

Friends International - Dundee

PORAGE

A visit to Scotland wouldn't be complete without trying real porage. True Scots will eat their porage with salt sprinkled on top, (not sugar!) and with a small jug of milk or cream. Making real porage isn't difficult. The secret is to remember to keep stirring! All you need to get started are the following:

A medium sized pan
Some oatmeal
Water
Salt

You can buy the oatmeal in the sort of shop which sells cooking ingredients loose from large bins or from a health food shop or a supermarket, although it is likely to cost more from these outlets. I buy evenly sized bags of fine and medium oatmeal and mix them myself. Rolled oats are **not** the same thing as oatmeal and will produce a different result. The taste will be similar, but the texture will be wrong. How much of your oatmeal mixture and how much water is needed will depend upon the type of oatmeal mixture. You may have to experiment. The outcome you seek is neither too runny nor too stiff when ladled into your bowl. I suggest that you start out with a ratio of about two heaped tablespoons of your oatmeal mixture to around a half pint of cold water. That will make around one well sized portion.

Sprinkle the oatmeal mixture into the cold water in the pan. Add a pinch of salt. Place the pan on the cooker and bring to the boil, stirring all the time. Officially, you would use a "spurtle" to stir the mixture. It is like a wooden spoon, but with no spoon at the end...a bit like just the spoon handle, but thicker. If you haven't got a spurtle, any wooden spoon will do. As the mixture boils, it should immediately start to thicken. Reduce the heat to simmer, and continue stirring while the porage simmers. If the outcome looks like the inside of a volcano with bubbles breaking the surface of the lava, or a mudpool with bubbles rising to the surface, you're on the right track!

Simmer for four or five minutes, taking care that the mixture doesn't burn, as it will continue to thicken. If it is getting too thick, you can cheat by adding a little boiling water to the mixture to thin it, taking care that it doesn't splash up into your face when it reaches the hot base of the pan.

Then ladle into your bowl, sprinkle with a little salt, and serve!

If you would like details of events being organised by Friends International-Dundee or of interest to International students, if you would like to read about interesting places to visit in Dundee and the surrounding area or if you want to try out some more of our own Scottish recipes please visit our web site at www.friendsinternational-dundee.org.uk. The site also contains details of coming events of interest to International students, useful contacts and website addresses.

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