

## Serious Eats: Recipes

# Cook the Book: Grand Central Bakery Scones

Posted by Caroline Russock, February 12, 2010

**"They're moist in a way you don't expect scones to be."**



[Photograph: Caroline Russock]

As far as breakfast pastries go, **I'd never really been much of a scone enthusiast.** Give me a danish or muffin over a dry, crumbly coffee shop scone. Even the best scones usually needed a healthy dose of butter and jam to be palatable.

But this scone ambivalence changed over the summer when I baked a batch at home. I was in need of a quick dessert and figured scones would be a good alternative to shortbread. They turned out shockingly well—moist, buttery and worlds away from the scones of my past.

These **scones** from [The Grand Central Baking Book](#) by Piper Davis and Ellen Jackson sparked my interest because they included **buttermilk** and I already had a quart sitting in my fridge (for Thomas Keller's [Buttermilk Fried Chicken recipe](#) from *Ad Hoc at Home*). Buttermilk is one of those ingredients you inevitably end up using a cup or two of, then throwing away. Really, why don't they make pint containers of the stuff?

Aside from buttermilk, **the rest of the ingredients are pretty standard.** The dough, like most scone doughs, was incredibly easy to put together, just a few minutes in the stand mixer, then a quick knead. The dough might look a little ragged, but don't fret—it will all come together in the baking.

The *Grand Central Baking Book* has you form the dough, brush it with an egg wash, then sprinkle turbinado sugar to make a crust that's both golden and covered with a layer of crispy sugar crystals.

When I pulled the scones out of the oven they looked pretty similar to other scones, but upon breaking one open,

I realized these were different.

The texture wasn't brittle and crumbly—they were cakey with a great, almost chewy crumb. They're moist in a way you don't expect scones to be. They have **a slight tang from the buttermilk and a warmth from the cinnamon**. Generally I worry my home-baked scones will dry out overnight but these guys were in no danger.

My ideal scone isn't too dry or sweet. It's as satisfying as a perfectly baked biscuit but with a little more going on—and these hit all the right marks.

## Win *The Grand Central Baking Book*

As always with our Cook the Book feature, we have five (5) copies of *The Grand Central Baking Book* to give away this week. [Enter to win here »](#)

## Grand Central Bakery Scones

- makes 6 large or 12 small scones -

Adapted from [The Grand Central Baking Book](#) by Piper Davis and Ellen Jackson.

### Ingredients

2 1/2 cups (12.5 ounces) all-purpose flour  
1/4 cup (1.75 ounces) granulated sugar  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/2 cup (4 ounces, or 1 stick) cold unsalted butter  
1 cup dried fruit  
1/2 cup nuts, lightly toasted and coarsely chopped  
2 eggs  
1/2 cup (4 fluid ounces) buttermilk  
Egg wash  
1/4 cup (1.75 ounces) turbinado sugar

### Egg Wash

1 egg  
1 tablespoon water  
Pinch of salt

### Procedure

1. Prepare to bake: Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Combine the dry ingredients: Measure the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon into a bowl with high sides or the bowl of a stand mixer and whisk to combine.
3. Cut in the butter, then add the fruit and nuts: Dice the butter into 1/2-inch cubes. Use your hands or the paddle attachment of the stand mixer on low speed to blend the butter into the dry ingredients until the pieces of butter are the size of almonds. Add the dried fruit and nuts.

- 4. Add the eggs and buttermilk:** Whisk the eggs and buttermilk together, then add two-thirds of the mixture to the dry ingredients. Gently mix the dough just until it comes together, then add the remaining buttermilk mixture; the dough will look rough. Scrape the dough from the sides and bottom of the bowl and mix again to incorporate any floury scraps. The majority of the dough will have come together, on the paddle if using a stand mixer. Stop mixing while there are still visible chunks of butter and floury patches. The dough should come out of the bowl in one piece, leaving only some small scraps and flour on the sides.
- 5. Form and cut the dough:** Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Gather it and pat just a few times to get it to come together. The top won't be smooth, but the rough surface creates a crunch that is part of a scone's charm. Gently form dough into a 7- to 8-inch disk (or, for smaller scones, into two 4- to 5-inch disks), brush with the egg wash, and sprinkle with turbinado sugar. Cut the disk into 6 wedges, like a pie.
- 6. Bake:** Place the scones on the prepared pan, in a grid with 3 by 2 for large scones and 4 by 3 for small scones. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes (20 to 25 minutes for small scones), rotating the pan halfway through the baking time. The scones should be golden brown.

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