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BAKING

Baking does not come naturally to all cooks but is worth persisting with. This is one area of cooking where temperatures, timing and quantities really matter: so measuring cups and a barbeque oven temperature gauge are invaluable tools to help you get it right.

Remember that there will be many disasters along the road to perfection, so never fear a failure (besides, something or someone will still find it palatable even if only the dog or the chooks!). Here's hoping these recipes will help you develop a new-found passion for baking.



BREADS

Most people wouldn't try making bread at home, let alone in a camp oven in the middle of nowhere. However, it's really not that difficult, and with a few shortcuts you can have spectacular success with it. The next few pages give a range of recipes that can be made from basic bread dough, using bread mix. I made flatbreads for many years from scratch, but the advent of premade bread mix has been a pleasant discovery and takes all the guesswork and mystery out of the process. The brand I use is Laucke, which comes in a box containing 4x 600g sachets with enough yeast to prepare the dough. There are many different varieties but the following recipes mostly use white bread mix. One sachet of bread mix will make 2 small square loaves, 2 small free form loaves, four small focaccias or 8 to 10 flatbreads.

FLATBREADS

Flatbreads are an unusual choice for camp oven cooking, but they are invaluable. I like to cook them over the coals on the top of the camp oven while something else is cooking inside. Flatbreads are very versatile and can be included in just about every meal.

TOTAL TIME: 45-50 mins MAKES: 8 to 10

1 bread mix and required amount of yeast and warm water

Prepare dough using the instructions on the box for a handmade loaf. Knead for about 5 minutes or until dough is elastic and smooth. It is unnecessary to let dough rise before making flatbreads, just use it straight from the first kneading. Divide dough into 8 equal portions. Generously flour the work surface and shape a piece of dough into a small disc. Roll it out flat until it is about 25cm in diameter. Heat a large heavy-based frying pan over a moderate heat source: a gas stove or camp fire is fine. Place the flatbread in the base of the dry frying pan and cook for a few minutes on each side – it really is that easy! Once cooked, place flatbreads straight into a plastic bag so they sweat: this helps to make them stay pliable so they don't crack when you wrap up your ingredients.

Tip ~ Try flatbreads as breakfast wraps filled with bacon, sausages, egg, hash browns, onions and sauces, or as lunch wraps with any filling your heart desires. For pre-dinner nibbles try salmon and caper bites, pita chips and dip (from the Five O'Clocksies section), or an antipasto platter with ripped up pieces of flatbread to dip into olive oil and dukka, or spread with your favourite relish. Snacks of flatbread toasties and quesadillas go down a treat too. And for dinner you can make Mexican tortillas, kebabs with roast meats and salads, hot meat and gravy rolls or even pizza (see following recipe).

CAMP OVEN PIZZA

No need for one of those flash and fancy pizza ovens – a camp oven does the job just as well. My preferred method is to use flatbreads made earlier: this means that the base is already done, and all that needs to be cooked is the top. Guaranteed you'll be everyone's best friend when you master the camp oven pizza!

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins **MAKES:** many as you want

pre-made flatbreads
tomato paste
your favourite pizza toppings
grated cheese

Spread spoonfuls of tomato paste over the flatbreads, add your favourite toppings, then sprinkle cheese over the top. (The toppings are an entirely personal thing and as long as you have tomato paste and cheese just about any combination of a few basic ingredients will satisfy the mob.) Place the pizza on a tray and put in a hot camp oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the middle, for 10 to 15 minutes. The idea is to quickly cook the toppings and melt the cheese and not overcook the base – so all the heat needs to be on the top.

CHEESE & BACON ROLLS

TOTAL TIME: 60-90 mins **MAKES:** 6

1 sachet of bread mix and required amount of yeast and warm water
1 cup grated tasty cheese
1 cup finely chopped bacon

Grease a 25cm pizza tray and a mixing bowl with spray oil. Prepare dough using the instructions on the box for a handmade loaf, then knead for about 5 minutes or until dough is elastic and smooth. Place dough into the mixing bowl covered with a plastic shopping bag and allow it to rise in a warm position until it has doubled in size. Re-knead the dough for another 5 minutes and cut into 6 pieces. Knead each piece into a ball and place 3 balls onto the pizza tray. Repeat for the rest, and allow to rise for about 20 minutes. Sprinkle with cheese and bacon and cook in a moderate to hot camp oven, on a high trivet with the coals scraped to the edges, for about 20 minutes. For the last few minutes scrape the coals to the centre to brown the bacon and cheese.



camp oven pizza

CALZONES AND BLACK OLIVE & SUNDRIED TOMATO FOCACCIA

Calzones are an Italian take on a traditional English Cornish pastie.

TOTAL TIME: 60-90 mins **MAKES:** 4 calzones + 2 focaccia

CALZONES

1 bread mix and required amount of yeast and warm water

1 cup of chorizo cut to a small dice

1 onion, finely diced

¼ cup sliced black olives

¼ cup sliced sundried tomatoes

½ cup finely diced bacon

4 tablespoons tomato paste

½ cup grated cheese

Grease a baking tray and a large bowl with spray oil. Make bread dough according to the instructions for a handmade loaf on the side of the box. Knead for about 5 minutes and return to the oiled bowl covered with a plastic shopping bag. Allow to rise until it has doubled in size. In a pan on the stovetop lightly cook all ingredients except tomato paste and cheese. Drain fat and allow to cool. Re-knead dough and divide in half. Return one half to the bowl and cover so it doesn't dry out. Cut remaining dough into 4 even pieces; roll out till about 15cm in diameter. Spread 1 tablespoon of tomato paste to within 1cm of the edges, then on each disc put a small amount of the meat mixture and sprinkle with cheese. Wet the edges of the disc with water or milk and fold one side over to the other to encase fillings. Press

edges down with a fork. Prick a couple of air holes in the top and brush with milk or beaten egg. Set aside for a few minutes for dough to rise slightly. Place on tray in a hot camp oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the edges, and cook for about 15 minutes. Scrape coals to the middle and cook for a further 5 minutes or until brown and crusty.

