

SOUTHERN TEACAKES RECIPE

Ingredients

1 ½ cup all-purpose flour
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon baking soda

1 stick unsalted butter
¾ cup granulated sugar
1 large egg room temperature
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract



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Instructions

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, salt & baking soda. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, add butter & sugar & mix together until fluffy & smooth.
3. Add in egg & vanilla & beat until well incorporated.
4. Add in flour mixture in intervals of three, mixing after each addition.
5. After dough is mixed well, put into a Ziploc bag & place in your refrigerator for at least one hour until firm.
6. Once dough is firm, remove from the fridge & preheat your oven to 325°F.
7. Line your cookie sheet with parchment paper.
8. Scoop cookie dough the size of the tablespoon & roll into a ball. Using your thumb, gently press the center to flatten a bit & place on the sheet.
9. Leave at least 1.5 inches between each cookie dough.
10. Bake for 9-11 min. until golden brown on the edges.
11. Remove from the oven. Let cool for 5-10 min. and serve.

*By Jocelyn Delk Adams
(Grandbaby Cakes)*



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SOUTHERN TEACAKES ORIGIN

Teacakes have deep roots in African American history, dating back more than 250 years. Enslaved people in the southeastern United States developed this soft, aromatic cookie, often served to the guests of slaveholders. In enslaved households, where they did not have access to white flour or sugar, they swapped in molasses and other ingredients. Each family developed its own closely guarded recipe.

Teacakes became a symbol of Southern African American culture, celebrated in poems, songs and stories. In Maya Angelou's "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," she recalls how Mrs. Bertha Flowers, her Black teacher, made teacakes for her: "The aroma of the freshly baked cookies merged with the rich sound of her voice as she read to me." For Angelou, teacakes symbolized her self-worth and dignity and her connection to her love of language.