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***Pancakes (crêpes)***      MAKES 11 PANCAKES, 6–6½" WIDE [15–16 CM]
 

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In the mid '90s around Shrove Tuesday, I bought a de Buyer pancake pan (crêpe pan), which I've used ever since but when trying to buy one recently, could only find teflon pancake pans — teflon's fine for some things, but for pancake-making, nothing beats a seasoned steel pan.

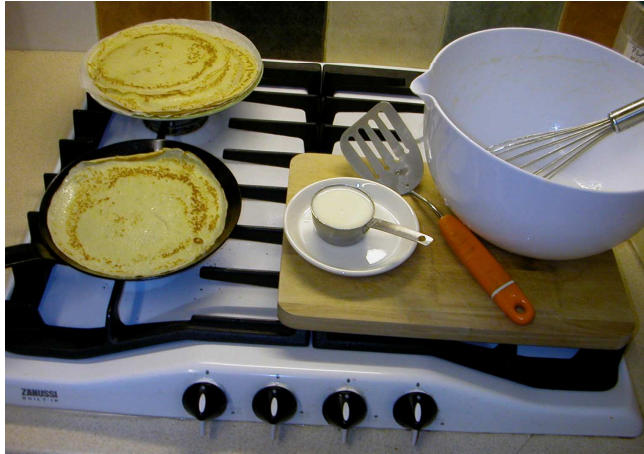
Pancakes are not difficult to make, yet it took moving to England for me to finally attempt them, and many other Americans, including accomplished cooks, have not made them, which is a shame as they're so versatile, and such a handy stand-by when cooking for people who are not well and may have lost interest in food.

Ingredients
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 3 eggs</li> <li>– a good pinch of salt</li> <li>– ¾ cup plus 2 Tbsp. plain flour [115g]                (<i>can also use gluten-free flour — see below</i>)</li> <li>– 1¼ cups milk (or soured milk) [½ UK pint / 300ml]</li> <li>– 2 Tbsp. butter [28g]</li> </ul>

**Procedure**

In a large bowl, preferably one with a spout, whisk the eggs with the salt and then add the flour, ¼ cup or so at a time until all is smooth. Pour in the milk, whisk it in, and leave the whisk in the bowl.

Melt the butter in the pancake pan, then pour it into the batter and whisk to combine. Doing it this way greases the pan, ready for cooking the pancakes, and also helps to keep the pan seasoned.



➤ *Stovetop set up:* In a 7" de Buyer pancake pan [18cm], 4 Tbsp. batter is the right amount to use so I put a  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup measure on a board next to the pan and pour the batter into that, ready for pouring into the pan. I also set out a plate for stacking the pancakes, along with some 8" baking parchment circles [20cm] which I use to separate every 4 or so pancakes — if for immediate use, you'll not need the parchment circles but if freezing the pancakes or using later in the week, the circles help keep the pancakes from sticking together. Heat the pan until hot, pour in  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup batter and tilt the pan to swirl the batter round till it covers the base of the pan. Cook over medium heat till the base of the pancake is set — usually 1 minute or less — then use a spatula to flip the pancake and cook the other side. (Once I've flipped the pancake, I whisk the batter again and pour out another  $\frac{1}{4}$  cupful, ready for the next pancake.) Stack them on a plate as they're cooked.

Pancakes freeze fine; to use from frozen, let them defrost, then proceed as you would with ones from the fridge. A single pancake heats in about 10 seconds in the microwave.

There are endless sorts of fillings you can make for savoury pancakes: mushrooms & cream; creamed spinach with Asian spices; scrambled eggs & cheese; chilli con carne; etc. For an ersatz enchilada made with pancakes, see page 173.

And in addition to the traditional melted butter, lemon juice & sugar, there are endless other sweet options — just use your imagination!

***For gluten-free pancakes:*** Replace the plain flour with gluten-free flour(s), such as those below, but remember to whisk each time before you pour the batter.

- ¼ cup gluten-free plain flour
- ¼ cup potato flour
- ¼ cup plus 2 Tbsp. rice flour

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## *Chilli con carne*

SERVES 4–6

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Chilli is such an easy dish to make and such lively flavours, friends always welcome it but, if you're on your own, freeze the leftovers in individual portions. Then, a month or so later when you're peckish and sifting through the freezer, you'll be happy to find them there.

This recipe is based on the 'Chilli Beef with Beans' recipe in Craig Claiborne's *A Kitchen Primer*, with just minor changes.