

## Lance's Mirliton Corn Muffins

By Lance Hill

(makes six muffins in standard paper bake cups)

½ cup corn meal

½ cup all-purpose flour

2 table spoons of sugar (adjust to taste)

2 teaspoons of baking powder

¼ tsp. salt

4 ounces of whole milk

1 egg

1 cup cubed (1/4" to ½" cubes), cooked, peeled, de-seeded mirliton (one or two mirlitons)\*

1 tablespoon of cooking oil

Six standard cupcake baking cups (2 ¼ base)

Set oven to 425 degrees. Combine all dry ingredients well. Beat egg slightly and add to flour mix along with milk and oil. Mix for a few seconds to blend ingredients well but work fast since you want the batter to rise in the oven. Add mirliton pulp that has been drained and stir quickly to cover pulp.

Spray the muffin tin with pam and insert the paper cup and spray again. I use a 1/3 cup measuring cup to ladle one full measure into the cup (hold the paper cup down with one finger while pouring in the mix to prevent the paper cup from folding). This should make six muffins. Work quickly and place in preheated oven immediately.

Regardless of what the cornmeal recipes say, these do not cook in 12 minutes. I baked for 25-30 minutes and did not take out until a toothpick came out very clean and internal temperature was 180-190 degrees F. (I used chilled pulp so that added to the baking time). Muffins were brown on top and I think the longer cook time may help prevent the mirliton juice from making the muffin mushy.

Serve slightly warm or room temperature. These are excellent by themselves but butter is a fantastic touch and changes the flavor of the mirliton from sweet to savory. They taste great the second day if

kept at room temperature and warmed but store in the refrigerator after that since they do have cooked pulp in them.

\* Mirlitons should be boiled until fork tender but not overcooked to mushy. You want the cubed fruit to have firm texture. It seems that chilled pulp that has set in the fridge for an hour dehydrates enough to prevent making the cornbread mushy. You will see that the cooked, chopped pulp will lose water as it cools, so after you take it out of the fridge, pour off the juice in the bottom and hand scoop pulp from the top of the container to get the most firm, drier pulp. Cubing is not a precise science. I just cut the cooked mirliton in half lengthwise and then sliced it in about ¼ inch slices, then turned and sliced those about ½ inch long. The goal is to have large enough cubes so that you can get a good taste of mirliton and the soft fruit texture contrasts with the cornbread. I like the pulp at the top of baked muffin and whether or not the pulp is added cold or room temperature make affect that.