

PANCAKES & WAFFLES

Since pancakes and waffles are the most generally cooked breadstuffs in the contemporary home, we will start with them. As Sourdough Waskey points out, and as thousands can attest, they are truly ambrosia. Sourdough batter is one of the most versatile batters available to the cook today, in spite of the many instant mixes. It may take a little more time but the results are far more tasty, and can frequently be spectacular. Sourdough Jack maintains a large sourdough starter or batter of at least a half a gallon most of the time, which can be converted instantly to feed a large number of people simply elegant pancakes, or make up a generous batch of real, honest-to-goodness bread.

Following the basic Sourdough Pancake Recipe are an even dozen variations of pancakes ranging from the homely old buckwheats that used to come from grandmother's capacious range, to the delightful and spectacular flaming crepes-suzette bathed in flaming orange-flavored liqueurs. Remember, with only minor adjustments to thickness or content of the basic batter, all these — and more — can be made easily and quickly. Remember, too, that most pancakes should be made silver dollar size and fairly thin to cook properly, and should always be baked and served as directly from the griddle as possible. In the few instances this is not possible they should be held no longer than necessary, and should always be served on hot, hot plates with hot syrups, where syrup is used.

Use your imagination with toppings — for some of the following pancakes try a meat sauce, tart fruit dressing, or sour cream alone or flavored with seasoned salts, or a bit of lingonberry or strawberry jam swirled through it. Bland syrups are not the only topping available for the pancake — be it breakfast or supper. Pancakes are a splendid dish — do them justice.

Initial Preparation of Sourdough: Many people when faced with their first venture into Sourdough breadstuffs get "buck fever". This is not necessary. Granted care, enough time to ferment, and enough warmth to ferment properly, there are no mysteries to Sourdough Cookery. It is *not* instant! Allow sufficient time to preparation, and follow the directions until you are conversant enough with the habits of Sourdough Cookery before striking off on your own. Then the only limits are those of your imagination. It can be fun, and with success, bring you more satisfaction than almost any other field of cooking.

Remember, however, that Sourdough is a *yeast* and that it reacts to the same conditions all yeasts do, but that it is generally slower and always needs more warmth to insure best results. Most beginning failures are the result of the kitchen being too cold at night. Few people realize that today's kitchens are much cooler than when grandmother was stoking the old wood range, and breadstuffs were easier to handle because kitchen temperatures were nearly ideal.

For best results with bread, Sourdough Jack recommends unbleached white

hard winter wheat flour. It makes a more delectable and nutritious loaf of bread. The flour may not be available at your local grocery store. Ask for it at gourmet or health food stores. Most flour in grocery stores today is all-purpose flour — all right for pancakes, cookies and cakes, but not a good *bread* flour.

B A S I C B A T T E R

The words “batter,” “starter,” and “sponge” are used interchangeably — particularly before ingredients other than flour and water are added. “Sponge” generally denotes a thicker dough in preparation for making bread rather than “batter” for pancakes. The only real difference in the two is the amount of flour used in relation to water. So do not be confused by this interchangeable use of the terms.

In the case of pancakes we want a thin starter hence the term basic batter is used here. To produce the basic batter simply follow the instructions in step five of my five step method. (p. 31)

The idea of expanding your starter in order to produce the quantity called for in the recipe is truly *basic to virtually every recipe we have*. The amount of batter or sponge you wish to produce depends on how much flour and water is added. Step five will produce 5½ cups of basic batter. After removing 1 cup and returning it to your sourdough pot, you'll have 4½ cups of basic batter for your pancakes.

Set your basic batter out the evening before you wish to make pancakes. Remember to place in a very warm spot to insure complete fermentation.



P A N C A K E S

The next morning, put 1 or 2 cups of this starter back into your sourdough starter pot. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use again. To the batter remaining in the bowl add:

- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- ¼ cup instant dry milk or evaporated milk

Beat thoroughly. Then combine:

- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 tablespoons sugar

Blend together until smooth, eliminating any lumps of soda. Sprinkle evenly over top of batter; fold in gently. This will cause a gentle foaming, rising action.

