

Red May Crisps

Time: About 1 hour

Thin and flaky? Difficult, but not impossible. Not if you're a homemade cracker. These lovely crisps have a sweet, wheaty nuttiness and the signature filigree crunch of Anson Mills Colonial-Style Whole Grain Wheat Flour, milled from Red May wheat. (Flecks of bran that drift through sifting screens during milling account for the captivating finish.) They are delightful under any cloak, from chicken liver mousse to pimento cheese

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe you will need parchment paper; a food processor; a rolling pin (we prefer a French, or tapered, rolling pin because it feels nimble and agile); a ruler; a fluted pastry or pizza wheel; an 18 by 13-inch sheet pan; and a dinner fork.

Ingredients

1 cup (5 ounces) Anson Mills Colonial-Style Whole Grain Wheat Flour

2 teaspoons granulated sugar

1/4 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt

2 tablespoons cold unsalted European-style butter, cut into thin slices

1/4 cup spring or filtered water, boiling

Directions

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 300 degrees. Cut 2 sheets of parchment paper, each one measuring 16 1/2 by 12 inches. Place the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in a food processor and pulse to combine. Scatter the butter slices over and pulse until the mixture resembles fine meal, about ten 1-second pulses. With the food processor running, add the water slowly (you may not need the full amount), processing until the dough clears the sides of the bowl, about 3 seconds.

2. Transfer the dough to one of the parchment paper sheets. Cover with the second sheet and roll the dough into a 15 1/2 by 12-inch rectangle of even thickness. Using a ruler and a fluted pastry or pizza wheel, trim the edges of the dough that extend beyond the parchment paper. Carefully peel off the top sheet of parchment paper. Trim one or both of the short sides so that the dough rectangle measures 15 inches long. Then, along the long side of the rectangle, make small notches marking 6 even rows, each about 2 1/2 inches wide. Along the short side, make small notches marking 6 even rows, each about 2 inches wide. Using the ruler and pastry wheel, cut at the notch

Baking Notes

Not everybody gets excited about making crackers. But if a craft project strikes your fancy, if the discipline of creating finely wrought little rectangles brings you satisfaction, and if the thought of delicate, lightly salted crackers with pure, simple ingredients (not a transfat in sight) makes you swoon, you will love making these.

The processing part of the recipe is a cinch—30 seconds and it's done. The rolling and cutting of the dough does require some handiwork, but mostly it requires patience. Parchment paper on top of and beneath the dough allows you to make mistakes: You can lightly reroll, re-shape, even patch. As long as you ultimately reach the dimensions specified, you and the crackers will be fine. There should be very little dough left over—just trimmings, basically.

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marks to divide the rectangle into 36 evenly sized biscuits. Prick each biscuit with a dinner fork.

3. Slip the parchment paper onto an inverted 18 by 13-inch sheet pan and bake until the crisps are brown and dry, about 30 minutes. Slide the parchment paper with the crisps onto a wire rack and let cool to room temperature. The crisps will have miraculously separated themselves during baking.

Makes 3 dozen 2 1/2 by 2-inch crisps