



Foraging Acorns

Acorns are an abundant source of edible nutrition – rich in fats, carbohydrates and proteins. As a survival food, they were a crucial food source for indigenous cultures especially in times of scarcity due to their availability and nutritional value. Some anthropological studies even suggest that acorns have been consumed more than wheat, rice and corn combined throughout human history.

A Mini Guide to Harvesting & Preparation:

Harvest. First, know your oaks. Bur oak and other white oaks are preferred by many foragers because they are the least bitter, while red oaks have more bitter tastings tannins. To collect the best acorns at the ideal time, wait for the heavy drop in late Summer to early Fall. Check for little holes in the nut and discard these because they have been infiltrated by vermin.

Shell: Let your acorns dry for at least a week, then crack them open to reveal the nut inside. Cracking them open can be a bit tricky, but nothing a decent hammer and a little practice can't resolve.

Grind: Grind the dried nut 'meats' into a fine meal.

Leach: Soak the ground acorn meal in water, changing the water frequently to remove bitter tannins so it's more palatable.

Cook: Use your leached acorn meal as a flour substitute in various dishes such as bread, cookies and porridge. (*Sample acorn pancake recipe below.*)

Storage: Acorns can be stored for several years if processed and stored correctly to provide a long-term source of food. To store whole acorns, dry them in their shells in direct sunlight for 2 - 5 days or in a 175-degree oven for 20 minutes. Be sure to keep the oven door slightly ajar so that moisture can escape. Make sure to get them very dry and store them in their shells because the tannin is a natural preservative. Put the acorns in large buckets with airtight lids.



Foraging Acorns *(continued)*

Acorn Pancake Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of wheat flour
- 1 cup of strained acorn meal
- 2 teaspoons of baking powder
- 1 teaspoon of baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon of salt
- 2 tablespoons of sugar
- 2 eggs
- 4 tablespoons of butter, melted
- 1 1/2 cups of buttermilk

Preparation:

1. Mix the dry ingredients (flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and sugar) with a whisk to combine.
2. In a separate bowl, whisk the two eggs, melted butter, and buttermilk. Add the acorn meal and whisk to combine.
3. Add the wet ingredients to the dry and stir gently, just to combine.
4. Cook your pancakes on a hot griddle until they are golden brown on both sides, then top them with homemade butter and homemade syrup!

