

Antebellum Coarse Grits

Time: In a slow cooker with no overnight soak, two hours and 10 to 15 minutes; in a saucepan with an overnight soak, 50 minutes; in a saucepan with no soak, 90 minutes.

Created in the tradition of the stone-ground, hand-milled grits of the Antebellum era, Anson Mills coarse grits have a large particle size that imparts a toothsome texture and pronounced corn flavor. Coarse grits do take time to cook—about an hour, at least—but are any cook's first choice when served as a stand-alone dish or as a complement to entrées such as fish, greens, or eggs. They make beautiful grits cakes, too.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe you will need a fine tea strainer, a slow cooker or a medium heavy-bottomed saucepan with a tight-fitting lid, an additional small saucepan if you're using a saucepan, and a wooden spoon. A rubber spatula works best for stirring grits in the slow cooker.

Ingredients

1 cup (6 ounces) Anson Mills Antebellum Coarse Grits (white or yellow)

Spring or filtered water

Fine sea salt

2 to 3 tablespoons unsalted butter

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Directions

1. For a slow cooker: Place the grits in the slow cooker and cover them with 3 cups water. Stir once. Allow the grits to settle a full minute, tilt the vessel, and skim off and discard the chaff and hulls with a fine tea strainer. Cover the slow cooker and turn the heat setting to high. Cook, stirring once or twice, until the grits are creamy and tender, but not mushy, throughout and hold their shape on a spoon, about two hours and ten or 15 minutes. (Cook times in slow cookers may vary slightly depending on the capacity of the individual cooker and its heat settings.) Season with 1 teaspoon salt and stir in the butter with vigorous strokes. Add more salt, if desired, and the black pepper.

2. For saucepan cookery: Place the grits in a medium heavy-bottomed saucepan and cover them with 2 1/2 cups water. Stir once. Allow the grits to settle a full minute, tilt the pan, and skim off and discard the chaff and hulls with a fine tea strainer. Cover and let stand overnight at room temperature. Note: If you have not soaked the grits, cover them with 2 1/2 cups water, and skim off and discard the chaff and hulls as directed above.

3. Set the saucepan over medium heat and bring to a simmer, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, until the first starch takes hold, 5 to 8 minutes. Reduce the heat to the lowest possible setting and cover. Meanwhile, heat 2 cups water in a small saucepan and keep hot. Cook the grits, covered, over low heat, stirring every 10 minutes or so, and adding small amounts of the hot water to the grits when they become thick and the spoon can stand upright, about 1 1/2 cups water or more in 4 or 5 additions. Cook until the grits are creamy and tender, but not mushy, throughout and hold their shape on a spoon, about 50 or 90 minutes, depending on whether or not they were soaked. Add 1 teaspoon salt halfway through the

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cooking time. To finish, uncover the pot and stir in the butter with vigorous strokes. Add more salt, if desired, and the black pepper.

Serves 4 to 6 as a side dish.