BLACK OLIVE AND SUNDRIED TOMATO FOCACCIA

remainder of the dough from the calzones or half a batch of dough

½ cup sliced black olives

½ cup sliced sundried tomatoes

rock salt

Grease a couple of 25cm pizza trays with spray oil. Cut remaining dough in half and flatten the portions to fit the trays. Let the dough rise for about 20 minutes, then press ingredients into the top. Sprinkle with a little rock salt and cook in a moderate to hot camp oven, on a high trivet with the coals scraped to the edges, for about 20 minutes. In the last few minutes scrape the coals to the centre to brown the top.

Tip ~ Other ingredients that work well are capers, grated cheese, capsicum, antipasto mixes and smoked salmon. The idea with focaccia is not to load it up with ingredients: two to three toppings is plenty.



calzones and black olive & sundried tomato focaccia

CHEESY VEGEMITE PINWHEELS & POPPYSEED PULL-APART DINNER ROLLS

TOTAL TIME: 60-90 mins MAKES: 6-8 pinwheels 6-8 rolls

1 sachet bread mix and required amount of yeast
and warm water
1 small jar of Vegemite

1 cup grated cheese
poppy seeds

PINWHEELS

Grease a baking tray and a mixing bowl with spray oil. Prepare dough using the instructions on the box for a handmade loaf, and knead for about 5 minutes or until dough is elastic and smooth. Place dough into the mixing bowl, covered with a plastic shopping bag, and allow to rise in a warm position until it has doubled in size. Re-knead the dough for another 5 minutes and cut into 2 pieces. Return one piece to the bowl and cover, cut the other piece into two and roll both pieces out to about 1 cm thickness. Spread with a little Vegemite and sprinkle with cheese, then roll up dough to make a log. Cut log into 2 cm lengths, stand lengths on the cut end and evenly space on the baking tray. Set tray aside in a warm place to let dough rise. Allow dough to double in size, then cook in a moderate to hot oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the edges, for about 15 to 20 minutes. For last five minutes of cooking scrape coals to the centre to brown the tops of the pinwheels.

POPPYSEED PULL-APART DINNER ROLLS

Grease a baking tray with spray oil. Divide the other half of the dough into 6 small pieces. Knead into balls and evenly space on the tray. Brush with a little milk and lightly sprinkle with poppy seeds. Set aside in a warm protected spot and allow to rise until doubled in size. Cook in a moderate to hot oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the sides, for 15 to 20 minutes. Scrape coals to the middle for the last five minutes for browning.

Tip ~ Cheese and Vegemite are great for the kids, but you can also substitute ingredients like tomato paste, feta, olives, capers and sundried tomatoes for a variety of delicious pinwheels. Or for a sweet treat, add some chopped dried fruits and brown sugar. Follow the instructions up to the point where you start adding the fillings, and then go wild with whichever flavours you choose!

cheesy vegemite pinwheels



GRAINY CHEESE, SUNDRIED TOMATO & OLIVE COB

TOTAL TIME: 60-90 mins | MAKES: 2 cob loaves

600 g sachet of grainy bread mix
required amount of yeast and warm water
1 cup of cheese cut into small cubes
½ cup of sliced black olives
½ cup of sundried tomatoes

Grease two baking trays and a large bowl with spray oil. Combine bread mix, cheese, olives and tomatoes in another large mixing bowl. Mix together and make a well in the middle. Put yeast in the well and pour in $\frac{3}{4}$ of the warm water – because of the other ingredients the mix may not need all the water so add later if required. Mix to form a pliable dough, then turn out onto a well-floured surface and knead for about 5 minutes. Return to the oiled bowl to rise until it has doubled in size. Re-knead the dough and divide in half. Shape into two thick discs and place on the trays. Cut a couple of expansion slits across the top and allow to rise until doubled in size. Cook in a moderate to hot oven, with coals scraped to the edges, for 20 minutes. Scrape coals to the middle and cook for a further 5 to 10 minutes or until brown and crusty.

Tip ~ Instead of making two cob loaves, one half can be cut into 4 and made into pannikin breads (see Pannikin Breads below) or cut into 6 to 8 to make Pull-apart Dinner Rolls (see above).



grainy cheese, sundried tomato and olive cob

SWEET FRUIT BUNS & JUBILEE TWIST

TOTAL TIME: 60-90 mins | MAKES: 6 buns + 1 twist

PASTRY

1 sachet of white bread mix
recommended amount of yeast and warm water
4 tablespoons dark brown sugar
1 teaspoon mixed spice
1 cup mixed fruit or sultanas

Grease a baking tray and a large bowl with spray oil. Place bread mix, sugar, spice and fruit into another bowl, mix together and make a well in the centre. Add yeast to the well and pour in most of the warm water (more may be added later). Mix to form a pliable dough and knead for about 5 minutes. Return to the oiled bowl and set aside in a warm sheltered spot to rise till it has doubled its size. Re-knead for 5 minutes and cut dough in half. Divide one half into 6 pieces and return the other half to the bowl. Shape the six pieces into balls and evenly space around the baking tray. Brush a little milk over the top. Put tray back in a warm sheltered spot and allow the buns to rise to double their size. Cook in a moderate to hot oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges, for about 15 minutes. Be sure to check the buns a couple of times as the sugar can make them burn if the temperature is too hot. If it is too hot remove a few of the coals to slow it down or place a piece of foil over the top, shiny side up, for the rest of the baking.

