

# English Muffin Breakfast Bake

(Recipe from Barefoot Contessa)

Serves 6-8

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, at room temperature  
12 slices good-quality, lean bacon  
2 tablespoons maple syrup  
6 English muffins, such as Thomas's  
12 large eggs  
2 ½ cups whole milk  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
¾ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
3 tablespoons minced fresh chives  
6 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, grated (2 cups, lightly packed)

Arrange two racks evenly spaced in the oven. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees and generously grease the bottom and sides a 9 x 13 x 2-inch baking dish with the butter. Line one sheet pan with aluminum foil.

Place an ovenproof baking rack on the sheet pan lined with foil and place the strips of bacon in a single layer on the rack. (If you don't have a rack, just place the bacon directly on the sheet pan.) Bake for 15-20 minutes, until the bacon has begun to brown. Remove the pan and carefully brush the strips of bacon with maple syrup. Return the pan to the oven and bake for another 5 minutes, until golden brown. Remove the bacon and allow to drain on a plate lined with a paper towel. Meanwhile, discard the aluminum foil from the sheet pan. When cool enough to handle, roughly chop the bacon and place back on the same sheet pan.

Meanwhile, cut the English muffins into 1" cubes. (Do not halve them horizontally as you would normally for the toaster.) Spread the cubes on a second sheet pan and bake, with the bacon, for 15 minutes, until lightly browned.

While the bacon and English muffins are in the oven, whisk together the eggs, milk, salt and pepper in large bowl.

To assemble, sprinkle half of the bacon, 1 tablespoon of the chives, and 1 cup of the cheese (in that order) onto the bottom of the baking dish. Add the English muffin cubes on top in one even layer. Carefully pour the egg mixture into the pan, pressing down lightly to make sure all the muffin cubes are moistened. Top with remaining bacon, cheese and chives. Wrap well and refrigerate for at least one hour, or overnight.

Before baking, lower the oven (or set the oven) to 350°F. If the dish has been in the refrigerator overnight, let it come to room temperature for 15 minutes before baking. Bake for 50-60 minutes, until puffed and cooked through. Allow to cool for 10 minutes before serving.

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