

Beaver Tails

If you have ever visited Ottawa in the winter months on the Rideau Canal, which is the longest skating rink in the world, they serve a sweet pastry that is essentially a flat doughnut with sugar on top.

Dough:

1/4 cup warm water
1 1/2 teaspoons active dry yeast
1 tsp sugar
1/2 cup warm milk
3 tbsp sugar
1 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 eggs
3 tbsp oil
2 - 2 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
2 tbsp melted butter

Topping:

1/4 cup granulated sugar for dusting
1 tbsp cinnamon

In a large mixing bowl, stir together the yeast, warm water and sugar. Allow mixture to stand a couple of minutes to allow yeast to grow, approx. 5 mins or until bubbles form.

Whisk in remaining sugar, milk, vanilla, eggs, oil and salt. Then using the whisk, incorporate roughly 1 cup of flour. Put the whisk aside and use a wooden spoon to incorporate the remainder of the flour to make a soft dough. Knead 5-8 minutes by hand slowing adding flour as needed to form a firm, smooth, elastic dough. Place in a greased bowl, cover with plastic wrap. (If not using right away, you can refrigerate the dough at this point). Let rise in a covered, lightly greased bowl, about 30 minutes. Gently deflate dough, (if dough is coming out of the fridge, allow to warm up about 40 minutes before proceeding).

Pinch off a golf ball sized piece of dough. Roll out into an oval and let rest, covered with a tea towel, while you are preparing the remaining dough.

Preheat the convection oven to 400F

Stretch the ovals into a tail - thinning them out and enlarging them as you do. Place the beaver tails on a parchment lined baking sheet, lightly brush with melted butter on both sides of the dough.

Bake for 15 mins or until golden brown. Toss the beaver tails in sugar mixture while hot and shake off excess.

Ginger Beef

This recipe originated in the Calgary Chinese community - a "must" for out-of-towners!

Ingredients:

1 lb. flank steak
1 egg, beaten
3/4 cup cornstarch
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup vegetable oil (separated)
2/3 cup thinly julienned carrots
2 Tbsp. chopped green onion
4 Tbsp. finely chopped ginger root
4 cloves garlic, minced
3 Tbsp. soy sauce
2 Tbsp. white cooking wine
2 Tbsp. rice vinegar
1 Tbsp. sesame oil
1/2 cup sugar
dash, crushed red chili flakes

**** 1 cup of rice + 2 cups of water, cook as directed. Set aside. ****

Instructions:

1. Slice steak while partially frozen into narrow strips. Mix beef and eggs.
2. Dissolve cornstarch in water and mix with beef.
3. Pour half of the oil in deep sauté pan. Heat to on medium heat until it is hot, but not smoking.
4. Add 1/4 of the beef to oil at a time. Separate with a fork (or chopsticks if you're talented) and cook, stirring frequently until crispy. Remove from oil and drain on paper towel and set aside. Add more oil in the next batches; continue until all beef is cooked. Set aside.
5. In a small bowl, mix soya sauce, white wine, rice vinegar, sesame oil, sugar and chili flakes. Set aside.
6. Put 1 Tbsp. oil in a clean frying pan. Add carrots, onion, ginger and garlic and stir-fry over high heat. Add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil.
7. Add beef, mix well and serve with rice of course!

Serves 4

Bannock Tacos

1½ hours | 1 hour prep

Ingredients:

2 cups flour
1 tsp quick rise yeast
2 tbsp sugar
2 tbsp vegetable oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup water
2 tbsp melted butter

Topping:

1/2 lb lean ground beef
2 tbsp taco seasoning
¼ cup water
1 cup grated cheddar cheese
½ cup chopped iceberg lettuce
1 tomato
½ cup each salsa and sour cream

Directions:

1. Mix flour, yeast, sugar and salt together in a bowl.
2. In a 4 cup liquid measure, add vegetable oil and water.
3. Make a well in the middle of the dry ingredients and using a wooden spoon, slowly stir in oil and warm water.
4. Starting from the center and working outwards in a circle motion, more and more flour will slowly work its way to form dough.
5. Start to knead the dough until all the flour is worked in, about 5 mins. Shape into a ball.
6. Lightly grease the bowl and put the dough back into the bowl. Cover with a damp towel
7. Let sit until doubled in size. You can also make a proof box in the oven with a pan of boiling water. (This will take about 20 mins)
8. In a sauté pan, brown the beef; drain off the fat into a metal tin. Then add taco seasoning and water, cook until the water evaporates. Set aside.
9. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
10. Divide the dough into 4 equal pieces and roll dough out to a 1/2 cm thickness on a well floured surface.
11. Lightly brush each side with melted butter and bake on a parchment lined sheet until golden brown.
12. Plate bannock on the plate with desired toppings, fold and enjoy!

Nanaimo Bars

Named after the city of Nanaimo in British Columbia, the first time this square was published under that name was in the early 1950's in the Vancouver Sun newspaper! This version of the original bar is from Company's Coming - 150 Delicious Squares! Later versions change the vanilla custard layer to mint or peanut butter but the original is my favorite.

BOTTOM LAYER

- ½ cup butter softened
- ¼ cup granular sugar
- 5 tablespoons cocoa
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 ¾ cups graham cracker crumbs
- ½ cup finely chopped walnuts
- 1 cup fine coconut

MIDDLE LAYER

- 1/2 cup margarine
- 3 tablespoon milk
- 2 tablespoons vanilla custard powder
- 2 cups icing sugar

TOPPING

- 2/3 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 4 tablespoons margarine

Directions:

1. **BOTTOM LAYER:** Melt first 3 ingredients in top of double boiler or heavy saucepan.
2. Add egg & stir to cook & thicken.
3. Remove from heat.
4. Stir in remaining ingredients & press firmly into a parchment lined 9 x 9-inch pan.
5. **MIDDLE LAYER:** Cream all ingredients together; beat until light.
6. Spread over bottom layer.
7. **TOPPING:** Melt chips & butter over low heat; cool.
8. When cooled but still runny, spread over middle layer.
9. Chill in refrigerator. Cut into squares.

The Best Classic Canadian Butter Tarts (makes 12)

Ingredients

For the Pastry *DAY 1*

- 2 ¼ cups flour
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- ½ tsp salt
- 1/2 cup shortening, Very cold and cut in cubes
- 1/2 cup butter, Very cold and cut in cubes
- 6 tbsp ice water, approximately, enough to bring the dough together

For the Filling *DAY 2*

- 1/2 cup lightly packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup corn syrup
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp salt
- ½ cup raisins, OR pecans OR walnuts

DAY 1: To prepare the pastry

1. Cut the cold butter and shortening into the flour sugar and salt using a pastry blender until the shortening or butter is reduced to pea sized pieces – this will take awhile!
2. Sprinkle the water over the surface and toss with a fork until the water is just incorporated into the dough. Do not over work the dough; handle it only enough so that the dough stays together.
3. Form the dough into two rounds about an inch thick.
4. Wrap in plastic wrap and put in the fridge for tomorrow!

Day 2 INSTRUCTIONS

1. Roll out dough on lightly floured surface. Cut into rounds with 4 inch cutter. Fit into muffin cups. Chill in the fridge or freezer while you prepare the filling. Cold pastry heading into a hot oven will always be flakier.

Day 2 :To make the filling

1. Combine all filling ingredients except raisins.
2. Mix well.
3. Sprinkle raisins in a single layer in the bottom of the pastry lined muffin cups.
4. Fill 2/3 full with syrup mixture.
5. Bake on bottom shelf of oven at 425 degrees F for 12 to 15 minutes.
6. Cool completely on a wire rack and remove tarts from pans.