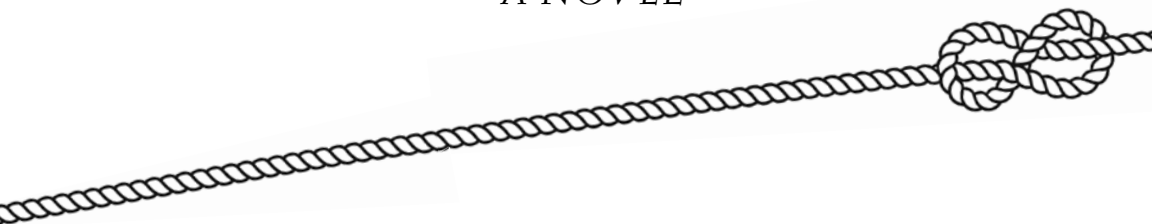




# Sugar AND Salt

A NOVEL



SUSAN WIGGS

*wm*

WILLIAM MORROW

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FIRST EDITION

*Designed by Kyle O'Brien*  
*Art by MicroOne / Shutterstock, Inc.*

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data has been applied for.

ISBN 978-0-06-291422-4 (hardcover)  
ISBN 978-0-06-323630-1 (international edition)

22 23 24 25 26 LSC 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# If You Need Help

RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) is a confidential, free, supportive resource for those dealing with sexual violence. If you or someone you know has been sexually assaulted, help is available 24/7. Visit online at [rainn.org](http://rainn.org) or call 800-656-HOPE (4673).

# Sugar and Salt Recipes

*collected by Susan Wiggs, inspired by the novel*

## Cocktails

### Welcome to Salt

*1 part lime juice  
smoked sea salt  
1 part smoky mescal  
1 part Cointreau or Grand Marnier  
1 jalapeño slice*

Dampen the rim of a glass with the lime juice and dip it in smoked sea salt. Put the glass in the freezer to frost it. Combine the ingredients in a shaker with ice and shake well. Strain into prepared glass, garnish with the jalapeño slice, and serve.

### Baja Oklahoma

*1/4 to 1/2 ounce freshly squeezed lime juice  
coarse salt  
2 ounces blanco or reposado tequila  
4 ounces Jarritos Toronja, Squirt, or Fresca  
grapefruit twist*

## SUGAR AND SALT RECIPES

Dampen the rim of a tall glass with the lime juice and dip it in coarse salt. Fill the glass with ice cubes, add the ingredients, stir, and garnish with a grapefruit twist.

### First Friday

*8 cucumber slices*

*8 mint leaves*

*6 ounces tonic water*

Muddle the cucumber and mint together in a shaker, then fill with ice, stir in the tonic, and strain into a tall glass filled with ice.

## **Mains, Sauces, and Sides**

### Red Hot Raging BBQ Sauce

Since you're already angry, this  
will set your hair on fire.

*4 cups packed brown sugar*

*1/2 cup molasses*

*1 cup maple syrup*

*1/2 cup honey*

*1/2 cup orange juice*

*2 pounds fresh apricots, halved and pitted (or use canned)*

*3 tablespoons salt*

*2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce*

*2 tablespoons soy sauce*

*4 cups cider vinegar*

*1 can (29 ounces) tomato sauce*

## SUGAR AND SALT RECIPES

*2 cups ketchup*  
*1 cup prepared mustard*  
*3 tablespoons chicken bouillon granules*  
*4 tablespoons crushed red pepper flakes*  
*2 tablespoons garlic powder*  
*2 tablespoons onion powder*  
*1 tablespoon ground black pepper*  
*2 tablespoons Liquid Smoke*

Combine everything except the liquid smoke in a large Dutch oven; bring to a boil, stirring so it doesn't burn the bottom. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered for one to two hours, stirring occasionally. Puree with an immersion blender. Stir in Liquid Smoke. Ladle into jars and store in the refrigerator or preserve using traditional canning methods.

Adapted from *Cowboy Cookbook* by Bruce Fischer

### Your Mama's Moist Cornbread

Life is too short to eat dry, crumbly cornbread. This is the one you've been looking for. You don't even need a mixer for this. The leftovers can be split crosswise, toasted, and served with pepper jelly or tomato jam.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter an 8 × 8 pan, or use a seasoned cast-iron skillet.

Combine the wet ingredients in a small pitcher and let the cornmeal soak to soften it:

*4 tablespoons melted butter*  
*1/3 cup oil*  
*1 1/2 cups buttermilk or plain yogurt thinned with milk*

## SUGAR AND SALT RECIPES

*2 eggs*

*1/2 cup cornmeal*

Let that sit while you combine the dry ingredients in a bowl:

*1 1/2 cups flour*

*1/2 cup sugar*

*1 tablespoon baking powder*

*1 teaspoon salt*

*1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper*

Combine everything to moisten, but don't beat or overmix.

