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## **THE DUTCH BABY IS THE LITTLE BLACK DRESS OF BREAKFAST**

BY DAWN PERRY

Meet the Dutch baby, your new breakfast obsession. It's essentially a big, sharable popover and easily skews sweet or savory. You can eat it for breakfast, at a fancy brunch, or whip one up when you're out of dinner ideas—or groceries. You could even gussy it up for dessert with a scoop of ice cream or a dollop of whipped cream. All you need are a handful of pantry staples and a hot skillet, and in about 30 minutes (for real, no fooling) you'll have one of the easiest and most impressive of all baked items on the table. But be warned: What was intended for four may easily be eaten by two.

### THE PREHEAT

Many people are guilty of skirting the preheat and just throwing things in the oven at around 283°F. This is not the time for that. Dutch babies do best in a preheated oven and skillet. Why? Adding butter to an already hot pan creates a nonstick surface so the finished product slides out easily while the batter cooks up fast and even, with dramatic hills and valleys. Get your oven up to temp first, then put the skillet in for about 10 minutes, or 15 if the oven was close but not quite there.

### THE PAN

You'll want to use a 10-inch oven-safe skillet. Cast iron is preferable because it gets hot and stays hot, but you can use a durable stainless-steel skillet in its place. Results may vary depending on the shape of your skillet. Straighter-sided cast iron will produce bigger bubbles all the way across the center, while sloping sides encourage a more crater-like appearance. Either way, the bottom gets golden and crisp while the edges rise around a custardy middle. Don't try a thin-skinned aluminum skillet here; the bottom will get too hot and burn the baby before it cooks through.

### THE BLEND

Dutch baby recipes often say to prep the batter in a blender and let it sit overnight. But who has the time? All you really need is a sturdy bowl, a decent whisk, and some focus. Then you just beat the heck out of it until there are no lumps. You'll be done mixing before the cast iron is completely preheated so the batter will have a few minutes to rest. BUT if your blender is on the counter and you'd like to fire it up, by all means, blend to your heart's content. And by that, I mean until smooth and lump-free.

### THE HOT TOPIC

The only thing tricky about this recipe is remembering that you're dealing with a screaming-hot pan. Even seasoned chefs will use an oven mitt for this one. Keep the handle(s) covered with a towel (or oven mitt) once it comes out of the oven and warn whoever is around that this is HOT STUFF. Did we mention this is hot?

### THE TA-DA

When it's ready, the baby should be puffed and dramatic. Assembled parties may gasp. But once it's out of the oven, it's natural for it to deflate as it cools. So set the table while it bakes and have your cameras at the ready—this baby waits for no one.

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## **Cinnamon-Sugar Dutch Baby**

### *FOR THE SKILLET*

- 2/3 cup milk (any fat % will work)
- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 3 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, plus more for serving

### *FOR THE CINNAMON SUGAR*

- 3 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Vanilla ice cream, for serving, optional

1. Prepare the Skillet: Preheat oven to 425°F. Place a 10-inch cast-iron skillet inside the oven to preheat, 5 to 10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, whisk milk, flour, eggs, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, and salt in a medium bowl. Continue whisking vigorously until no lumps remain (this could take about a minute).
3. Remove skillet from oven and add 2 tablespoons butter, swirling until melted. Pour batter into skillet and return to oven. Bake until golden and puffed up dramatically, 12 to 15 minutes.
4. Prepare the Cinnamon Sugar: Combine sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl or jar and whisk to combine. Set aside.
5. Dot warm Dutch baby with a little more butter and sprinkle with about a tablespoon (or more) cinnamon sugar. Return to oven and bake until sugar sets, about 5 more minutes. Top with a scoop or two of ice cream .

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