(NOTE: This is a modern version of Frank Waskey's method of mixing the soda and water together before adding to the batter as mentioned in "Ambrosia". The author believes this revised method superior because it retains more of the leavening in the batter, thus insuring a lighter product.)

Allow batter to rest a few minutes, then fry on a hot *lightly* greased griddle. If pancakes do not brown rapidly and sizzle slightly as you drop each spoonful of batter on the griddle it isn't hot enough. Let me repeat, always make dollar size pancakes using a tablespoon full of batter for each pancake. If your batter seems too thick, it wasn't warm enough during the night and didn't ferment sufficiently — a common fault of modern kitchens. It may be thinned with a little milk. The sourdough pancake batter is normally fairly thin but lively. You'll find that sourdough pancakes require a hotter griddle than other pancakes.

The above basic recipe should make between 25 to 30 dollar size pancakes and feed 3 or 4 persons, depending on how hungry they are.

If you wish to increase your amounts of pancakes or bread to serve quite a number of people, always increase the amount of starter in *proportion*. Do this by making the basic batter above, a day or two in advance of time to serve. You can double, triple, quadruple and so on *ad infinitum* until, as I occasionally do, you will find yourself serving from 10 to 500 people. The Sourdough Starter (Leavener) should always be *proportionate to the amount of flour and water* (Basic Batter) you want to make up.

Apple Pancakes: Grate tart cooking apples or core and slice thinly. Combine apple with basic batter or drop onto uncooked side of pancake before turning.

Banana Pancakes: Slice thinly or mash banana. Combine with basic batter or drop slices onto uncooked side of pancake before turning.

PANCAKE VARIATIONS

Blueberry Pancakes: Drain blueberries well (failure to drain well will give you purple pancakes). Add berries to basic batter or drop onto uncooked side of pancake before turning.

Buckwheat Pancakes: This marvelous old standby has been terribly mistreated in recent years. To make it more tasty and digestible it must be leavened with Sourdough as it was back home in Grandma's vast old kitchen. Use basic batter recipe but *make up a separate starter* for the buckwheats, or you will spoil your basic all-purpose starter. Use half buckwheat flour and half white flour in making up your buckwheat starter. After trying once, more or less buckwheat flour may be used according to your own personal taste.

Clam Pancakes: When Sourdough Jack was small, these were called clam fritters and are among his fondest memories of his mother's cooking skill. Take the finest chopped or minced clams you can find. If desired, add a very small amount of clam liquor to the basic batter. Then, either add the drained clams to the batter or drop onto uncooked side of pancake before turning. These are fine supper pancakes and add real character to any menu. Try them with just plain butter.

Corn Meal Pancakes: Corn meal in pancakes should be used with discretion since it cooks more slowly than other flours used in the batter. For a colorful, crisper pancake with delightful taste use no more corn meal than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the flour measurement. In other words, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup yellow corn meal and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup flour for every cup flour called for in plain recipe.

Hominy Pancakes: To the basic batter, add 1 cup drained golden hominy, or drop onto uncooked side of pancakes before turning. These make excellent breakfast or supper pancakes.

Potato Pancakes: This, an old German favorite, is a fine dinner accompaniment to roast beef or whatever your main meat course. Partially cook two medium-sized potatoes by boiling about 10 minutes. Grate fine and add to basic batter. Fry on hot, greased griddle until brown.

Shrimp Pancakes: This one is related to Clam Fritters and is delicious. Drain small canned shrimp and rinse with cold water. Drop onto uncooked side of pancake before turning. Eaten with lemon butter they are a special treat.

Crepes-Suzette: This pancake, of course, is a masterpiece inherited from the French, and only proves the versatility of Sourdough Batter. The basic batter for making these crepes should be thinner than usual — about the consistency of heavy cream. Use a little more milk and an additional egg, if necessary, to achieve the proper consistency. When planning to make Crepes-Suzette, prepare the Orange Liqueur Sauce first and keep it hot so it will be ready when the pancakes are baked.

To basic batter add $\frac{1}{2}$ stick ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup) butter or margarine, melted, and 1 tablespoon cognac.

