

NANA'S SPICY CHEESE BISCUITS

MAKES ABOUT 60 BISCUITS

These are more like cheese crackers than biscuits, but Nana called them biscuits so I'm going with that. A true Southern lady, Nana (my husband Ben's grandmother) could always be counted on for a warm smile and a home-baked (and always butter-forward) treat. A tin of freshly made cheese biscuits was her calling card, especially around the holidays, when she'd package them up and dole them out to pretty much everyone, ever. Nana's cheese biscuits are spicy (in a slow-burn sort of way) from a generous glug of Tabasco, and a healthy amount of butter (duh) and sharp cheese give them a flaky, tender crumb. They're great on their own or as part of a larger cracker/cheese/fruit spread—try one with a smear of apple butter for an unexpected treat.

One of my favorite things about this recipe is that it's super easy to make the dough ahead of time: You can store the unbaked dough logs, tightly wrapped, in the freezer for up to 3 months before slicing off and baking the biscuit-crackers (no need to thaw them first).

½ pound (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
2 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese (about 8 ounces)
1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese (about 4 ounces)

2½ teaspoons hot sauce (such as Tabasco)
~ 2 cups all-purpose flour, plus extra for working the dough

LET'S COOK:

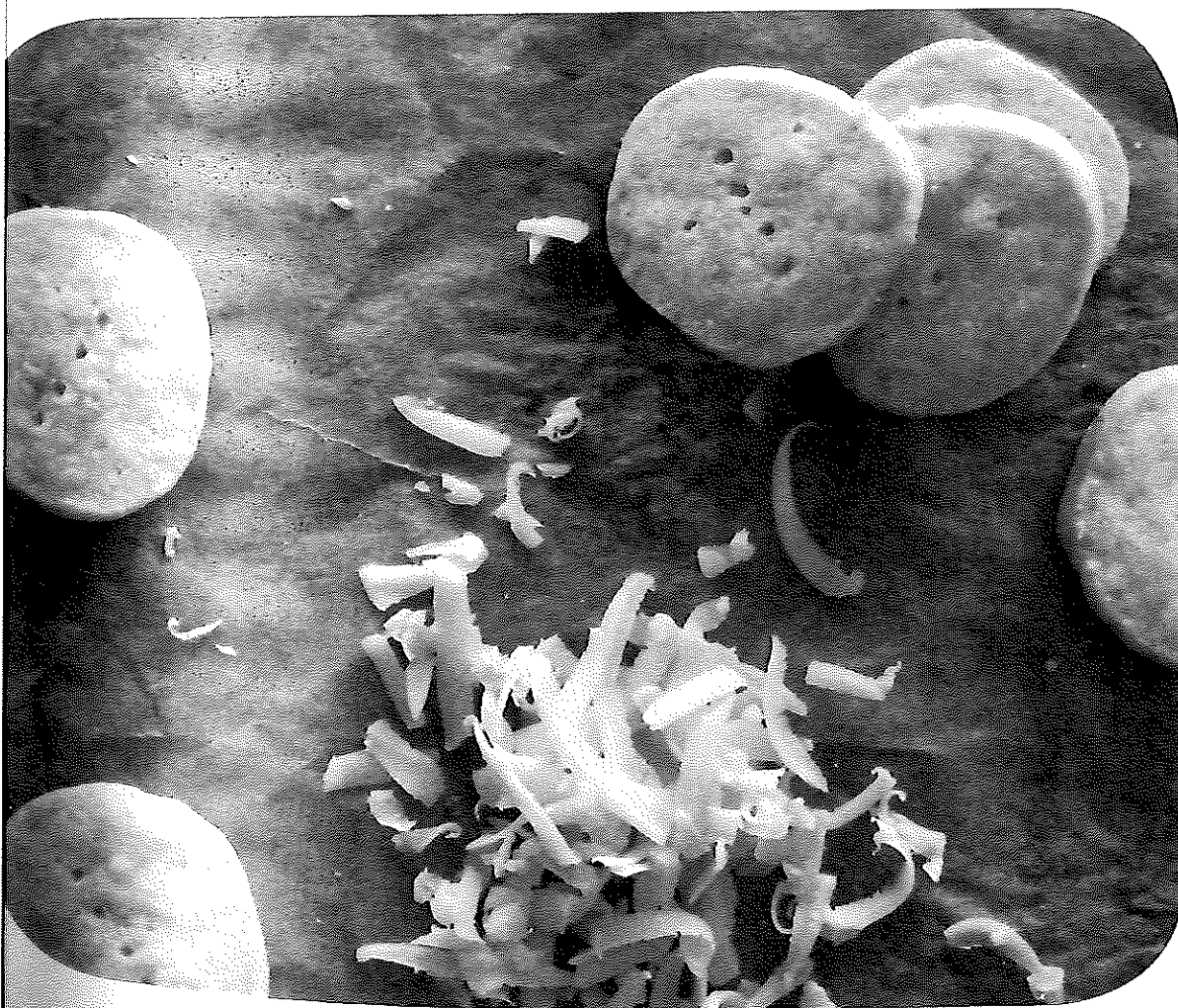
1. In a food processor, blend the butter, Cheddar, and Parmesan until smooth and creamy. Add the hot sauce and pulse to combine. Add the flour and pulse just until the dough comes together; you don't want to overwork the dough.
2. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface and, with floured hands, divide it and shape it into logs roughly 1 inch in diameter and 12 to 18 inches long (you should get 2 or 3 logs of dough). Wrap the logs tightly in plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator until firm, about 1 hour, or in the freezer for 30 minutes.

