

British Style Currant Scones

3 cups all-purpose flour (15 ounces)
1/3 cup sugar, (2 1/3 ounces)
2 Tablespoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
8 Tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
and softened
3/4 cup dried currants
1 cup whole milk
2 large eggs



Adjust rack to upper-middle position, heat oven to 500°F. Line rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Pulse flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in processor until combined, about 5 pulses. Add butter and pulse until fully incorporated and mixture looks like very fine crumbs with no visible butter, about 20 pulses. Transfer to bowl and stir in currants.

Whisk milk and eggs together in second bowl. Set aside 2 tablespoons milk mixture. Add remaining milk mixture to flour mixture and, using rubber spatula, fold together until almost no dry bits of flour remain.

Transfer dough to well-floured counter and gather into ball. With floured hands, knead until surface is smooth and free of cracks, 25-30 times. Press gently to form disk. Using floured rolling pin, roll into 9-inch round, about 1 inch thick. Using floured 2 1/2 -inch round cutter, stamp out 8 rounds, recoating cutter with flour if it begins to stick. Arrange scones on prepared sheet. Gather dough scraps, form into ball, and knead gently until surface is smooth. Roll dough to 1-inch thickness and stamp out 4 rounds. Discard remaining dough.

Brush tops with reserved milk mixture. Reduce oven to 425°F and bake scones until risen and golden brown, 10 to 12 minutes, rotating sheet halfway through baking. Transfer scones to wire rack and let cool for at least 10 minutes. Serve scones warm or at room temperature. Makes 12 scones.

British scones are not as sweet or as rich as American scones, making them more suitable for serving with butter and jam. To make the fluffiest scones, we add more than the usual amount of leavening. Rather than leaving pieces of cold butter in the dry ingredients as we do for flaky biscuits, we worked in softened butter thoroughly until it was fully integrated. This protected some of the flour granules from moisture, which in turn limited gluten development and kept the crumb tender and cakey. We add currants for tiny bursts of fruit flavor and brush some reserved milk and egg on top for enhanced browning.