

Apple Crisp



Time Needed



Real Food Rating



Cost

Nothing says fall here in Michigan like apple orchards and apple pickin'. Apple crisp is the perfect simple dessert to take to a potluck or have ready for company, and your house will smell as good as the dish tastes.

Ingredients



Apples (see below for details)

½ c. brown sugar OR sucanat OR palm sugar

¼ tsp. nutmeg

¼ tsp. powdered ginger

1 tsp. cinnamon

3 Tbs. lemon juice

¾ c. rolled oats

1/3 c. flour (all-purpose, whole wheat, or spelt)

pinch of salt

1/3-1/2 c. butter

optional: ground cloves*

optional: ½ c. apple juice OR cider OR water

optional: ½ c. raisins

optional: ½ c. chopped walnuts

How many apples? 2-4 pounds apples, or about 5-10 small or 3-4 large apples, any type. (Golden Delicious or Granny Smith are among my favorite baking apples.) The goal is to fill your chosen baking dish to at least an inch.

Method

Grease an 8x8 or 9x13 baking dish. (*You may want to double the topping amounts for a 9x13, but as written the topping will cover a thin layer larger than an 8x8.*)

Wash, core and slice apples (peeling optional) to cover the bottom of your dish at least an inch deep, but deeper is fine. It's up to you the ratio of apples to topping you have.

Combine the sugar, nutmeg, ginger and cinnamon in a medium bowl, then fold half of that mixture in with your apples in the baking dish along with all of the lemon juice. If adding nuts or raisins, mix into the apples at this time (the nuts can also go into the topping if desired).

**For an extra special fall spiced treat, sprinkle ground cloves over the apples before adding the topping.*

Mix the oats, flour, and salt with the rest of the sugar-spice mixture in the bowl. Using a pastry blender or two knives, cut the butter into that mixture, adding the optional liquid at this time if using. You can also use an electric mixer and simply blend everything together if your butter is slightly soft, especially if you add the liquid. Sprinkle/drop/spread the oat mixture otop the apples.

Bake uncovered at 350°F for 45 minutes OR 375°F for 30 minutes. Check with a fork for doneness – you want the apples to be soft.

Serve warm if possible. Store leftovers in the refrigerator. Eaten cold, it's still an excellent treat!

Serves 4-8+

Variations

Slow cooker: Follow all recipe instructions using the slow cooker as your dish, then turn on low for 3-4 hours.

Gluten-free: Use gluten-free oats and substitute brown rice flour or almond flour for the wheat flour. Or honestly, just skip the flour altogether, but don't use the optional liquid.

Less sweetener: Particularly with sweet apples, the sweetener could likely be cut in half – only use the sweetener in the topping, but keep the spices mixed into the apples.

Alternative sweeteners: In dishes containing cinnamon, palm sugar is my unrefined sweetener of choice (sucanat works fine as well). I bet apple crisp would be amazing with maple syrup, too, but I'd start with ¼ c. since it's sweeter than sugar.



Soaked: Cut the butter into a mixture of oats, flour and half the sugar/spices (just leave out the salt). Add ½ cup apple cider OR water with 1Tbs. lemon juice or whey. Allow to sit 12-24 hours at room temperature.

Proceed with directions above using this soaked mixture as the topping.



Timesaver: You can prepare the apples ahead of time, too, and simply rely on the lemon juice to prevent browning. Store in your baking dish, covered, in the refrigerator overnight while the topping is soaking on the countertop.

Everything goes together very quickly the next day for dessert!

FAQs

- ✓ *Why add the optional liquid?* Without the liquid, the topping is like a streusel or granola topping. With the liquid, you get closer to a crust, like a crumble.
- ✓ *Can I use apples that aren't looking so good anymore?* Yes! Any baking recipe should be very flexible with brown/bruised apples. Visit that reduced produce section. Don't waste fruit – make dessert!
- ✓ *Can I use frozen apples?* What a great way to extend the season! I like to slice and freeze apples, no treatment needed, for dishes just like this. Once the slicing is done, apple crisp is a seriously quick dessert any time of year. You can thaw and drain or just pop frozen slices in the pan.

Notes from the Kitchen

- ✓ *Substitution ideas:* You can switch out the fruit for anything that's in season – pears or peaches would be lovely with the same spices, and berries might taste best with just a bit of cinnamon in the mix. One of my favorite spices to make something really special is cardamom.
- ✓ Play with the spices as well – if you have some favorites with apples, they'll go great in this recipe.
- ✓ Many people say the flavor of applesauce is sweetest and tastiest with a variety of apples. I think the same applies to a crisp, but you can't go wrong with all the same kind of apple, either.
- ✓ I like to bake apple crisp in the oven along with dinner, and it's the perfect temperature for young children by the time dessert is served.
- ✓ Because a crisp is delicious served warm, cold, or lukewarm, it's an excellent, quick, simple, and frugal option for bringing to a party to share with others. Try keeping it warm in the slow cooker.