



Breakfast, Serves 6

## Santa Fe Cakes

Like a warm hug from your new best friend, Santa Fe cakes make you feel good inside and stick around until at least lunchtime. Different and surprisingly delightful, these little cornmeal wonders are right up there for most-requested recipe off the Winding Waters river menu. Inspiration for these cakes came to us years ago from our friends' Peg & Jim Nave's Wildflower Café in Joseph.

What we're dealing with here is cornbread batter enveloping a southwesterly mix of black beans, peppers, onion, chiles – sausage if you like – and the power of melted cheese.

Lots of folks aren't sure what to make of Santa Fe's at first glance. Corn pancakes? Huh? With vegetables and stuff inside? Oh, but add a dollop of salsa, sour cream, a dose of hot sauce on there and start making room on your Top 10 Breakfast Food list.

3 Cups	Cornbread or Corn Muffin Mix (add milk and/or eggs depending on mix)	1/2 Cup	Onion (diced)	CONDIMENTS: Sour Cream Salsa Hot Sauce
1 Cup	Black Beans	4 Ounces	Green Chiles (diced)	
1/2 Cup	Red Bell Pepper (diced)	2 Cups	Cheddar Jack Cheese (grated)	
		1 Pound	Ground Sausage (optional)	



**The Doing of the Thing:** Santa Fe Cakes are a two-stage operation. You'll have a big bowl of corn batter ready to go and also a skillet full of the beans and veggie mix, already cooked.

We'll be delicately plopping batter onto a hot griddle, just like you would for pancakes. Then we add a spoonful of the beans and veggies on each batter puddle. OK, really it's a three-part process because after the bean medley you go around sprinkling shredded cheese on top of everything. Don't forget that cheese. Really ties the cakes together.

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## Santa Fe Cakes, Continued

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**Phase One- Corn Batter:** Get as fancy as you want with your cornmeal, but little boxes of cornbread mix from the baking aisle at the store work great. Some call for eggs and milk, others are just-add-water. Your call. Consistency shouldn't be too runny. Think waffle batter. We need some structure to cradle those spoonfuls of beans and other goodness.

**Phase Two- Beany Good Stuff:** Dice and saute' onion and pepper. Add your green chiles and pre-cooked black beans. If you want to spice it up, now would the time to add some jalapeno or garlic. Up to you.

*Sausage Option:* Paul and Penny regularly make Santa Fe's for Arentsen Family gatherings and Paul's brothers correctly pointed out that – while Santa Fe's are very, very good – everything is better with the secret ingredient of pork. And so it was that Santa Fe's con carne were born.

Brown some sausage and add it in there with the bean mix if you like. Or, this is one of the rare recipes that can easily please vegetarians and carnivores alike. Make your veggie cakes first and then start adding the sausage in to serve the barbarians.

Heat all this until it's all good and heated. Salt, pepper to taste. Throw in some crushed red pepper flakes too if you're feeling peppy. Looking good. Have grated cheese standing by.

**Let's Get Cooking:** Heat your griddle or skillet to that magic medium pancake temperature. Coat with oil or cooking spray and begin by adding dollops of corn batter, just like pancakes. (*Be warned- Corn cakes are not immune to natural laws, so – just like pancakes – the first one might turn out less than optimal. Nobody knows why this is. Nobody. The cook has to eat that one.*)

Now you come in right behind with a smaller dollop of the bean mixture on top of each. Then a good sprinkle of cheese. Having a helper to add the bean mix and cheese is nice, but you can handle it yourself.

Let these cook halfway through, then flip 'em over. You'll probably hear a sizzle from the cheese and other stuff. Don't be alarmed. That's the sound of greatness.

Your corncakes are done when the batter is cooked all the way through and the cheese is a nice crispy brown. Serve with sour cream and salsa on top and a dash of hot sauce if you like that sort of thing.

*Enjoy!*