SIMPLE ICING

1½ cups icing sugar
juice of 1 lemon

Mix ingredients together to make a thin icing. Spread half the icing over the buns when they are cold. This is enough to ice the Jubilee twist as well.

JUBILEE TWIST

Grease a baking tray with spray oil. Knead remaining dough from the fruit buns into a log that will fit on your tray. Flatten slightly and with a sharp knife divide the log lengthways into three separate strips of dough – but don't cut right through at one end. Loosely plait the three strips together. Pinch the cut ends together and place plait on the baking tray. Brush with a little milk, set aside and let rise until it has doubled in size. Bake in a moderate to hot oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges, for about 15 mins. If twist looks like it is browning too fast, remove some of the heat from the lid or loosely place a piece of tinfoil on top, shiny side up, for the rest of the baking. Once twist is cold, brush with the remainder of the icing. It's just perfect for morning tea!

Tip ~ This recipe as a whole can also be used to make Hot Cross Buns for Easter (makes about 12), and with the addition of some nuts can make a lovely fruit and nut loaf too.



HOMEMADE GARLIC BREAD

The usual way to make garlic bread is to slice French sticks, spread them with garlic butter, wrap them in foil and bake them in an oven. Pannikin breads make perfect mini garlic breads, or you can even bake a couple of special long loaves to make into garlic bread when you are having a bake-up. The second way to make garlic bread – popular in cafes and restaurants – is to use much larger loaves, sliced, spread with garlic butter and toasted on both sides on a hotplate. Both versions are great, and easy to do in or on the camp oven.

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins | MAKES: as many as you want

1 cup of room temperature softened butter
2 tablespoons minced garlic
1 teaspoon dried parsley or mixed herbs

Mix all ingredients together in a bowl and spread mixture onto sliced bread. Then wrap in foil and cook in a moderate camp oven on a high trivet, with coals scraped to the edges for 10 to 15 minutes or until butter is melted and bread is hot. Or, lightly toast the bread slices in a frying pan over a moderate heat on the stovetop or camp fire.

PANNIKIN BREADS

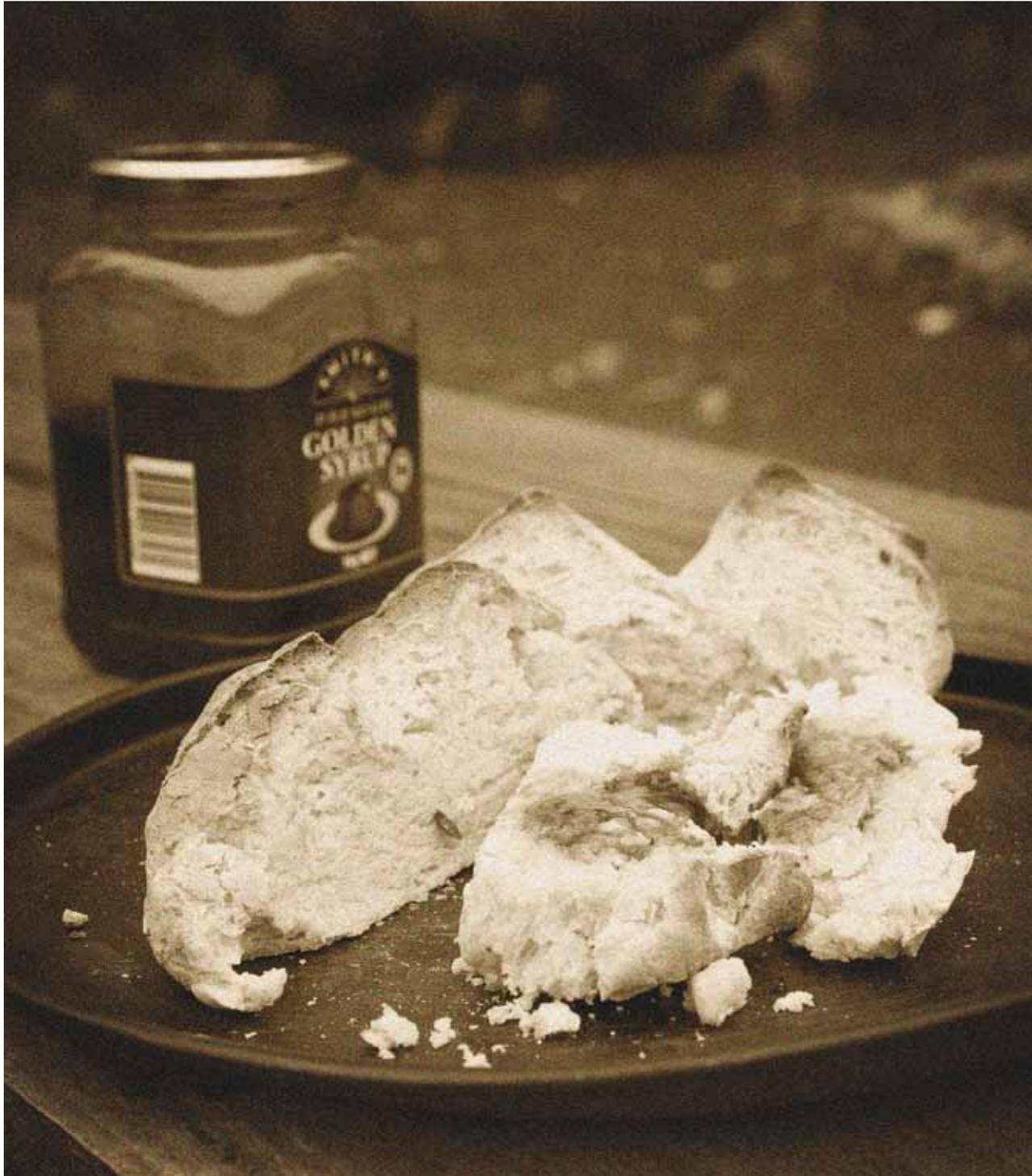
One of the most useful discoveries I have made in regards to cooking equipment is that the humble tin pannikin can be used as a baking dish to cook a variety of food, including breads.

