

Maple-Glazed Bacon Apple Scones

Scones:

3 ounces bacon, cut into small cubes
2 medium baking apples, peeled and cubed
1 1/2 cups (7 1/2 ounces) all purpose flour
1/2 cup (2 1/4 ounces) whole spelt (or whole wheat pastry) flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt
1/8 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
2 tablespoons reserved, chilled bacon fat (see directions)
about 3 tablespoons cold, unsalted butter
1/4 cup maple syrup (preferably grade B)
1/4 cup whole milk
1/4 cup heavy cream, more as needed, plus 2 tablespoons for brushing the scones

Glaze:

1/3 cup powdered sugar, sifted
about 2 tablespoons maple syrup

Make the scone dough:

In a medium skillet, cook the bacon over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until golden and crisp, about 5 minutes. Remove the bacon with a slotted spoon and transfer to a small, heat-proof bowl. Pour all but 1 tablespoon of the rendered fat into another small, heat-proof bowl - you should have around 2 tablespoons. Cool both the bacon and 2 tablespoons of fat to room temperature, then place both in the refrigerator to chill until very cold, about 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, saute the apples in the bacon fatty skillet until tender and golden, stirring occasionally, 5-10 minutes. Tip the apples out onto a plate, let cool to room temperature, then chill until completely cold, about 20 minutes.

In a large bowl, whisk or sift together the flours, baking powder, salt and nutmeg. Measure the bacon fat, then add enough butter to make 5 tablespoons of fat, total. Cube the butter, and use a pastry blender or your fingers to work in the cold fats until the mixture resembles sandy gravel, with some pea-sized butter chunks. Stir the chilled bacon bits and apples into the flour mixture until evenly distributed.

In a measuring pitcher, stir together the maple syrup, milk and cream. Slowly drizzle the maple mixture into the flour mixture, tossing gently with a rubber spatula, adding more liquid directly to the dry bits, until the mixture clumps together and no floury bits remain. If the mixture is dry, add a bit more cream until it comes together.

Shape the scones:

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and divide into two equal pieces. Press each piece into a 1" high round, about 5 inches in diameter. Cut each round into 6 wedges. Separate the wedges, place them on a small baking sheet, and freeze for 30-60 minutes or until firm. (At this point, the frozen scones can be stored in a freezer-safe zip-lock bag and baked from frozen.)

Bake the scones:

Position a rack in the upper third of the oven and preheat to 425°F. Stack two rimmed baking sheets (to prevent the bottoms from over-browning) and line with parchment paper. Remove the scones from the freezer and space them evenly on the lined baking sheet. Brush the tops lightly with cream. Bake the scones until golden all over, craggy and puffed, 15-20 minutes. Remove the scones to a wire rack and let cool slightly.

Glaze the scones:

Meanwhile, sift the powdered sugar into a medium bowl and whisk in enough maple syrup to make a drizzle-able glaze. Drizzle the glaze over the warm scones.

