Squash Cornbread Wedges with Apple-Mustard Butter

12 cornbread wedges from two 7 in/18 cm rounds, with about 20 g apple-mustard butter each | Active 35 min | Cook 40 min | Total 190 min (cold service and transport) | Cold-travel planning: 190 min; follow the stated cooling endpoint and finishing route.

Ingredients

- 1 1/8 cups (180 g) fine cornmeal
- 1 cup (120 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp (12 g) baking powder
- 1/2 tsp (3 g) fine salt for bread
- 2 large eggs, 100 g without shells
- 1 1/4 cups (300 ml) milk
- 3/4 cup plus 1 tbsp (200 g) plain canned pumpkin or squash purée, not pie filling
- 3 tbsp (45 ml/42 g) neutral oil, divided: 2 1/2 tbsp for batter and 1/2 tbsp for pans
- 1 medium apple, peeled, cored and coarsely grated, 150 g prepared weight
- 5 1/2 tbsp (80 g) unsalted butter, divided: 10 g to cook apple and 70 g softened for mixing
- 1 tbsp plus 1 tsp (20 g) Dijon mustard
- 1 1/2 tsp (10 g) honey
- Small pinch (0.5 g) fine salt for butter

Set out

Oven, Two 7 in/18 cm round metal cake pans, at least 1 1/2 in/4 cm deep, Parchment paper, Two mixing bowls, Whisk, Small skillet, Grater, Small lidded butter container, Wire rack, Knife, Food thermometer, Cooler with ice packs

Allergens

Wheat, Milk, Egg, Mustard. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Line the pan bases and grease the sides with the measured 1/2 tbsp oil. Mix cornmeal, flour, baking powder and bread salt in one bowl. Whisk eggs, milk, pumpkin and the remaining 2 1/2 tbsp oil in the other. Fold together just until no dry flour remains.

2. Divide all batter equally between the pans and level gently. Bake 25-32 minutes until golden at the edge, firm in the center with no wet batter, and at least 160°F (71°C) in the egg-containing center. Rest in the pans 10 minutes, then turn onto the rack and cool at least 30 minutes before cutting each round into 6 wedges. For cold transport, cut the fully cooled rounds into their twelve wedges and refrigerate in a shallow layer until at 40°F (4°C) or below, planning 60-90 minutes of chilling; this overlaps the butter preparation and chilling where possible.

3. While bread bakes, melt 10 g butter in the skillet. Add the grated apple and cook over medium heat for 6-8 minutes, stirring, until tender and visibly dry. Spread shallowly and cool 15 minutes. Mash into the softened remaining 70 g butter with mustard, honey and the small pinch of salt. Refrigerate in a shallow covered container until at 40°F (4°C) or below, allowing at least 1 hour.

4. Set out 12 wedges and the cold apple-mustard butter with a clean spreading knife. Divide the butter across the portions rather than adding an unmeasured thick coating.

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Bring it

Carry fully cool cornbread protected in a box and the cold apple-mustard butter in a separate sealed container in a cooler at 40°F (4°C) or below. Include a bread knife and a small clean butter knife. During packing, travel and display, keep cold food at 40°F (4°C) or below and hot food at 140°F (60°C) or above. Allow no more than 2 hours combined outside those controls, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C). Discard food beyond that limit.

Finish at the gathering

No host cooking is needed. Cut the two rounds into six wedges each and set the butter bowl into ice. If bread was already sliced, allow 2 minutes for arranging; avoid turning a simple board into an unexpected oven booking.

Make it yours

Use the orange bread at a winter brunch or make the sweet-potato variation for a spring shared lunch. The compound butter is the surprise, so keep the serving description clear: apple, mustard, honey and dairy.

Ingredient labels

Check cornmeal and canned purée for label warnings. Honey is unsuitable for children under 12 months.

A useful detail

The 190-minute cold-ready planning estimate covers bread preparation, baking and rack cooling, then about 60-90 minutes of refrigerator chilling for the cut wedges, overlapping the apple-butter preparation and its at-least-1-hour chill where possible. Both bread and butter must actually be at 40°F (4°C) or below before cold transport; allow longer if needed. The apple-mustard butter is perishable, not canned, fermented or shelf-stable.

Another way

Replace the canned pumpkin with 200 g cooked, thoroughly drained and smooth mashed sweet potato. Cool it before adding to the wet mixture.

Use 20 g wholegrain prepared mustard instead of Dijon, checking its label.

Keep it well

Refrigerate cooled cornbread and apple-mustard butter separately at 40°F (4°C) or below for up to 3 days. Keep the butter cold during service. If warming refrigerated cornbread, heat it to 165°F (74°C) and serve promptly; do not warm the butter for prolonged holding. Respect the combined travel-and-display limit in “Bring it.”