TOTAL TIME: 60-90 mins | MAKES: 6-8

Once your bread dough is ready for its final rising, knead golf ball-sized or slightly larger pieces of dough and put them into pannikins lightly greased with spray oil. Allow dough to rise until it has doubled in size. Place pannikins in a hot oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges, for 15 to 20 minutes. Scrape coals to the centre to brown. Pannikin breads can be used as rolls, sliced vertically or horizontally to make little garlic breads, or toasted for crostini and bruschetta.



pannikin breads



SCONES & DAMPERS

Scones and dampers could have been included with the breads, but are such different products that they really deserve a section of their own. One of the secrets to making good scones and dampers is not to play with the dough too much. Unlike bread, scone and damper dough does not need to be kneaded – in fact, the more you play with the dough the more rock-like your scones will turn out.

Tip ~ I use spray oil all the time on baking trays. It is just more convenient than butter or margarine and a lot less likely to spill than if it were in a bottle – plus the can makes an acceptable rolling pin!

PLAIN LEMONADE AND CREAM SCONES

These scones work every time, and are so easy to make that it is worth hiding some cream and lemonade in the tuckbox somewhere. UHT cream works just as well as fresh, and it's easy to whip up a batch for morning tea.

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins per batch | **MAKES:** 8 to 10

4 cups self-raising flour

300 ml carton of pouring cream or 250 ml UHT

300 ml plain lemonade or 350ml if using UHT

Grease a baking tray with spray oil (or whatever you prefer). Place flour in a mixing bowl and make a well in the centre. Pour the cream into the well. Pour lemonade into the empty cream container, up to the crease in the carton, and add it to the cream. Mix ingredients together with a butter knife until just combined to make soft and fluffy dough. Turn out onto a floured board and gently press together and pat down to form a 2-3 cm disc of dough. With a scone cutter or sharp knife cut the dough into the desired shapes and place onto the baking tray. Place the tray into a hot oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the edges, and cook for 10 minutes. Scrape coals to the middle and cook for a further 3-5 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with jam and cream for morning or afternoon tea.

Tip ~ *It's a good idea to invest in a scone cutter, or use a sharp knife to cut out diamond or square shapes. Don't use a cup or a glass to cut out scones because the rim of the cup is not sharp: instead of cutting the dough cleanly it squashes the edges together and you will end up with lopsided scones.*



plain lemonade & cream scones

Basic scone dough can be made into lots of other baked goods too. Here are three alternatives (the first two each use half a batch of scone dough).

JAM PINWHEELS

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins | MAKES: 10 to 12

half a batch of plain lemonade and cream scones dough
your favourite jam

Grease a baking tray with spray oil (or whatever you prefer). Instead of making all your scone dough into plain scones, cut into half. Divide one half again into two pieces and roll out to about 1cm thick. Spread with your favourite jam, marmalade or conserve. Roll into a log and cut into 3cm rounds, arrange on the baking tray cut side up, and cook in the same way as scones.



APRICOT DUMPLINGS

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins | MAKES: 15 dumplings

half a batch of plain lemonade and cream scones dough
dried apricots
800 ml apricot nectar

Using half a batch of scone dough, finely chop some dried apricots and add to the dough. Divide into about 15 small pieces, roll into tight little balls and pop into a saucepan with just-simmering apricot nectar. Cook for about 6 to 8 minutes till puffed and fluffy. Once all the dumplings are cooked reduce the apricot nectar liquid till it turns thick and syrupy. Serve dumplings with hot syrup and custard.



apricot dumplings

FRUIT TARZIS

TOTAL TIME: 20-30 mins | MAKES: 6 to 8

plain lemonade and cream scones dough
2 tablespoons very thick custard
slices of canned fruit
dark brown sugar for sprinkling

Grease a baking tray with spray oil. Make discs of dough about ½ cm thick and about 10-12 cm diameter. Place a couple of tablespoons of very thick custard in the middle of the discs, arrange a few slices of canned fruit over the top and pinch edges in to encase the filling. Sprinkle with a little dark brown sugar. Place a couple of tarts onto the baking tray and cook in a moderate camp oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, for about 10 minutes. Scrape coals to the middle and cook for a further 5 to 10 minutes or until golden on top.

GINGETZ, SULTANA & GINGETZ ALE SCONES

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins | MAKES: 15 dumplings

4 cups self-raising flour
1 cup roughly chopped candied ginger
½ cup of sultanas
300 ml carton of pouring cream
300 ml ginger ale

Grease a baking tray with spray oil. Combine flour, candied ginger and sultanas in a mixing bowl and make a well in the middle. Pour cream into the well. Using the empty carton, measure out ginger ale to the crease and pour in with the cream. Mix together with a butter knife to make light fluffy dough, turn out onto a floured surface and gently mould into a 2-3 cm disc. Using a sharp knife, cut dough into small squares or diamonds and evenly space on the baking tray (depending on the size of your tray you may need to bake in separate batches). Place into a hot camp oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the edges, for 10 minutes. Scrape coals to the middle and cook for a further 5 to 10 minutes or until golden brown. Serve for morning or afternoon tea with a good cuppa and a smearing of butter.

fruit tarts

CARAMELISED PUMPKIN SCONES, PANNIKIN SCONES AND PUMPKIN GINGER DATE SLICE

That's right, three things from the one recipe – now that's what I call economical! It also means you don't have to be eating pumpkin scones for the next three days.

