

Apple and Sausage Breakfast Bake

Kathy Shortt, Garner

9 slices of Pepperidge Farm Cinnamon Bread
1 lb. Neese's Southern-Style Country Sausage
2 cups chopped and peeled NC Apples (cut into ¼ inch pieces)
½ cup fancy shredded Cheddar Cheese
2 cups milk
6 eggs

Cut each slice of bread into 9 squares. Brown the sausage until no longer pink, drain and crumble. Core and peel the apples and cut into small ¼ inch pieces. Toss the bread, sausage and apples together in a 9 x 13 inch baking dish. Sprinkle the top with the cheese. Mix together the milk and eggs using a whisk. Pour the milk/egg mixture over the bread/sausage apple mixture. Cover the baking dish with cellophane and refrigerate over night or bake immediately. Preheat oven to 350. Bake uncovered for 45 minutes, let sit for 5 minutes. Drizzle with the glaze (optional). Enjoy!

PERSONAL Note: Kathy Shortt from Garner created this recipe and won second place at the 2006 NC State Fair Apple Recipe contest. She used Mutsu apples so it would be less tart. However, if you prefer a more tart apple, use Granny Smith. When I made it, I used Fuji because it is sweet and firm. I also added a glaze to the recipe.

Glaze

½ cup confectionary sugar
2 Tablespoons water

Stir until it is thin enough to drizzle over the casserole. You may need to continue to add water 1 teaspoon at the time until it is the consistency you prefer.

Apple Delicious Snack Buffet

Variety of NC Apples (Red Delicious, Granny Smith, Gala, Pink Lady)
Peanut Butter
Carmel
Raisins
Peanuts – chopped
Cheeses (cheddar, Swiss, muenster)
Any other item that would be great to try with apples

Mix together some fresh lemon juice (2 lemons) and water (1/4 cup). Slice the apples into 12 slices and coat in the lemon juice mixture. This will keep them from turning brown. Chop the peanuts into bite size pieces. Slice or cube your cheese. Set it all up in a colorful fun buffet and encourage your guest to try different combinations.

PERSONAL Note: This is a fun, healthy way to get kids to eat better. When they have choices they love to try different things. Also, giving them different varieties of apples to try will let them discover the taste and texture that they really love. Not everyone loves a Red Delicious or a Granny Smith. But a child may taste a Gala for the first time and that can become a favorite fruit!

Apple Skewer Appetizer

2 North Carolina Granny Smith Apples
1 package thinly sliced Prosciutto ham
2 packages thinly sliced cheeses (Havarti, Muenster, cheddar or Swiss)

Core and slice your apples into 12 or 16 slices. Carefully wrap the apple with a slice of Prosciutto and then a slice of cheese. Secure with a toothpick. Serves 4-6

PERSONAL Note: I used the Granny Smith because it is a very tart apple that is firm. It complements the ham and cheese. But you can mix and match this appetizer using a different variety of apples and cheeses.

Garden Apple Salsa

¼ of a medium sized red onion – diced
1 red pepper – diced
1 green pepper – diced
1 Anaheim Chile pepper – diced
1 small jalapeno pepper – diced
2 vine ripened tomatoes – diced
2 Tablespoons apple cider vinegar
2 Tablespoons olive oil
1 bunch cilantro – chopped (optional)
Juice of 1 lime
2 NC Jonagold Apples – cored, peeled and diced
Salt and fresh cracked pepper

Just chop, dice, peel and core. Then mix it all together and refrigerate.

PERSONAL Note: This salsa is great on fish, pork chicken or with chips. It is so fresh and delicious. This recipe makes plenty so you can have it with your meal and have enough leftover for salsa. I used the Jonagold apple in this recipe because the flesh is a soft creamy yellow with a hint of tartness.

Grilled Apples

2 Pink Lady Apples – core and cut into 8 slices (leave the peeling on)
Heavy Duty Aluminum Foil
4 Tablespoons butter or margarine
1 Tablespoon sugar
1 Tablespoon cinnamon

Mix together your cinnamon and sugar. Tear off enough aluminum foil to make a packet. Place the apple slices onto the foil pouch. Cover with pats of butter. Sprinkle with the cinnamon sugar mixture. Seal the pouch leaving room for them to steam. Place on the cooler side of the grill for 20-30 minutes. 4 servings.

PERSONAL Note: I used the Pink Lady Apple because it is not only a great size but the flavor is sweet and tart. Perfect for grilling.

Harvest Apple Cookies

2 cups plus 2 Tablespoons all-purpose flour
¾ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking soda
1 stick (8 Tablespoons) unsalted butter, room temperature
1 cup granulated sugar
1 large egg
½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
2 North Carolina Rome Apples – cored, peeled and diced
1/3 cup apple jelly
2 Tablespoons fine sanding sugar
1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Whisk together flour, salt, and baking soda.

Beat butter and granulated sugar with a mixer on medium-high speed until pale and fluffy, 2-4 minutes. Reduce speed to low. Beat in egg and vanilla. Add flour mixture, and beat until just combined. Add apples and jelly, and beat until just combined.

Using a 1 ½ - inch ice cream scoop or a tablespoon, drop dough onto baking sheets lined with parchment, spacing about 2 inches apart. (If not baking all the cookies at once, refrigerate dough between batches; dough can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 2 days.) Combine sanding sugar and cinnamon. Sprinkle each cookie with 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon-sugar mixture.

Bake cookies, rotating sheets halfway through, until golden brown and just set, 11 to 13 minutes. Let cool on baking sheets for 5 minutes, and then transfer cookies to wire racks to cool completely.

PERSONAL Note: These cookies are like a cobbler. You could even put a few in a bowl with some ice cream. They are best warm but what cookie isn't? I used our North Carolina Rome Apple because it is one of our best baking apples. The flavor grows richer as it bakes.

Oriental Apple Chicken Salad

2 cups diced North Carolina Apples (Granny Smith)
¾ cup Sesame Ginger salad dressing
2 medium chicken breasts cooked and shredded
4 oz. can crushed pineapple with juice
½ cup golden raisins
1-cup mayonnaise
2 Tablespoons fresh lemon juice
¼ cup chopped scallions
½ cup chopped mixed nuts
1 tsp. paprika
½ cup diced celery
1 diced medium green pepper
½ diced medium red onion

Put 2 cups diced NC Granny Smith apples into a bowl. Add the lemon juice and salad dressing. Stir to combine. Add the chicken, pineapple with juice and mayonnaise. Stir. Then add the red onion, celery and pepper to the mixture. Add scallions, raisins, mixed nuts and paprika. Gently stir until all ingredients are combined. Place in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour to chill.

PERSONAL Note: This is a great recipe for lunch. Serve it in a hollowed out apple. I recommend a Honey Crisp apple because the flesh is very soft and easy to remove. The color is also beautiful. Homemade Chicken Salad on a plate with a spinach salad and a muffin and you will be enjoying a light delicious meal.