

Laver Scones

Laver refers to any of several edible seaweeds of the genus Porphyra. Laver grows on the rocks off the California coast where it is “wildcrafted,” or hand-harvested. The California indigenous Kashaya Pomo people have harvested laver sustainably from the same rocks for centuries.

Laver is valued in China, Korea, and Japan, where it is farmed and processed into sheets of nori, in a process similar to paper-making. The indigenous peoples of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales have long-gathered these seaweeds to make laverbread.

This tribute to the traditional laverbread uses rolled oats. Keeping the oats moist for at least six hours before cooking, as described in the recipe, is essential because this process activates phytase (enzymes) present in the oats, neutralizing phytates (anti-nutrients) in a manner analogous to the sourdough bread traditions.

Phytates are present in the grain to maintain the dormant seed’s mineral stores for the benefit of the coming seedling. These phytates act as an anti-nutrient in our own digestive tract as they combine with the calcium, iron, magnesium, zinc, and other minerals and eliminate them from our bodies, which can, over time, lead to mineral deficiencies.

Fresh

Kefir, yogurt, or whey, ½ cup

From the Pantry

Rolled oats, 1 cup
Spelt flour, approximately ½ cup
Dried laver, 15 grams
Butter, ½ cup
Sea salt

1. Prepare the dough: mix the rolled oats, spelt flour, and kefir, yogurt, or whey and leave in a warm place for at least six hours or overnight.
2. Lightly roast the dried laver in an open pan on high heat, stirring constantly, until it is crisp and brittle.
3. Crumble the laver into small pieces.
4. Melt the butter.
5. Combine the laver crumbs, butter, and a pinch of sea salt with the dough and mix well. Add a little more spelt flour if the dough is very moist; the goal is a soft but not runny texture.
6. If desired, chill the dough for one hour to make it firmer and easier to handle.
7. Grease a baking tray with butter.
8. Form the dough into plum-sized dumplings of round or triangular shape; arrange on the baking dish.
9. Bake at 325°F for 15 to 20 minutes until the scones are firm.
10. Allow the scones to cool for a few minutes; serve warm or cold, spread with butter if desired.