TOTAL TIME: 20-30 mins each **MAKES:** 8-10 scones, 2-3 pannikin scones, 9-12 slices

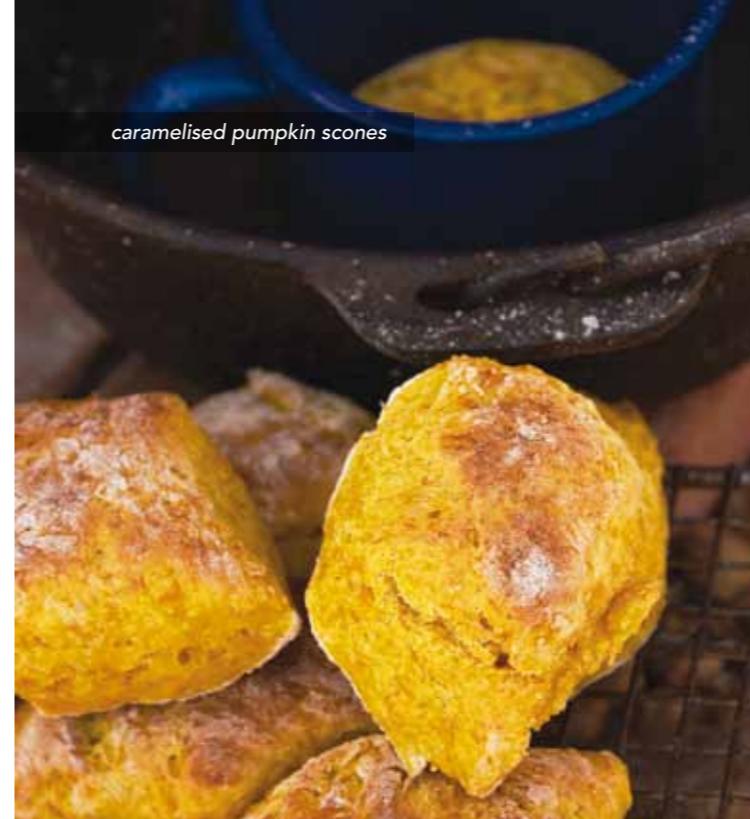
2 tablespoons butter
10 thin slices of pumpkin, kent, jap or butternut approx 1 cm thick, to make 1 cup of cooked pumpkin
3 tablespoons dark brown sugar
2½ cups self-raising flour
pinch of bicarb soda
1 egg
2 tablespoons sour cream

PUMPKIN GINGER DATE SLICE FILLING

1 cup dates
½ cup roughly chopped candied ginger
1 tablespoon butter
¾ cup water

CARAMELISED PUMPKIN SCONES

Heat butter in a large pan on the stovetop. Place pumpkin slices flat side down and cook over medium heat till cooked through and slightly browned. Being careful not to let the contents of the pan burn, increase the heat slightly and sprinkle sugar over the top, then turn pumpkin over and cook until the sugar has melted and the pumpkin is caramelised. Turn off the heat and allow to cool in the pan. When cold, mash with a potato masher and spoon into a mixing bowl with flour, bicarb, egg and sour cream. Mix together with a butter knife until all ingredients are combined to form a light dough. Turn out onto a floured board and cut mixture into thirds. Pat one third down till about 2cm thick and, using a sharp knife, cut diamond or square shapes to make about 10 small scones. Place on a greased baking tray and cook in a hot camp oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, for about 10 minutes. For the final 5 minutes scrape coals to the middle to brown the tops.



PUMPKIN GINGER DATE SLICE

Cut the remaining third of the dough in half and gently flatten both pieces to fit a greased 20cm square baking dish – place one half in the bottom of the dish and reserve the other for the top. Combine all filling ingredients in a pot and cook on the stovetop to make a chunky paste. Allow it to cool, and spread it over the pastry in the dish. Place the other piece of pastry on top, brush with milk and sprinkle with a little dark brown sugar. Cook in a moderate camp oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, for about 15 minutes. Scrape coals to the centre for a further 5 minutes to brown the top. Serve warm straight out of the oven with cream or custard as a dessert, or serve cold as a slice for smoko.

PANNIKIN SCONES

Grease two or three medium pannikins with spray oil, and evenly divide another third of the dough between the pannikins. Place in a hot camp oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the edges, for about 10 minutes. For the last 5 minutes scrape coals to the middle to brown the tops.





DAMPERS

Damper lives by the same rules as scones: the less you play with the dough the better the damper will be.

Damper should be eaten hot, straight from the oven, or toasted the next day. It does not last as well as bread – however as there is usually nothing left but crumbs and an empty plate, having leftovers is generally not a problem. Traditional damper is very plain and was literally flour, water and salt. Things have changed over the years and, as you will see by the recipes that follow, just about any ingredient can be used to spice up your damper loaf.

