter and arrange on a silicone baking mat, insulated baking sheet, or in a square baking pan.
- Bake in a preheated 425-degree F oven for 15 minutes or golden brown and serve very hot. Yield: 6 biscuits

Recipe by: James Beard, Beard on Bread, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1973

His original recipe made 12 biscuits. "We had a reputation at home for very special biscuits, which were made by our Chinese cook, who was with us for many years. After he left us, they became a standard item in our household, and I still make them very often. The secret of their unique quality is this. They use heavy cream instead of butter or shortening."

Cook's Note: I found that making the biscuits thicker produced a fluffy soft biscuit with a crisp crust. If you cut the biscuits into a smaller size, you will get more biscuits. The flour you use will probably make a difference in the type of biscuit you make. I tried both all-purpose and bread flour. I didn't add all the flour at one time and used only 1-3/4 cup for the first mixing. Then I added some of the additional flour to dust the pastry mat as I kneaded it into a soft dough. I used greased round pans and left room between the biscuits and also made them on a cookie sheet another time.

About the Recipe: James Beard's Cream Biscuits are the epitome of simple elegance. Made with just a handful of pantry staples and heavy cream instead of butter or shortening, they bake up crisp on the outside and tender on the inside. These biscuits quickly became a household favorite for good reason. They're incredibly easy, deliciously buttery, and far superior to anything from a grocery store.