

Biscuits. Something about them transports me to another time and place. I grew up in a family that ate cereal and sugary treats for breakfast, while these days I usually grab a granola bar on my way out the door. But some of my favorite memories come from the breakfast table at Granny's house where we feasted on bacon and eggs, the adults lingered over coffee, and I always asked for just one more biscuit.

biscuits

by leslie ann jones

FAST AND EASY BISCUITS

*1 stick margarine, melted
1 cup self-rising flour
About 4 ounces sour cream*

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Melt margarine. Add flour and sour cream to margarine and mix with a fork until incorporated. Spoon mixture into six cups of an ungreased muffin pan. Bake for 25-30 minutes, until golden brown on top. Yield: 6 servings.

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I don't remember a time in my life when biscuits did not remind me of my grandmother. Mornings at Granny's house revolved around preparing the Southern staple. My sister and I always crashed on the couch at her house, just one thin wall away from the kitchen. We woke up to the sounds and smells of bacon frying and coffee brewing, and by the time we scurried out of bed and ran into the kitchen to "help," she had chairs pushed up to the counter ready for us to stand in.



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We climbed into the chairs, and she showed us how to knead the dough. As my fingers sank into the stickiness, Granny floured the surface of the counter to roll out the biscuits. She placed them in a cast iron skillet seasoned by years of Southern cooking, and as they baked in the oven, we hurried to wake up our parents and bring them to the table.

As I got older, I found it impossible to remember Granny's recipe for biscuits. She disdained the thought of measuring ingredients. She started with a little flour, cut in some shortening, and added buttermilk until it looked and felt right. One of my greatest regrets is that I never mastered the art of making her biscuits before she died when I was a junior in high school.

After Granny died, my family began spending most holidays at my aunt's house. Breakfasts at Aunt Jan's look a lot like those at Granny's. Her method of making biscuits involves a recipe, but they are every bit as tasty as Granny's were. Mornings stretch on for hours as we gather around the table and enjoy the warmth of each other's company.

As a college student, I became the designated assistant for Mrs. Kathy, who made biscuits for the Baptist Student Union's (BSU) Christmas party. For three years in a row, we hunkered down in a corner of the kitchen, mixing and rolling out biscuits. She taught

me that a little bit of shortening melted in the pan and brushed on top of the biscuits crisps them as they bake.

When I got married, one of the first recipes I tried was a simple biscuit I saw on a popular cooking show. This has become my go-to recipe when I crave biscuits. They don't require rolling out, but they are full of buttery goodness. When I make them, I think I may be just a little bit like Granny. I melt a stick of butter, add a cup of self-rising flour, then stir in sour cream until it looks and feels right to me.

Granny lived in Gulfport. My family watched in horror when Katrina ravaged the coastline, swallowing her neighborhood with floodwaters. Months later, I went to the coast to chaperone a disaster relief trip with the BSU, and Granny's house drew me there. I needed to see it and know that it had made it through the storm.

As I drove down her street, FEMA trailers dotted the yards, and I knew that her house must have received substantial damage. But I pulled up in front of her house, there was no trailer. I knocked on the door, and the new owners invited me inside. The moment I stepped into the kitchen, a torrent of memories washed over me. I realized that knowing Granny's precise biscuit recipe is not what matters. It is remembering those early mornings together, and I always have biscuits to remind me of them. ■