Heat a 6-inch heavy iron skillet over burner. When pan is hot, melt sufficient butter in it to form a thin film on bottom; tilt pan back and forth to cover evenly. Pour a small amount of batter in center of pan; tilt pan until batter covers entire bottom. When golden brown on underside, turn. Check browning by lifting up edge of crepe with spatula.

When crepe is browned on both sides, lift or slide crepe onto paper towel; fold crepe into quarters or fold and hold in warm oven while baking remaining crepes.

Dip folded or rolled crepes in sauce and arrange attractively in pan. Sprinkle liberally with powdered sugar. Then pour $\frac{1}{3}$ cup heated cognac over the crepes, light and serve.

Orange Liqueur Sauce

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sifted powdered sugar
- 6 tablespoons sweet butter
- Grated rind of 1 orange
- Grated rind of 1 lemon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup strained orange juice
- 3 tablespoons Grand Marnier
- 2 tablespoons Cointreau
- 2 tablespoons Benedictine
- 1 tablespoon Kirsch

Combine sugar, butter, rinds and orange juice in a 10-inch crepes pan or one of the porcelainized frying pans. Bring to a boil, stirring; reduce heat and simmer for 6 minutes. Add liqueurs.

P A N C A K E T O P P I N G S

Spread pancakes with sour cream and top with strawberry jam. Roll up and sprinkle with powdered sugar.

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Sprinkle pancakes generously with grated semi-sweet chocolate. Roll up and serve with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream.

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Top pancakes with sliced fresh strawberries, slightly sweetened and laced with Cointreau or Port.

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Sprinkle pancakes with brown or maple sugar. Top with sour cream or softened cream cheese.

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Roll up pancakes with small curd cottage cheese. Brush with butter, drizzle with lemon juice and sprinkle with sugar. Run under broiler to lightly glaze.

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W A F F L E S

Use the basic pancake recipe but add two more tablespoons of oil to make a richer batter and prevent sticking on the griddle. Use slightly hotter waffle iron than when baking regular waffles. No other change is necessary; this batter makes the finest, crispest waffles you have ever eaten — and they retain the distinctive tang of sourdough.

Sourdough Waffle Variations

Almost every pancake variation above except for Crepes Suzette can be tried in the waffle iron by either including the variation flavoring in the batter or dropping it on the uncooked side of the waffle before closing the lid. To these variations, and particularly good with waffles, can be added breakfast meats:

Link Sausage: Slice and drop slices on uncooked batter, close top.

Bacon: Lay bacon over the uncooked batter, close top.

Canadian Bacon: Lay bacon over the uncooked batter, close top.

Ham: Slice thin and lay over uncooked batter, close top.

Add 1 cup chopped filberts, pecans or walnuts to batter. Top baked waffles with coffee ice cream and a drizzle of chocolate or butterscotch sauce.

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Fold 1 cup drained whole kernel corn into waffle batter. Spoon creamed chicken or shrimp on baked waffles for a hearty supper dish.

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Blend $\frac{1}{2}$ cup maple syrup with 1 cup honey and $\frac{1}{3}$ cup butter. Heat and serve on waffles. If you enjoy spice in your waffle syrup, stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon. Or, add a teaspoon of slivered orange or lemon peel.

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Top waffles with sliced and sweetened fresh peaches or strawberries as they come hot from the baker. Spoon on a topper of 1 cup whipping cream beaten stiff with 2 teaspoons sugar; fold in 2 tablespoons Sherry or Cointreau.

Use your imagination in toppings — for some of the following pancakes try a sweet sour barbecue meat sauce, tart fruit syrup, or sour cream alone or flavored with seasoned salts. Or try a bit of loganberry jam, strawberry jam, lime or ginger marmalade marbled through sour cream. Get genuine maple syrup! It is worth the price for what it does for Sourdough pancakes and waffles.

In mixing the preserves and sour cream use $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of preserves to $\frac{2}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ sour cream, depending on your sweet tooth. Do not mix vigorously — just marble or swirl them through; more attractive and more contrast in taste that way.

If you are serving syrup — serve it *hot*. Then you may wish to follow an old Sourdough custom and add a shot of good brandy to the syrup pitcher before serving. Either serve butter at room temperature or whip it in your food mixer with a small amount of milk. Pancakes should never have cold butter or syrup on them.