

Cheese Straw Biscuits with Country Ham
Recipe by Katherine Cobbs
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Yield: 16 to 18 biscuits

Ingredients

For the biscuits

4½ cups sifted all-purpose flour
1½ tbsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. sugar
1 tbsp. dry mustard
2½ tsp. kosher salt
1 tsp. garlic powder
½ tsp. cayenne
¾ cup cold unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
8 oz. extra-sharp cheddar cheese, freshly shredded
1¾ cups buttermilk
Tomato chutney-mustard butter (recipe follows)
12 oz. thinly sliced cooked country ham

For the tomato chutney-mustard butter

½ cup salted butter, softened
¼ tsp. dry mustard
2 tbsp. tomato chutney
1 tbsp. grainy Dijon mustard

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Combine dry ingredients in the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade; pulse 2 or 3 times to combine. Sprinkle a layer of cold butter pieces evenly over the mixture and toss with hands or a spoon until all the pieces are lightly floured (so they don't clump together). Pulse 10 to 12 times until mixture resembles coarse meal. Sprinkle shredded cheese over the top of the flour mixture in batches, tossing as before after each addition to coat with flour until you've added all the cheese. Pulse 2 or 3 more times to distribute cheese throughout. Transfer mixture to a large mixing bowl and make a well in the center. (You can also do the above with hands or a pastry cutter in a mixing bowl.)
3. Pour the buttermilk into the well. Fold the flour into the buttermilk with a spatula until the dry ingredients are just moistened and no liquid remains. The dough will be a rough, shaggy mass. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface. Knead about a dozen times or until dough comes together, flouring hands and surface to keep the dough from sticking.
4. Roll dough into a ½-inch-thick rectangle. Fold in one short side of the dough up and over the center of the rectangle and the other short side of the dough up and over the first. Roll the dough again into a ½-inch-thick rectangle. Repeat the fold-and-roll to

create a ½-inch-thick rectangle. Cut out biscuits with a 2½-to-3-inch round biscuit cutter, pressing straight down without twisting. Or instead, cut the dough into squares with a chef's knife, cutting straight down rather than slicing. (Twisting or slicing flattens the edges of the biscuits, impeding their rise in the oven.)

5. Place the biscuits close together on the baking sheet for a higher rise, or with room between for a wider spread. Brush tops with buttermilk, if desired. Bake 15 to 18 minutes or until biscuits have risen and tops are golden. Transfer biscuits to a wire rack to cool at least 5 minutes.
6. **Make the tomato chutney–mustard butter:** Beat butter and dry mustard with an electric mixer on high speed for a few minutes until light and fluffy. Gently stir in chutney and mustard. Transfer to a small bowl, cover, and chill until ready to serve.
7. **Assemble:** Split each biscuit in half. Spread a bit of the tomato chutney–mustard butter on cut sides. Layer the bottom half of each biscuit with ham and top with other biscuit half. To reheat before a party, loosely wrap the assembled biscuits in foil and then place them in a 350°F oven for 5 to 8 minutes.