LARGE DAMPERS VS DAMPER BITES

In the early two thousands I ended up with a catering job solely on the basis that I could cook an edible damper in a camp oven. It must have been a bit of a fluke because it seemed to be the only time I really got it right! After many dismal failures I gave it up as a lost cause. It wasn't until recently, when I became a lot more confident with my camp ovens and applied a bit of sideways thinking, that I came up with the notion of making several very small dampers instead of the usual large one. Small dampers are the same as scones: they like a very hot oven so they can be cooked quickly. As there is not as much mass in a small damper, the hot air can penetrate right to the middle and you get perfect damper bites every time. Large dampers are impressive and look great coming out of the camp oven all golden and crunchy on the outside, but as I found all too often the middle may still be uncooked. Because the large damper takes longer to cook it is much harder to keep a constant temperature range for an extended cooking time.

The following recipe is the one I cooked all those years ago in the dry riverbed of the Gascoyne River, on Bidgemia Station in the Western Australian outback.

FETA, SUNDRIED TOMATO AND OLIVE DAMPER

TOTAL TIME: 30-40 mins **MAKES:** 24-30 damper bites, 4 cob loaves, 8 pannikin dampers or 1 loaf

4 cups self-raising flour
ground black pepper
¼ cup sliced black olives
125 g packet of feta cheese, any type and any flavour, crumbled
¼ cup chopped sundried tomatoes
2 tablespoons of the oil from the sundried tomatoes
1 can or bottle of beer

Place all ingredients except beer and oil into a large mixing bowl, combine together and make a well in the middle. Add oil to the well and ¾ of the beer (more can be added later if needed), mixing together with a butter knife to form a soft dough. Turn out onto a floured surface. Shape into whatever type of product you prefer – either cob loaves, pannikin loaves, damper bites or a whole loaf – and cook according to instructions above.

CHEESE AND BEER DAMPER BITES

TOTAL TIME: 25-40 mins | **MAKES:** 24-30 damper bites, 4 cob loaves, 8 pannikin dampers or 1 loaf

4 cups self-raising flour
good pinch of salt
1 cup grated or finely cubed cheese
1 teaspoon dried chives
1 bottle or can of beer, or substitute soda water, water or milk
2 tablespoons oil

Place all ingredients except the beer and oil into a large mixing bowl, combine and make a well in the middle. Measure the oil into the well and pour in $\frac{3}{4}$ of the beer (add more beer if necessary later). Mix together using a butter knife until ingredients form a soft dough. Turn out onto a well-floured surface and gently shape to form a large disc about 2-3 cm thick. It is entirely up to you how to shape your damper. The easiest is to cut the disc into quarters and cook a couple at a time, to end up with four small cob loaves. You can also cut the dough into small diamonds or squares for damper bites, or divide dough between 8 medium pannikins and make pannikin dampers. Damper bites, pannikin dampers and cob loaves should all be placed into a hot oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the edges, for 10 minutes, then scrape coals back to the middle for a further 5 to 10 minutes. However if you are confident with your temperature control, have a crack at a large loaf. The larger loaf will need to be put into a moderate camp oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges, for about 20 minutes, then scrape the coals to the centre for a further 5 to 10 minutes. The loaf is meant to sound hollow when you tap it on the bottom, but a wooden kebab stick stuck through the middle works every time: if it comes out clean the loaf is done, but if there is dough on the stick it needs a little longer.



cheese and beer damper bites

CHEDDAR & CHILLI DAMPETZ

TOTAL TIME: 30-40 mins | MAKES: 1 damper

2 cups self-raising flour
1 good pinch of salt
2 tablespoons oil
¾ cup soda water, beer or water
2 tablespoons sweet chilli sauce
1 cup cheddar cheese cut into small cubes

Grease a baking tray with spray oil. Place flour and salt in a large mixing bowl and make a well in the centre. Pour the oil, water and chilli sauce into the well, and mix together with a butter knife to form a soft dough. Turn out onto a floured surface and press dough out to make a 1 cm thick disc. Sprinkle cheese onto the top, then roll dough over to encase the cheese and shape into a round loaf. Place on the baking tray and cook in a moderate camp oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges, for about 20 minutes. Scrape coals to the centre and cook for a further 5 to 10 minutes or until golden and crunchy.

Serve straight from the oven sliced or broken into chunks, with a little cream cheese spread on top to balance out the chilli.

BLUE CHEESE & DATE DAMPETZ HORSESHOE

TOTAL TIME: 30-40 mins | MAKES: 1 damper

2 cups self-raising flour
pinch of salt
generous grinding of black pepper
2 tablespoons oil
1 cup soda water, beer or water
100 g block of blue cheese
¾ cup chopped dates
sprinkling of poppy seeds

Grease a baking tray with spray oil. Combine flour, salt and pepper in a bowl. Make a well in the middle and measure in the oil and the soda water, then cut together with a butter knife to form a light dough. Turn out onto a floured surface and roll out to make a disc about 1 cm thick. Crumble blue cheese over the top of the disc. Sprinkle dates over the cheese, then tightly roll the dough over to form a log encasing the cheese and dates. Seal the ends and gently roll dough log to lengthen it slightly. Place on the baking tray and bend to make a horseshoe shape. Cut slits in the top at about 2cm intervals, brush with milk or beaten egg and sprinkle with poppy seeds. Place into a moderate to hot camp oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, for about 20 minutes. Scrape coals to the centre and cook for a further the oven



blue cheese and date damper horseshoe



BISCUITS, MUFFINS & SLICES

'Smoko' is the Australian slang term for morning and afternoon tea and is widely used in a number of industries, shearing sheds being one of them. The recipes in this section are some of the things I used to cook on the shearing teams for smoko. Most of the shearers appreciated the fact that everything was homemade and not store-bought. They also liked the mess bill being cheaper when it came time to pay for the stores at the end of the shed.

