

CRACKLING BREAD

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Follow our easy, step-by-step, photo illustrated recipe to make this old Southern favorite Crackling Bread. We just call it Cracklin Bread, dropping that G, but it's super easy to make and delicious with just about anything. This is a follow-up recipe using the cracklings we made from rendering our own leaf lard but you can find cracklings available in many grocery stores throughout the South. Printable recipe included.



CRACKLIN BREAD

Cracklin Bread Recipe:

It's Cornbread with WHAT in it?

Cracklin's.

You don't say. What are Cracklins?

If you're scratching your head and wondering what this recipe is all about, your may not be from the South. On the other hand, if you recognized it right off the bat, it's likely you either grew up Southern, or know someone that did.

A few weeks ago, I did a post on [How To Render Leaf Lard](#). I had purchased about a pound of leaf fat, then melted it down into Leaf Lard, right on my stove top. Leaf Lard is supposedly the best lard one can use to make pie crusts with. I still haven't tried it, but hope to be making another pie before too long.

When pork fat is melted down, the hot liquid fat solidifies into what we know as lard. It's fairly easy to make your own at home, it's just a bit time consuming. Lard can still be purchased throughout the

~~South, but the store bought stuff has to be overly processed these days and just takes away from the quality of the product.~~

When you render the fat down, most of the fat melts. The pieces that remain are called "Cracklings." We just call them, "Cracklins," dropping the G all together. The size of the cracklins will depend on how large the chunks of fat were when you started. I had diced mine up pretty small as they say that helps the fat to produce more liquid during rendering.

Crackling Bread can be made different ways. It's basically cornbread with the cracklins added to it for more flavor. As you know, even folks in the South argue about how to make basic cornbread, so we'll stay away from getting too far involved in that debate here. But, for the purists, I will say that "No Sugar was harmed during the making of this Crackling Bread." How's that? (Even though I like a little sugar in my cornbread.) Oops, now I've done it.

We didn't eat a lot of Cracklin Bread as I was growing up. Normally, cracklins were only available after we killed hogs during the fall. Thanksgiving Day was normally set aside for that special occasion. Once the men folk started butchering up the pig, the big black "wash pot" was used to render down lard. The leftover cracklings were often divided among those that helped do the work. After that, Mama would make Cracklin Bread as opposed to just plain cornbread.

All you really need is a hunk of Cracklin Bread and a baked Sweet Potato to have a good meal. Ever tried it?

I know this isn't going to be one of my most popular recipes here on Taste of Southern. Still, it's an old favorite worth saving and I really wanted to add it to the collection. I hope you'll give it a try.

Check out our [How To Render Leaf Lard](#) post, to see how we ended up with the Cracklins. Then, if you're ready to give it a try, we'll heat up the cast iron skillet. Oh, you're ready now? Alright then... Let's Get Cooking!



Crackling Bread Recipe: You'll need these ingredients.

You can't tell from the photo, but that's some really good Buttermilk in that jar. It comes from [**Maple View Farm**](#), a little North of Chapel Hill, North Carolina in Hillsborough. I love this stuff. It's thick and creamy, totally unlike the watery stuff you'll find in those cartons at your grocer. I just learned about it recently and can't wait to visit their Country Store and try out their Ice Cream. I promise I'll give you a full report when I get the opportunity to visit.

