

Sarah's Ham and Cheddar Savory Scones

Makes: 8 large scones, 16 medium scones or 32 cocktail scones

Ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda*
- 1½ teaspoons granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground mustard
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch pieces and chilled
- ¾ cup ham, finely chopped
- 1 cup sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- 3 tablespoons fresh chives, finely chopped
- 1 cup cold buttermilk, plus 1 tablespoon for brushing*



*Heavy cream may be used in place of buttermilk; omit the baking soda.

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a large bowl or food processor, combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda (omit if using heavy cream), sugar, salt, garlic powder, mustard and pepper. Whisk to combine or pulse about 10 times.

Add the cold butter and cut it in with two forks or a pastry blender if mixing by hand, or pulse in the food processor 12 to 15 times, until the mixture resembles coarse meal.

Add the chopped ham, cheese and chives and pulse 3 to 4 times just until incorporated.

If using a food processor, transfer the mixture to a large bowl. Add the buttermilk and use a fork to work it into the dough until most of the flour is incorporated.

Turn the dough out onto a large piece of plastic wrap. Gather the corners toward the center and twist to enclose the dough. Gently knead through the plastic until it forms a rough ball and the crumbly bits are worked in. The dough will be very soft; the plastic allows you to work quickly without overhandling.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and shape it into an 8-inch circle or square. Cut the scones into large, medium, or small wedges and place them on the prepared baking sheet, spaced 1 inch apart. Cover lightly with plastic wrap and freeze for 20 minutes to keep the dough cold before baking.

To bake: Brush the tops of each scone with buttermilk and place the baking sheet on the center oven rack. Bake until the tops are golden brown and firm to the touch, about 18 to 20 minutes.

Remove from the oven and cool on the baking sheet for 3 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack and cool until warm. Scones may also be cooled completely, stored at room temperature, and reheated at 300°F for 5 to 8 minutes.

To store: Scones keep fresh up to two days at room temperature or up to five days in the refrigerator.

To freeze: Place scones on a baking sheet in the freezer for one hour, then transfer to a freezer bag or airtight container and freeze for up to three months. Unbaked scones can go straight from the freezer to the oven; add 2 to 3 minutes to the baking time. Baked scones can be thawed at room temperature and reheated in a 300°F oven for 8 to 10 minutes until warm.