

Topfenschmarren – Fluffy Austrian Quark Pancake Pieces

Ingredients

- 250 g quark (called Topfen in Austria)
- 125 ml milk
- 80 g plain (all-purpose) flour; Austrian type W480 or German type 405
- 3 eggs, separated
- 40 g sugar for the batter, plus 2 tsp sugar for caramelising
- 1 sachet vanilla sugar
- A pinch of salt
- 2–3 tbsp butter for cooking and caramelising
- Icing (powdered) sugar, for dusting

Stovetop Method

Prepare the batter: Mix the egg yolks, quark, milk and vanilla sugar until smooth. Quickly stir in the flour to make a smooth, thick batter. Let it rest for about 5 minutes before folding in the beaten egg whites.

Fold in the egg whites: Beat the egg whites with a pinch of salt and the 40 g sugar until glossy and firm, but not dry. Gently fold them into the quark batter using a spatula.

Cook: Melt 2 tbsp butter in a large frying pan over medium heat. Pour in the batter and cover with a well-fitting lid. Cook for about 4 minutes, until golden brown underneath.

Turn and tear into pieces: Use a spatula to divide the pancake into quarters, flip each quarter and reduce the heat slightly. Cover again for the first 2 minutes. After a total of another 3–4 minutes, tear the quarters into bite-sized pieces using two forks or spatulas. Make sure the batter is set in the centre before tearing it apart.

Caramelise: Add the remaining butter and 2 tsp sugar. Gently turn the pieces in the uncovered pan for another 1–2 minutes, until the sugar has melted and the edges are lightly crisp.

Dust with icing sugar and serve warm.

Enjoy your homemade Topfenschmarren!

Tips for Light, Fluffy Results

For a fluffy texture and evenly cooked pancake pieces, keep these tips in mind:

1. Cook with a lid

A well-fitting lid traps heat and steam in the pan, helping the top of the pancake cook through.

- **How to do it:** Cover the pan as soon as you pour in the batter. After flipping the quarters, cover again for the first 2 minutes.
- **Tip:** Remove the lid for caramelising so that excess moisture can escape.

2. Beat and fold the egg whites carefully

Beaten egg whites give the batter its lift; this recipe does not use baking powder.

- **Texture:** Beat the egg whites until glossy with firm peaks. Avoid overbeating: dry, grainy egg whites are harder to fold in evenly.
- **Folding:** Use a spatula or large spoon to gently lift the batter from the bottom and fold it over the egg whites. Avoid vigorous stirring to keep as much air in the batter as possible.

3. Cook gently

Quark batter needs enough time to set in the centre without browning too much underneath.

- **Heat:** Preheat the pan over medium heat. If the underside browns too quickly, turn the heat down. The cooking times are a guide and will vary depending on your pan, hob and the thickness of the batter.

Resting time: Let the base batter rest for about 5 minutes before folding in the egg whites, allowing the flour to absorb the liquid. Once the egg whites are folded in, cook the batter promptly.