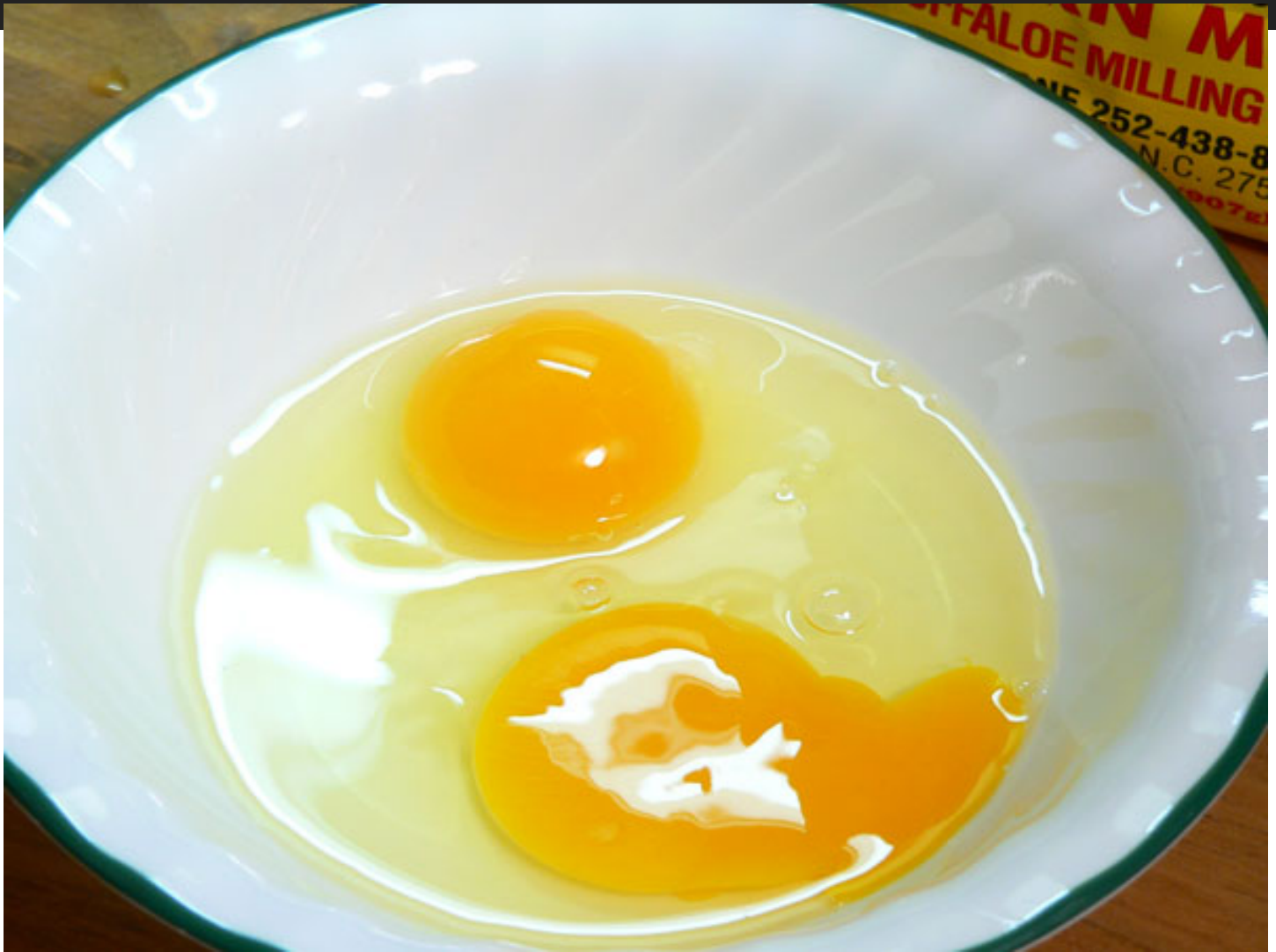
[**Moss' Cornmeal**](#) is another great North Carolina Product. They make various cornmeals, breaders and mixes. All good stuff.



Normally, I'd be asking you to place the two Tablespoons of Bacon Grease in your skillet and let it melt. As it happened, I had just fried up a batch of Bacon in my skillet and drained the remaining fat from the pan. Here, I'm just returning two Tablespoons of that fat BACK into the skillet. The skillet was still hot and the fat was already melted. Hope that doesn't confuse you.



Place the cornmeal in a medium size mixing bowl.



In a smaller bowl, break the eggs. It's always best to break eggs in something else first. That way, you can easily remove any pieces of shell that might fall in. It happens you know. OK, maybe just to me, but it still happens.



Whisk the eggs up with a fork. Mix them up really good.



Make a small well in the cornmeal, then add the beaten eggs.



Add the Buttermilk.



Stir the batter together. You may have to add a little more Buttermilk to get it to the proper consistency. You want a batter pretty much like that of a pancake batter. It should pour easily, but not be watery thin.



Add the hot Bacon Grease that you've melted in the skillet.



Add the cracklings to the batter.



Stir everything together until combined. Don't worry about any lumps, they're OK. Just mix it together until it's fully combined, then stop.



Pour the batter into the hot skillet.



Spread the batter out if need be. This was just a little thick, but still OK.



**BAKE AT 450°
20-25 MINUTES**

OR UNTIL DONE - TEST WITH A TOOTHPICK

Place the skillet in the hot oven. Bake the bread for 20-25 minutes, or until done, at 450°F. You can test the bread if needed, by inserting a wooden toothpick in the center. If the toothpick pulls out clean, the bread is done. If the toothpick pulls out with a few crumbs clinging to it, let it bake a few more minutes until done.



Remove the pan from the oven when the bread is done. Place the skillet on a folded towel or wire rack to cool. I like to add a few pats of Butter to the top for added flavor.

After a couple of minutes, flip the baked bread out into a serving plate, or just slice and serve from the skillet.



Enjoy!