

Biscuits And Sausage Gravy

BISCUITS

Makes about a dozen

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons vegetable shortening, chilled
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, chilled
1 cup buttermilk, chilled

Preheat oven to 450 degrees.

In a mixing bowl, combine dry ingredients, then use your fingertips to quickly work the shortening and butter into the flour mixture; it should feel like coarse meal. Make a well in the flour mixture and add the buttermilk a little at a time, using a wooden spoon to stir just until a sticky dough forms.

Turn dough onto a floured surface, sprinkle with flour, and knead gently, four or five times (you can add more flour if the dough is sticky). Press the dough out into a round about 1/2 inch thick, then use a floured biscuit cutter to cut out the biscuits. Place biscuits on a baking sheet so they just touch. Bake for about 15 minutes, turning the baking sheet halfway through for even cooking, until the biscuits are raised and golden brown.

SAUSAGE GRAVY

Makes about 2 cups

1/4 pound breakfast sausage
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
2 cups whole milk, warm

Cook the sausage in a cast-iron skillet over medium heat until done, then remove with a slotted spoon. Drain off all but 2 to 3 tablespoons of the fat (you can add vegetable oil if you don't have enough). Add the flour and stir, scraping up any bits on the bottom of the pan. Slowly add the warm milk, whisking constantly until smooth. Lower the heat and continue to stir until gravy is thick (if it's too thick, you can add a little warm water). Stir in the cooked sausage and add salt and pepper to taste.

