



Apples

Why wait till fall when you can eat 'em today?

By Dennis Rosenblum
staff writer

No, it is not fall. No, the cider is not yet flowing. But the day is long gone when apples were a seasonal fruit; if you like them — and who doesn't? — why wait?

Plenty of fruit — both foreign and domestic, is available in stores this time of year. The domestic apples are put in "controlled atmosphere" storage in the fall. The foreigners are shipped over, and often are available on store shelves just three weeks after being picked.

Afficionados may complain that some apples from storage lose their fresh "crunch" but, according to Mark Arney, director of the Michigan Apple Committee, "If the conditions are correct, an apple should be just about as good as when it went in."

Arney is predicting a great year for Michigan apples, with a fall harvest of 21 million bushels — up considerably from last year's 16 million bushels.

"There should be some gems in the store because of almost ideal spring conditions," he says.

"I think you'll see one of the best crops."

One of the changes in the apple market, both here and abroad, has been an increase in the production of certain apple varieties that never turn red.

And the folks who import Granny Smith apples, the green ones available now in stores, have been doing their best to combat what they call "green apple syndrome," a deep-seated

belief that green apples are those sour things you got sick on as a kid.

Granny Smith apples are always green. And they're not sour. But most of us think of apples as being red when they're ripe.

Even the domestic apples growers have faced the problem, with such varieties as golden delicious. "An apple doesn't have to be all red to be good," says Arney.

Of such concern was this to the Granny Smith folks that a couple years back they hired a psychologist to figure out what type of person would be most likely to eat a glossy green Granny. They ended up with a personality profile of people who like various fruits.

Grape lovers, it seems, are often lazy, showy, a bit insecure, and like to strut around in designer clothes and be the center of the party.

Banana eaters are just the opposite — they don't like parties and they eat junk food. Besides being sex symbols, bananas are a throwback to soft, mushy baby food.

Oranges, which are messy and hard to peel, are for the meticulous and patient and people who like to work with their hands. Engineers and accountants often enjoy oranges.

And apples, as you might expect, turn out to be full of all sorts of good connotations, with traditionalists sticking to the reds and more flexible, open-minded types willing to eat greens.

This all comes up because this is the season for imported Granny Smith apples, what they say are the only "fresh" apples — meaning those not placed in storage — now available. They're shipped from the southern hemisphere, mainly Africa, where the growing season is in our winter.

The apples make it from tree to store in close to three weeks and are sold until September, when the domestic apple harvest is in full swing. About a million cases are expected to be imported this year.



Barbara Burman

"The beauty about them is that they're the only fresh apple you can eat in the summer," says Barbara Burman, a traveling publicist for Granny Smiths.

Granny Smiths are now being grown in Washington and California, but these still won't make it off the trees until fall with the reds.

The Granny Smith name comes from an English woman who emigrated to Australia in 1838. To help support the family, she operated a small orchard and sold the fruit in Sydney.

One day, a seller gave Mrs. Smith six Tasmanian French crab apples to cook. She tossed the seeds out her kitchen window, as the story goes, and one of the trees that grew from the seeds produced a large, green-skinned apple.

Cuttings from the original tree produced others and today the Granny Smith Memorial Park stands near her former home.

The nice thing about having fresh fruit in the summer, Burman notes, is that it's the time of year for informality, for snacking, for being outdoors.

"When we're eating fruit, we have no table manners. There's no right way to eat fruit."

Here are a variety of recipes we've run across, all using fresh apples.

CRAN-APPLE CRUNCH

- 1 cup cranberry juice
- 1 cup apple juice
- 1 large apple

Wash, core and cut apple into small pieces. Put into blender with remaining ingredients. Blend until apple pieces are small but still crunchy. Makes two servings.

from "This Can't Be Healthy, I Like It" by Grace R. Gluckin

YAM AND APPLE BAKE

- 2 16-oz. cans yams in syrup
- 2 apples, cored, peeled and sliced
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts, divided
- 4 Tbsp. light brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp. butter or margarine
- 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Drain yams, reserving 1/2 cup of syrup. Slice yams and arrange half in a greased 2-quart casserole. Place apples over yams. Sprinkle with 1/4 cup of the walnuts and 2 tablespoons of the sugar. Top with remaining yams. Sprinkle with remaining 1/4 cup walnuts and 2 tablespoons sugar. Dot with butter. Combine reserved syrup, cornstarch and Worcestershire sauce. Pour evenly over all. Bake, covered, until apples are tender, about 45 minutes. Makes six portions.

APPLE WINECREAM

- 1 1/2 cups diced, pared apples
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 3 Tbsp. water
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 5 Tbsp. corn starch
- 1 1/2 cups white wine
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 eggs, separated

Stir together apples, 2 tablespoons sugar and water in medium saucepan.

Cover and simmer 2 minutes or until apples are tender. Drain. Mix together 1/2 cup sugar and corn starch in medium saucepan. Gradually add wine and water, stirring until smooth. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until mixture comes to a boil and boils 1 minute. Beat egg yolks. Blend a little hot mixture into egg yolks, then stir all into remaining hot mixture in saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Beat egg whites until soft peaks form when beater is raised. Fold apples and hot mixture into beaten egg whites. Pour into serving dishes. Chill. Makes seven 1/2-cup servings.

CARROT AND APPLE SALAD

- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- Salt
- Fresh ground black pepper
- 2 Tbsp. oil
- 2 large carrots, washed and peeled thinly
- 2 large tart apples, peeled and cored

In a salad bowl, mix the lemon juice with salt and pepper to taste, using a small whisk. Add the oil and mix well again. Shred the carrots and apples, using the shredding disk of a food processor, and put them into a salad bowl. Toss immediately with dressing so the apples do not discolor. Season with more salt and pepper if necessary. Serves six.

BOURBON APPLES

- 4 large, crisp apples
- 6 Tbsp. light brown sugar
- Juice of 1/2 lemon, about 1 1/2 Tbsp.
- 1/4 cup bourbon
- 4 scoops vanilla ice cream

Peel, core and cut apples into bite-size chunks; place in a 10-inch skillet. Add brown sugar, lemon juice and bourbon. Cover and simmer until apples are tender, stirring occasionally and basting with liquid. Serve warm over scoops of vanilla ice cream. Makes four servings.