BISCUITS

CHOC CHIP COOKIES

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins | MAKES: 24-30 biscuits

¾ cup butter or margarine
½ cup caster sugar
½ cup dark brown sugar
1 egg
½ tsp vanilla
1¾ cups self-raising flour
1 cup choc chips

Grease a baking tray. Cream butter and sugar in a large bowl, then mix in the egg and vanilla. Add flour and choc chips, mixing to form a stiff dough.

Shape teaspoon-sized amounts of dough into balls and space evenly on the baking tray. Gently press to flatten slightly and allow enough room for spreading. Bake on a low trivet, in a moderate camp oven (approx 150°C) with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, for 12 to 15 minutes or until golden brown.

SUGAR & SPICE COOKIES

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins | MAKES: 24-30 biscuits

basic biscuit dough (see above)
1 teaspoon cinnamon
2 tablespoons sugar

Grease a baking tray. Mix cinnamon and sugar together in a small bowl, roll dough into teaspoon-sized balls and coat in sugar mix. Evenly space on the tray and flatten slightly with a fork. Bake in a moderate camp oven on a low trivet for 12 to 15 minutes.



sugar and spice cookies

PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES

This recipe came my way when I had a house full of small children, and peanuts weren't the big no-no they are today.

Three ingredients and no flour – how could they possibly work? But they do, and are just delicious – plus they take no time at all to whip up.

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins per batch of 6 **MAKES:** about 24 biscuits

375 g jar of crunchy peanut butter
1 cup sugar
2 eggs

Grease a baking tray. Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl until they form a stiff dough. Roll teaspoon-sized amounts into balls and space evenly on the baking tray. Press each ball down with a fork and cook in a moderate camp oven, on a high trivet with coals scraped to the edges, for 10 minutes. Scrape coals to the centre and cook for a further 5 to 10 minutes or until golden brown.

These biscuits do spread so give them plenty of room – you may only be able to make 6 at a time, so will need to make three or four batches.



ALMOND ANZACS

Just a slight variation on the humble old Anzac. For a really patriotic version try crushed macadamias! Most crushed nuts work well with this recipe. I had struggled to make the perfect Anzac until I came across the original recipe on an ancient golden syrup can.

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins per batch of 6 **MAKES:** about 24 biscuits

1 cup rolled oats, 1 cup brown sugar
1 cup plain flour
100 g packet of slivered almonds
¾ cup desiccated coconut
125 g butter
2 tablespoons golden syrup
1 teaspoon bicarb soda
3 tablespoons boiling water

Grease a baking tray. Combine oats, sugar, flour, almonds and coconut in a mixing bowl. Melt butter and golden syrup together. Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients and pour in the melted butter and golden syrup. Add the bicarb to the boiling water and pour into the well with the butter and syrup. Mix liquids together, then combine all ingredients till well mixed. Place spoonfuls onto the baking tray (since this mix spreads, and a small round tray is all that can be used in a camp oven, it's only possible to cook about 6 biscuits at a time). Each batch should only take 12 to 15 minutes in a moderate oven on a low trivet. Anzac biscuits should be a rich golden syrup colour when cooked, and should have just the right amount of crunch and chew.



BASIC BISCUIT DOUGH

2 cups plain flour
¾ cup custard powder
¾ cup icing sugar
1 cup butter or margarine

Combine dry ingredients together in a bowl, add small pieces of butter to the dry ingredients and rub together with your fingers until all ingredients form a firm but pliable dough. If dough appears too crumbly add a couple more spoons of butter until it all comes together.

MELTING MOMENTS

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins
per batch **MAKES:** 12-15 biscuits

basic biscuit dough (see above)
1½ cups icing sugar
juice of 1 lemon

Grease a baking tray. Using the same biscuit dough as for the jam drops, place teaspoon-sized balls on the baking tray and press flat with a fork. Cook in a moderate camp oven on a low trivet for 12 to 15 minutes. Mix the icing sugar together with enough lemon juice to make a stiff icing mixture. When the biscuits are cold, sandwich two together with a small amount of icing and dust with icing sugar.

JAM DROPS

TOTAL TIME: 15-20 mins
per batch **MAKES:** 24-30 biscuits

basic biscuit dough (see above)
jam for dropping

Grease a baking tray. Roll teaspoon-sized amounts of basic biscuit dough into balls and press flat with your palms. Space evenly on the baking tray, then make a small indent in the middle of the biscuit mixture with your thumb and drop in a small amount of jam. Bake in a moderate camp oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, for 12 to 15 minutes. Scrape coals to the centre and cook for another few minutes or until slightly browned.





blackforest muffins

MUFFINS

Muffins are easy to make in the camp oven. They take very few basic ingredients and you can add dried fruit, canned berries or fresh fruit to make them different every time. If you want to take a short cut by using muffin mix, then by all means go for it. I have found that using enamel pannikins for muffins is perfect. If you use the medium-sized ones, these mixes will make 4 monster muffins at a time, otherwise cooking stores have sturdy paper muffin cases that don't require a muffin tray to hold them up. These mixes also make a nice-sized single loaf that can be iced as a cake or sliced with a spreading of butter.

BLACKFOREST MUFFINS

TOTAL TIME: 30-40 mins | MAKES: 4 large muffins

- 4 tablespoons dark brown sugar**
- 2 eggs**
- 3 tablespoons of butter or margarine, melted**
- 3 tablespoons cocoa powder**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk**
- 2 cups self-raising flour**
- 1 cup drained pitted black cherries**

Grease 4 pannikin tin mugs. Mix together sugar, eggs, butter and cocoa powder until well blended. Add milk and flour and mix to a silken consistency; add more milk if mix is too thick. Place a large spoonful in the bottom of each mug, evenly divide the cherries between the four and cover each with remaining cake batter. Place muffins in a moderate camp oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, and cook for 10 to 15 minutes. Scrape coals to the middle of the lid and cook for a further 5 to 10 minutes, or until muffin tops spring back to shape when gently pressed in.

