This workshop will give participants an opportunity to learn about traditional oatcakes & how to make them. The presentation will include a video showing how they were made in an 18thc setting, using traditional equipment. It is the hope of the presenter that participants will “cook along at home” during the workshop. We’ll make the oatcakes in stages, first watch the historic video, then do the first step, and so on. There will be opportunities for questions. This is a bit of an experiment, so we here at the Frontier Culture Museum hope you’ll be patient! And we hope you will have fun cooking in your own kitchen. The ingredients are few & cheap & may quite well be in your pantry already. The equipment may challenge you a tiny bit, but not too much.

Here is some information to help would-be cooks prepare for the workshop. Read through beforehand, so you’ll be prepared.

**INGREDIENTS:**

- Oats, about 1c total (1/2c rolled old-fashioned oats or Bob’s Red Mill Scottish Oatmeal; 1/2c oat flour) plus extra flour for rolling out
- Bacon, 3 strips and/or rendered bacon drippings, about 1 TBSP
- Salt, a “pinch”
- Water, about 1 cup, or a little more
- Maybe a bit of cheese or jam or honey, for when it’s time to sample your oatcake

About the oats...

Traditionally, they would be stone-ground whole oat groats, like “Scottish Oatmeal” from Bob’s Red Mill. They make up beautifully but can be hard to find. Rolled oats (Quaker or other, but not quick cooking) will do, although not traditional. The rolled oats should be ground pretty thoroughly in a blender or food processor beforehand. Do NOT use steel cut oats.
Oat flour is not absolutely necessary, especially if you want a really rustic, rough sort of oatcake, but it will give the end product a nicer consistency. It also makes the dough easier to roll out to the aimed-for thinness.

About the bacon...

Any bacon will do, but in the interests of time, plan to fry it before the workshop begins so the drippings are ready to go. Three strips should provide enough for one batch of oatcakes, with some left-over. Keep the bacon handy. Don’t nibble!

About the salt...

You won’t need much, but oats are pretty bland so don’t leave it out.

About the water...

(I can hear you now…she has to tell us about WATER??)

Just have it heating as the workshop starts. Ideally, it will be at a boil when it’s needed. An electric teakettle is perfect. Heat more than called for, just to be prepared.

**EQUIPMENT:**

This is where you get to be creative! Oatcakes were traditionally made cooking at a hearth, using the cooking utensils that were available. You will be cooking in your home kitchen, unless you are able to utilize a historic kitchen at your site. If you want to cook historically, that’s fine. But this can be done in a modern kitchen with not-really-that-difficult substitutions.

Here are the basic, normal items you’ll need on hand:

- Bowl for mixing, medium size, heavy is good
- Measuring cup
- Something to heat about 1c water, or a little more
- Something to roll out the dough on (board or counter top)
- Tablespoon measure
- Knife (a paring knife will do)
- Rolling pin
Here are the not-so-normal items you’ll need (or a substitute):

- Spurtle (wooden spoon, which you’ll use upside down)
- Cast iron griddle/girdle, hanging (large cast iron skillet or electric griddle)
- Open/barred girdle or harnen stand (cooling rack)
- Small trivet & redware mug or small brass pot to heat water (if you are working at a hearth)

About the spurtle...

A traditional tool for stirring, from Scotland. The back end of a wooden spoon will work just fine.

About the griddle/girdle...

The large, flat, cast-iron griddles were often suspended above the fire. At your stove, you can use a cast-iron skillet or griddle, placed over a burner. Or an electric griddle, if you have one. The heat will probably need to be the lowest setting.

About the open girdle...

There isn’t really a good substitute for this, but a cooling rack placed over your skillet sort of works. This is a helpful but not terribly critical part of the cooking, so don’t stress over it. If you’re working at a hearth, a board or plate propped up before the fire will work.

Now then!

Hopefully, you haven’t been scared off by all this, and you’re ready to have a bit of fun in a few days! Remember, if I can do it in my kitchen, you can, too!

If you have any questions before Friday, you’re welcome to email me at:

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