Then fold in:

*1 small can diced green chiles*

*1 cup shredded cheddar cheese*

*1 cup fresh, frozen, or canned and drained corn kernels*

Gently fold in but don't overmix the optional ingredients—any combination:

*sliced green onion*

*sliced jalapeño peppers*

*sautéed red, orange, and green sweet peppers*

*dried sweetened cranberries*

*Texas pecans*

*snipped fresh herbs, such as rosemary, sage, or thyme*

Pour batter into the pan and bake for about 30 minutes. If it's still damp in the middle, bake for another 5–10 minutes. Serve warm with butter and tomato jam or pepper jelly.

## SUGAR AND SALT RECIPES

### Honey Butter Fried Chicken

It's worth the trouble.

*2 pounds chicken pieces (or have the butcher cut up a whole chicken)*  
*1 pint buttermilk*  
*1/2 teaspoon kosher salt*  
*1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper*  
*1/4 cup potato starch*  
*1/4 cup all-purpose flour*  
*1/2 teaspoon baking powder*  
*peanut oil for frying*

Brine the chicken for 8–12 hours in a bath of water with a cup each of sugar and salt. Add other flavorings if you like—lemon, peppercorns, herbs. Remove from brine, pat dry, then place the chicken pieces in a bowl with the buttermilk. Combine the dry ingredients in a wide, shallow bowl. Dredge the pieces in the seasoned flour. Heat the oil in a deep skillet or fryer to 350°F. Use tongs to place the chicken pieces in the oil, starting with the dark meat. Fry for about 5 minutes per side, turning with tongs. Chicken is done when the internal temperature is 165°F. Drain on a rack over a sheet pan.

***For the honey butter sauce:***

*4 tablespoons butter*  
*3 garlic cloves, minced*  
*1/4 cup brown sugar*  
*2 teaspoons soy sauce*  
*2 teaspoons honey*



## SUGAR AND SALT RECIPES

Melt the butter in a skillet, add the garlic, and sauté for about a minute. Whisk in the other ingredients and simmer until it bubbles vigorously. Drizzle over the chicken pieces and serve.

### Lazy Biscuits

No need to get out the cookie cutter. These aren't as pretty but they taste better.

*2 cups White Lily flour (this is made from winter wheat and yields the fluffiest biscuits)*

*2 teaspoons baking powder*

*1/2 teaspoon baking soda*

*1 teaspoon sugar*

*3/4 teaspoon table salt*

*1 cup cold buttermilk*

*8 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted, plus 2 tablespoons melted butter for brushing biscuits*

*Maldon (or other flaky) salt*

Heat oven to 475°F. Whisk dry ingredients in large bowl. Combine buttermilk and 8 tablespoons melted butter in pitcher, stirring until butter forms small beads throughout. Add buttermilk mixture to dry ingredients and stir until just until batter pulls away from sides of bowl. Using a greased 1/4-cup dry measure, scoop level amount of batter onto parchment-lined baking sheet. This should yield about 12 biscuits. Bake until tops are golden brown and crisp, 12–14 minutes. Brush biscuits with more melted butter and top with a pinch of salt flakes.

## SUGAR AND SALT RECIPES

### Brisket Kaisers

Do not skimp on the not-so-secret ingredient  
of crushed barbecue potato chips.

*4 kaiser rolls, buttered and grilled*  
*1 cup barbecue sauce*  
*1 pound brisket or grilled portobello mushrooms*  
*1 large onion, caramelized with butter and salt in a heavy skillet*  
*1/2 cup remoulade*  
*4 pepperoncini peppers, sliced thin*  
*crushed barbecue potato chips*

Brush the rolls on the top and bottom with barbecue sauce. Then layer the meat or mushrooms, caramelized onion, remoulade, and peppers on the bottom of the bun. Add a layer of crushed potato chips and top with the rest of the seedy bun.

## Happy Endings

### Texas Sheet Cake

*2 cups all-purpose flour*  
*2 cups sugar*  
*1/4 teaspoon salt*  
*1/2 cup buttermilk*  
*1 teaspoon baking soda*  
*1 teaspoon vanilla extract*  
*2 eggs*  
*2 sticks butter*  
*4 heaping tablespoons cocoa powder*

## SUGAR AND SALT RECIPES

### *For the icing:*

*1-3/4 sticks butter*  
*4 heaping tablespoons cocoa powder*  
*6 tablespoons milk*  
*1 teaspoon vanilla extract*  
*1 pound powdered sugar*

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Combine the flour, sugar, and salt. In a separate bowl, mix the buttermilk, baking soda, vanilla, and eggs.

In a medium saucepan, melt the butter and whisk in the cocoa. Bring 1 cup water to a boil and pour it into the pan, allowing it to bubble; then remove from heat. Pour this mixture into the dry ingredients and stir. Add the egg mixture and stir. Pour into a rimmed 10 × 13 cookie sheet and bake for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the icing. Melt the butter and add the cocoa powder, then the milk, vanilla, and powdered sugar. When you remove the cake from the oven, pour on the warm icing while the cake is still hot. Cool before serving.

Handwritten by my friend Janece