3. While the dough is chilling, preheat the oven to 300°F with racks in the upper and lower thirds. Line two sheet pans with parchment paper.

4. After the dough has firmed up, use a sharp knife to slice the logs into ½-inch-thick rounds. Place the rounds on the prepared pans and prick them gently with a fork (if you're baking them from frozen,

don't prick them, since they'll crack apart). Bake until they're just firm and darkened at the edges, about 30 minutes.

5. Let the biscuits cool on the pans. Serve generously during cocktail hour. Cheese biscuits will keep well for a few days in an airtight container at room temperature.



3. Pecorino Popcorn with Tarragon

SERVES 4 TO 6

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon dried tarragon
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1/2 cup popcorn kernels
1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
1 cup finely grated Pecorino

Heat the olive oil and tarragon in a small pot over low heat until fragrant. Meanwhile, heat the vegetable oil and popcorn over high heat in a large pot with a tight-fitting lid. When the first kernel pops, shake the pot off the heat, then return it to the heat. Shake every 10 seconds or so until the popping slows, then remove the pot from heat for good. Pour the warm oil over the popcorn, sprinkle with salt, replace the lid, and shake the pot vigorously. Working in layers, pour half of the popcorn into a metal bowl, sprinkle half of the Pecorino over it, and stir to mix. Repeat and adjust the salt if necessary.

4. Cannellini Greenie Crostini

MAKES 36 CROSTINI

CROSTINI

1 baguette
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
Kosher or sea salt

BEANS AND GREENS

One 15-ounce can cannellini beans,
drained and rinsed
1/2 cup pitted green olives, preferably
picholine
1/2 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley,
plus tiny sprigs for garnish
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

For the crostini: Preheat the oven to 350°F. Thinly slice the baguette, and spread the rounds in a single layer on two rimmed baking sheets. Brush each side with oil and sprinkle with salt. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until crisp and golden brown, rotating the baking sheets halfway through. Cool, then store for up to 2 weeks in an airtight container.

For the beans and greens: Combine the beans, olives, cheese, oil, parsley, lemon zest and juice, and pepper in a food processor and pulse to a coarse purée. At the picnic, spread a thick layer on each of 36 crostini. Garnish each with a tiny sprig of parsley.

Apple Cinnamon Breakfast Bake

2 cups cottage cheese
3 large eggs
1 large apple, peeled & diced finely.
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup rolled oats or almond flour
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup maple syrup or honey
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ t ground cinnamon
1 t baking powder

Instructions

Grease 9x9 baking dish
Whisk cottage cheese, eggs,
syrup or honey and vanilla in a bowl.
Stir in oats, cinnamon and baking powder.

Fold in diced apples
Pour into prepared baking dish, spread
even.

Bake at 350°F for 35-40 minutes until
golden brown and toothpick tests clean
Allow to cool slightly before serving

Homemade Queso

1 cup milk heated to just below boiling
2 Tsp sodium ~~citrate~~ citrate dissolved in milk
8oz cheese of choice grated
Dash of salt
Stir until cheese is melted and serve

Source: