

## Miniature Strawberry Shortcakes

Makes about 2-dozen mini-shortcakes (a couple more if scrap dough is used)

*I prefer my strawberry shortcake to not be overly sweet, but if you have a sweet tooth dip half of each strawberry in granulated sugar before placing it atop the cakes. These cakes are best served immediately after being assembled. The biscuits can be made earlier in the day, but keep them at room temperature in an airtight container for best results. This recipe is easily doubled if cooking for a crowd. Happy cooking!*

### **For biscuits:**

1 ½ cups all-purpose flour  
2 tablespoons granulated sugar  
1 ¾ teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
4 1/2 tablespoons very cold unsalted butter, cut into small cubes and kept cold  
1 ½ tablespoons melted butter for brushing  
½ cup plus 2 tablespoons whole milk  
Sugar in the Raw (granulated sugar can be substituted)

### **For assembling:**

¾ cup heavy cream  
1 ½ tablespoons granulated sugar plus more for dipping strawberries (optional)  
24 small strawberries, washed and hulled  
24 small mint leaves  
24 bamboo skewers

Place a rack in the center of the oven and preheat it to 450 degrees.. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Add the butter and cut it into the dry ingredients with a pastry blender or two forks until the butter is in pea-sized lumps.

Pour ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons whole milk into the flour mixture and stir until just combined (dough will be shaggy). Gather dough into a rough ball by rolling it around the sides of the bowl, pressing down gently. Turn out the dough on a well-floured surface and knead briefly to combine. Don't overwork the dough as biscuits will be tough; you just want the dough to hold together.

Working quickly, pat the dough out on a well-floured surface until it is 1/2 -inch thick. Use a small, 1-inch round biscuit cutter (or a small heart shape cutter if you have one) to cut out about 2-dozen rounds. *When cutting the rounds, do not twist the biscuit cutter as it seals the edges and will prevent the biscuits from rising; simply press down with the cutter and then pull up.*

The remaining dough scraps can be brought together and patted down in order to cut additional rounds, but the resulting biscuits will not be as tender as the first batch. Space the biscuit rounds on the parchment-lined baking sheet and brush with the melted butter. Sprinkle generously with sugar in the raw. Bake biscuits for 10 minutes or until golden brown on the center rack.

Meanwhile, combine the 3/4-cup heavy cream and the 1½- tablespoons of sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer. Use the whisk attachment to whip the cream until it is thick and fluffy. Spoon the whipped cream into a piping bag with a star tip and keep refrigerated until biscuits are ready.

Remove the cakes from the oven and cool on a wire rack. When cool, pipe whipped cream on top of each biscuit. If a sweeter dessert is desired, dip one side of the strawberry in granulated sugar. Pierce a mint leaf with a bamboo skewer and then pierce the strawberry from top to bottom. Carefully place the strawberry atop the whipped cream and secure with the bamboo skewer. Repeat with the remaining ingredients until you have two-dozen miniature strawberry shortcakes. Assembled shortcakes (where the strawberries have not been dipped in sugar) will keep in the refrigerator for several hours, but are best when assembled and served immediately.