

# Nixtamalized Cornbread

**SERVES** Serves 10 to 12



## WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

by Tim Chin

Nixtamalization is a chemical process that changes the color, flavor, and even nutritional profile of corn. Using nixtamalized corn in place of cornmeal in this recipe yields a nuttier, more complex cornbread. The bread develops an especially brown and rich-tasting crust where it comes in contact with the cast-iron skillet. In fact, we like the crust so much that we sometimes even serve the cornbread upside down.

## INGREDIENTS

- ☐ **6½** cups water
- ☐ **2¼** cups (14 ounces) dried field corn
- ☐ **¾** teaspoons pickling lime
- ☐ **16** tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 8 equal pieces
- ☐ **2** teaspoons vegetable oil
- ☐ **1¾** cups (12¼ ounces) sugar
- ☐ **2** teaspoons baking powder
- ☐ **1¼** teaspoons salt
- ☐ **1¼** cups whole milk

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

**\*** Dried field corn, also known as dent corn, can be found in smaller quantities at well-stocked Latin markets and in large quantities online. Pickling lime, also known as slaked lime and Cal, is food-grade calcium hydroxide. It is used in home canning and can be found wherever canning supplies are sold or online. Those of you who prefer Southern-style cornbread and want something even less sweet—but equally moist—can substitute an equal weight of ground isomalt for the sugar. This is a neat trick popular with the team at ChefSteps. Isomalt is a sugar substitute used often in pastry and confections; it imparts all the structural benefits of sugar with about half the sweetness. We love the bottom crust on this cornbread so much that we often prefer to serve it upside down.

- ☐ **3** large eggs
- ☐ **1** cup plus 7 tablespoons (7 ounces) all-purpose flour

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## NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

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Per Serving (Serves 12)

Calories 415; Fat 19 g; Saturated 11 g; Trans 1 g; Monounsaturated 5 g; Polyunsaturated 1 g; Cholesterol 90 mg; Sodium 344 mg; Carbs 57 g; Fiber 1 g; Sugars 32 g; Protein 6 g

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**1** In large saucepan, combine water and corn and bring to boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low and simmer until corn has softened slightly, about 10 minutes. Remove saucepan from heat and whisk in pickling lime until dissolved and corn turns yellow-orange, about 30 seconds. Cover and let sit at room temperature for at least 12 hours or up to 24 hours.

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**2** Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees F/200 degrees C. Heat 7 pieces butter in 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat until it begins to turn golden, about 3 minutes. Continue to cook, swirling skillet constantly, until butter is dark golden brown and has nutty aroma, 1 to 3 minutes; transfer to medium bowl. Add remaining 1 piece butter to bowl of browned butter and stir until completely melted; set aside. Wipe skillet clean with paper towels. Add oil to skillet and transfer to oven.

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**3** Whisk sugar, salt, and baking powder together in medium bowl and set aside. Drain corn in colander. Place colander in large bowl and fill with water. Massage corn in water for 30 seconds, then lift colander and discard water in bowl. Repeat massaging 2 times with fresh water. Transfer rinsed corn to food processor and process until coarsely ground, about 1 minute, scraping down sides of bowl as needed. Add milk and browned butter and process until combined, about 1 minute, scraping down sides of bowl as needed. Add eggs and process until combined, about 30 seconds. Add sugar mixture and process until combined, about 30 seconds. Transfer mixture to large bowl. Using rubber spatula, fold in flour until just combined and no clumps of flour remain, about 15 folds.

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**4** Remove skillet from oven. Reduce heat to 350 degrees F/180 degrees C. Scrape batter into preheated skillet, smooth top with spatula, and bake until top is deep golden and toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 60 to 70 minutes, rotating skillet halfway through baking. Use metal spatula to carefully slide cornbread onto wire rack set in rimmed baking sheet. Let cool for 30 minutes. Slice into wedges and serve.