

# Corn Cherry Scones excellent

*A few years ago, we trained a group of people starting a new bakery cooperative. In order to do this, we opened the store on Mondays, a day we had been closed on for years. A lot of experimenting was done on those Monday mornings. This is one of the creations from those hectic training days. We tried the corn cherry scone first as a muffin, then as a biscuit, until its final version emerged, a buttery, sweet scone studded with dried cherries. The cornmeal tends to make the batter heavy and slow rising, so only buttermilk is added. This acts with the leavening to create a lighter scone. The initial high oven temperature also helps give this scone a push so it doesn't flatten out while baking. It crumbles when eaten, and the crumbs are very popular with the sparrows and dogs that hang out in front of the store.*

## MAKES 10 TO 12 SCONES

Preparation time including baking: 45 minutes

- 2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2/3 cup plus 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 1/2 cups medium-grind yellow cornmeal
- 1 cup (2 sticks) cold unsalted butter, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 3/4 cup dried sweet cherries
- 1 1/4 cups buttermilk

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a baking mat.

Sift the flour, baking soda, and baking powder together into the bowl of a stand mixer or a large bowl.

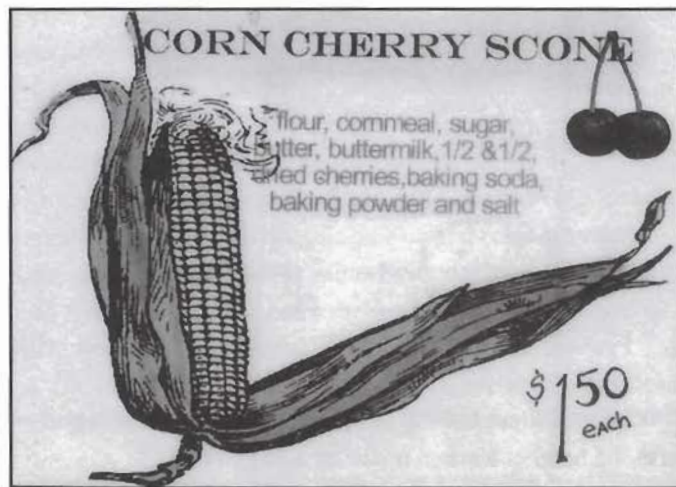
**If using a stand mixer**, add the salt, the 2/3 cup sugar, and the cornmeal to the bowl and mix with the paddle attachment on low speed until combined. Add the butter and cut it in on low speed for about 4 minutes, or until it is the size of small peas. Mix in the cherries. Make a well in the center and add the buttermilk. Mix briefly, just until the ingredients

come together; some loose flour should remain at the bottom of the bowl. Let the batter stand for 5 minutes.

**If making by hand**, add the salt, the 2/3 cup sugar, and the cornmeal to the bowl and stir with a wooden spoon until combined. Add the butter and cut it in with a pastry cutter or 2 dinner knives until it is the size of small peas. Using the spoon, mix in the cherries. Make a well in the center and add the buttermilk. Mix briefly, just until the ingredients come together; some loose flour should remain at the bottom of the bowl. Let the batter stand for 5 minutes.

Gently shape the dough into balls about 2 1/4 inches in diameter (they should have a rough, rocky exterior) and place them on the prepared pan about 2 inches apart.

Sprinkle the 1/4 cup sugar on top of the scones. Place the scones in the oven on the middle rack and immediately turn the temperature down to 375°F. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the scones are golden. Transfer the scones to a wire rack to cool.



**When I first worked here, seeing the overwhelmingly huge mountain of dough was exciting. I'd think, "How many thousands of scones do we have to make before seven o'clock and we open?"**

**—JOSÉ**