

1990

CHEDDAR GRITS AND BACON ROULADE

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 45 MIN START TO FINISH: 1¼ HR

Here, the beloved grits of the South are baked into a tender, cheesy roll that embraces all the elements of a country-style breakfast. Just slice and serve.

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour plus additional for dusting
- 1 cup whole milk
- ⅛ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 4 large egg yolks
- 2 cups cold water
- ½ cup quick-cooking grits (not instant)
- 4½ oz coarsely grated extra-sharp Cheddar (1¾ cups)
- 6 large egg whites
- 8 bacon slices (7 oz), cooked until crisp, then drained and crumbled (1 cup)
- ⅓ cup finely chopped scallion

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: a 15- by 10-inch shallow baking pan (see Tips, page 139); parchment paper

► Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 350°F. Butter baking pan and line with parchment paper, then butter paper. Dust pan with flour, knocking out excess.

► Melt butter (3 tablespoons) in a 1- to 1½-quart heavy saucepan over moderately low heat, then add flour and cook roux, whisking, 3 minutes. Add milk in a slow stream, whisking, then add nutmeg, ¼ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Increase heat to moderate and bring to a

boil, whisking constantly, then reduce heat and simmer mixture, whisking occasionally, 5 minutes. Remove from heat and add egg yolks 1 at a time, whisking well after each addition. Transfer to a large bowl and cover surface of mixture with a sheet of buttered parchment (buttered side down, to keep yolk mixture from forming a skin), pressing gently.

► Bring water to a boil in cleaned saucepan and gradually add grits, whisking constantly. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes. Remove from heat and whisk in 1 cup cheese, remaining ¼ teaspoon salt, and remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper. Whisk grits into yolk mixture until combined well.

► Beat egg whites in another large bowl with an electric mixer at medium-high speed until they just hold stiff peaks, then stir one third of whites into yolk mixture to lighten. Fold in remaining whites gently but thoroughly.

► Spread evenly in lined baking pan, then bake until golden and firm to the touch, 25 to 30 minutes.

► Toss together bacon, scallion, and remaining ¾ cup cheese in a bowl.

► Remove roulade from oven and cover with well-buttered parchment paper (buttered side down) and then a kitchen towel and invert a baking sheet over towel. Invert roulade onto baking sheet. Carefully peel off parchment from top of roulade and discard, then trim ¼ inch from each short side of roulade. Scatter bacon mixture evenly over top of roulade.

► Starting with a long side, roll up the roulade jelly-roll style, using towel to help lift and support as you roll and carefully removing parchment as you go. Arrange roulade, seam side down, on baking sheet and bake, uncovered, just until cheese is melted, about 5 minutes.