

USING CORNSTARCH

HELPFUL TIPS

1. Dredge meat in cornstarch for added crispness when browning OR to help batter and breading adhere when deep frying. Corn starch is key to crisp tempura.
2. Add 1 teaspoon of cornstarch to the custard base for homemade vanilla ice cream to increase creaminess.
3. Meringues won't weep (become watery) if one teaspoon cornstarch is added to the sugar before beating into the egg whites.
4. For silky smooth puddings and custards, mix cornstarch with the sugar from the recipe first, then stir into the cold liquid. The sugar helps disperse the cornstarch evenly in the liquid for a perfect consistency.
5. It is easy to make your own cake flour! Place two tablespoons cornstarch in a measuring cup. Fill remainder of cup with all-purpose flour.
6. Conversions. One pound cornstarch = 3 ½ cups. One ounce cornstarch = 3 ½ tablespoons.

HOW TO USE CORN STARCH AS A THICKENER.

1. For a medium to thin consistency in soups and sauces, add 1 tablespoon corn starch per cup of liquid (such as broth, stock, water or milk). For thicker sauces (more gravy-like consistency) add two tablespoons corn starch per cup of liquid.
2. Make a slurry by mixing corn starch and cold liquid together, stirring until very smooth. Add this mixture to the food to be thickened. Never add corn starch to hot liquids, as this will cause immediate lumping.
3. Use medium heat, stirring gently, and constantly. Sauces will go from opaque (cloudy) to transparent (clear) as thickening occurs. Continue to stir and boil for one minute. Remove from heat.
4. A few things to keep in mind:
 - a. Avoid cooking with high heat, which can cause lumping and scorching.
 - b. Prolonged boiling or rough stirring (beating) will cause the starch to break down and the sauce to become thin.
 - c. Acids, such as fruit juices, reduce the thickening power of corn starch, so add acids after the sauce has thickened.

TOP 5 ADVANTAGES FOR USING CORN STARCH VS. FLOUR

1. Corn starch is a "super-thickener" compared to flour, so use half as much corn starch as you would flour. When you thicken with corn starch, you use 47% fewer calories than thickening flour.
2. Corn starch thickens with a smooth glossy appearance. Sauces are clear and are more translucent, as opposed to opaque, cloudy, flour-based sauces. It is the best choice for glazes, gravies, fruit pies and Asian sauces.
3. Corn starch is flavorless, so it doesn't mask the flavor of the foods in the dish.
4. Corn starch is gluten free.
5. Besides thickening, corn starch helps prevent eggs from curdling in recipes such as custards, puddings, cheesecakes and quiches.