

BACON CHEDDAR POPOVERS

INGREDIENTS

1 3/4 cups whole milk, warmed
2 cups bread flour (you can use AP Flour, but they won't puff quite as much)
4 large eggs, room temperature
6 lardons bacon, fried until just crispy, fat reserved (you will need 2 tablespoon bacon grease)
1/3 cup finely grated cheddar cheese
1 tablespoon fresh herbs, very finely minced (I used parsley and rosemary)

You will also need: a 6-cavity popover pan (alternatively, a 12-cavity muffin tin will work)

DIRECTIONS

Place the milk in a bowl and microwave on high for approximately 90 seconds, or until warm to the touch. Spoon the flour into a cup and level it off with a knife (do not shake the cup to settle the flour).

Finely crumble or mince your crispy bacon, so that you have very small pieces. Mince your herbs very finely. Grate your cheddar cheese.

In a blender combine the eggs, milk, and bacon grease; process approximately 10 seconds until blended. Add flour to egg mixture in blender. Process approximately 10 to 15 seconds or until just combined. Only mix the batter until small lumps are left in it, to reduce the risk of over mixing the batter. Scrape down the sides of the blender with a rubber spatula, if necessary. Fold in bacon pieces, cheddar cheese and herbs. Let batter rest for 60 minutes before pouring into the popover cups (this is very important -- do not skip this step!). Do **not** refrigerate the batter.

Preheat oven to 450F. Place oven rack on the middle rung and heat a empty popover pan for 5 minutes, or until it is hot.

Once oven is the correct temperature and the empty popover pan is hot, quickly remove the popover pan from the oven; lightly spray the popover cups with a nonstick spray (the tins only need a thin coating of baking spray to prevent sticking). Fill the popover cups almost to the top with the batter. If you must leave one of the cups of the popover pan empty (i.e. do not have enough batter), fill it half full of water (this will help protect the pan from the high heat). Immediately place the pan back into the oven.

Bake without opening the door for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 375F. and bake for another 20 to 25 minutes or until deep golden brown on the outside and airy on the inside. Under baking can cause popovers to collapse after they're removed from the oven. Resist the urge to open the oven door. If you open the oven door, the heat escapes, the oven cools down, the steam inside the popovers condenses, and the popovers collapse.

Remove popovers from the oven, and unmold onto a rack. Pierce the sides with the tip of a sharp knife to let steam escape (this will keep the exterior crisp, the interior moist, and prevent the popovers from collapsing), and serve immediately.