

Cornbread

Makes one 9-inch cornbread

You may have some “thoughts” about this cornbread. First, if you are the sort who believes cornbread should be strictly savory, nary a whisper of sugar, baked in nothing but a pool of bacon grease inside a cast-iron skillet, skip this recipe. This is not going to make you happy. If you believe cornbread, like any other quick-bread-type delicacy, should have just enough sugar to balance out the salt, baked in whatever the hell you have on hand, then I think you’re going to absolutely love it. Second, there is mayonnaise in this cornbread. Please do not let this freak you out—mayonnaise is just oil and eggs (two ingredients typically found in cornbread), so it really isn’t that strange if you think about it. Are you still thinking about it? If you simply can’t fathom the addition, sour cream also works. But please, try to trust me on this one.

Ingredients

1 stick/4 ounces/115g unsalted butter, melted, plus more softened butter for serving

1 cup/145g all-purpose flour

1 cup/130g coarse cornmeal

½ cup/90g packed light brown sugar

1 tablespoon/12g baking powder

1¼ teaspoons/5g kosher salt

1 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper (optional)

2 large eggs

¾ cup/170g mayonnaise, sour cream, or a mix of both

½ cup/120g buttermilk

Honey, for serving

Flaky sea salt, for serving

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Spoon a bit (a tablespoon or so) of the melted butter into the bottom of a 9-inch pie plate, cake pan, or cast-iron skillet (any 1-quart/1-liter baking dish). Using a brush or your fingers (I am using my fingers), grease the dish all along the bottom and up the sides.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, cornmeal, brown sugar, baking powder, salt, and pepper (if using).
4. In another medium bowl or measuring cup, whisk together the eggs, mayonnaise, and buttermilk.
5. Whisk the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, but just until combined (a few dry spots/lumps are okay). Add the remaining melted butter to the batter and gently fold until it’s totally incorporated.
6. Pour the batter into the prepared pan, smooth the top, and bake until the edges are deeply browned and crispy and the top is a lovely, sunflower-y golden yellow color (if it cracks, I’m into that), 20–25 minutes.
7. Remove from oven and let cool a few minutes before slicing into. While you wait, if you like, mix some softened butter with a good amount of honey and a healthy pinch of flaky salt. Mix until shiny, glossy, and spreadable and serve with the cornbread.

DO AHEAD: The cornbread can be baked 2 days ahead, tightly wrapped in plastic, and stored at room temperature. It’ll last up to 5 days in the fridge, but you’ll want to toast in butter or griddle it before serving.

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