BANANA MAPLE MUFFINS OR LOAF

TOTAL TIME: 30-40 mins | MAKES: 4 large muffins

2 eggs
¼ cup maple syrup or honey
2 large overripe bananas, mashed
½ cup melted butter or margarine
2 cups self-raising flour
pinch of bicarb soda

Grease 4 oiled tin pannikins or a loaf tin that will fit inside the camp oven. Mix together eggs, syrup and banana in a large bowl. Add butter and stir till combined. Stir in flour and bicarb and mix until smooth, then spoon mixture into the pannikins or loaf tin. Place muffins or loaf into a moderate camp oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, and cook for about 20 minutes. Check occasionally to see if cooking properly. Insert a skewer or bamboo kebab stick to make sure muffins are cooked in the middle, or gently press the top – it will spring back into shape when cooked. A loaf will take longer to cook than muffins.

APPLE SPICE MUFFINS

TOTAL TIME: 30-40 mins | MAKES: 4 large muffins

½ cup sugar
1 teaspoon mixed spice
2 eggs
½ cup milk
½ cup melted butter
2 cups self-raising flour
1 cup stewed or pie apple

Grease 4 enamel mugs. Mix together sugar, spice and eggs. Add milk and melted butter, stir in flour and apple. Evenly divide the mixture between the mugs; place in a moderate camp oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, for 15 to 20 minutes. Scrape coals to the centre and cook for a further 5 to 10 minutes if needed. Insert a skewer or bamboo kebab stick to make sure muffins are cooked in the middle, or gently press the top – muffins will spring back into shape when cooked.

apple spice muffins



SLICES

MACAROON SLICE

TOTAL TIME: 30-50 mins | MAKES: 19-12 slices

BASE

2 cups self-raising flour
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon butter or margarine
1 egg
½ cup milk
1 jar of jam, your choice of flavour

Grease a 22cm baking dish. Combine flour and sugar in a bowl, rub butter in with fingers until all absorbed. Make a well in the centre. Mix egg and milk together and pour into the well, mixing together with a butter knife to form a light fluffy dough. Turn out onto a floured surface, cut in half and set one half aside to use for another slice. Gently flatten remaining dough to fit the baking dish, and spread with a generous amount of jam.

TOPPING

2 eggs, beaten
2 tablespoons sugar
2 cups coconut

Beat eggs and sugar together. Stir through coconut, and spread mixture over the top of the pastry and jam. Place in a moderate camp oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, for 10 to 15 minutes. Scrape coals to the centre of the lid and cook for a further 5 to 10 minutes or until coconut is lightly toasted. Allow slice to cool and cut into 9 to 12 pieces. This slice is also delicious for dessert when served still hot, with custard.

FRUIT MINCE SLICE

TOTAL TIME: 30-50 mins | MAKES: 12-16 slices

2 cups plain flour

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup icing sugar

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup custard powder

1 cup butter or margarine (room temperature)

1 small jar of Robertson's fruit mince

Grease a 22cm baking dish (or a size that will fit into the camp oven – doesn't matter if it's round or square). Combine flour, sugar and custard powder together in a bowl. Add butter and rub together with your fingers until all ingredients come together to form a dough. If dough is too crumbly and won't stick together, add a little more butter until it does. Divide dough in half and place one half in the fridge. Press the other half into the baking dish. Spoon fruit mince into the dish on top of the dough. Remove remaining dough from the fridge and, using a vegetable grater, grate it over the top of the fruit mince until it is all used up. Bake slice in a moderate camp oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, for 10 to 15 minutes. Scrape coals to the centre of the lid and cook for a further 10 to 15 minutes or until golden brown and crunchy on top. Allow to cool and cut into 12 to 16 portions.

Tip ~ This recipe also makes a great alternative to fruit mince pies at Christmas time.



fruit mince slice

LEMON DATE SLICE

TOTAL TIME: 40-55 mins **MAKES:** 12-16 slices

BASE

2 cups self-raising flour
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon butter or margarine
1 egg
½ cup milk

Grease a 22cm baking dish (or a size that will fit inside the camp oven – it doesn't matter if it is round or square). Combine flour and sugar in a mixing bowl. Add butter and rub in with fingers until all absorbed. Make a well in the middle for liquid. Mix egg and milk together and pour into the well. Using a butter knife, mix all ingredients together to form a light dough. Turn out onto a well-floured surface and divide dough in half. Pat each piece flat to fit the baking dish.

TOPPING

1½ cups dates
juice of 1 lemon
2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
1 cup of water

Place dates, lemon, sugar and water into a saucepan and cook over a moderate heat to form a chunky paste. Remove from heat and allow to cool to room temperature. Fit one piece of the pastry into the baking dish and spread with the dates, then place the other piece of pastry over the top and brush with a little beaten egg or milk. Place in a moderate camp oven, on a low trivet with coals scraped to the edges of the lid, for about 15 minutes. Scrape coals to the middle and cook for a further 5 to 10 minutes or until just browned.

ICING

1 cup icing sugar
juice of 1 lemon

Combine icing sugar and lemon juice in a bowl to make a spreadable mixture. Spread over the top of the cooled slice while still in the baking dish. Allow to set, then cut out small portions to serve with morning or afternoon tea.

lemon date slice