

**Seasonal Eating**  
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**Scones Make Holiday Mornings Special**  
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Holiday baking is a tradition in my family. The smell of sugar and spices wafting through the house is the ultimate comforting, welcome home aroma associated with so many memories of Christmas.

One of my favorite things to bake for breakfast is scones. I discovered scones many years ago on a trip to Seattle to visit my Aunt. They sold a mix at the local market and she made them for breakfast. Needless to say I left with several packets of scone mix in my suitcase. Now I make them from scratch and they are just as delicious. A cousin to the biscuit, these tender and moist wedges can be filled with many types of flavors.

For a holiday breakfast, two of my favorites are Cranberry Orange Scones and Country Ham Scones with Maple Butter. The cranberry orange are a sweet version while the country ham ones are savory with a sweet butter on top. The mix of the salty, savory ham with the chewy dried cranberries and sweet maple butter is a winning combination. There is also some cornmeal in the dough which gives a little bit of a crunchy texture to the scone. If I am making the sweet scones, I sprinkle a little coarse sugar on top to add crunch.



No matter which one you are making, cut in the cold butter with a pastry blender (or a fork) until there are little bits of butter distributed among the flour mixture. This will make them flaky and tender and beautifully buttery. When adding the wet ingredients, be careful not to overwork the dough. I usually use a fork and mix just until there are no more pockets of dry flour mixture. Bring it together with your hands at the end and place on a parchment paper lined baking sheet and press into a circle. Using a table knife, cut the round into wedges, leaving them together to bake.

Have a happy holiday season and bake up some memories for your family. For more seasonal eating recipes and information check out the Bedford County Extension website ([bedford.tennessee.edu](http://bedford.tennessee.edu)).

**Cranberry Orange Scones**

- 2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- 1/2 cup butter, cold and cut into pieces
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup buttermilk

2 teaspoons orange juice  
1 cup dried cranberries  
1/2 cup chopped pecans  
2 teaspoons milk  
1 tablespoon coarse sugar

Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, sugar and orange zest in a large bowl. Cut in butter with a pastry blender until mixture is crumbly, leaving some big lumps of butter. Combine egg, buttermilk and orange juice. Add to flour mixture, stirring with a fork just until dry ingredients are moistened. Stir in cranberries and pecans. Put dough on a parchment lined baking sheet and pat into an 8 inch circle. Cut into 8 wedges (do not separate). Brush with milk and sprinkle with 1 tablespoon sugar. Bake at 400 degrees for 20 minutes or until golden. Serve hot.

### **Country Ham Scones with Maple Butter**

1 3/4 cups flour  
1/4 cup yellow cornmeal  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper  
2 tablespoons sugar  
6 tablespoons butter, cold and cut into pieces  
3/4 cup slivered country ham  
1/4 cup dried cranberries  
1 cup heavy cream  
1/2 cup butter, softened  
2 tablespoons maple syrup

In bowl, combine flour, baking powder, salt, cornmeal, sugar and pepper. Cut in butter with pastry blender until mixture is crumbly. Stir in ham and cranberries. Add whipping cream, stirring with a fork just until dry ingredients are moistened. Transfer dough to a parchment lined baking sheet. Pat into 7" circle. Cut into 10 wedges but don't separate wedges. Bake at 425 degrees for 24-26 minutes or until golden. Let cool slightly. Beat butter and maple syrup together until fluffy and serve with warm scones.