

Enjoy a crisp fall with all these varieties of apples



AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR CANCER RESEARCH

Apple crisp: You can make great, low-fat desserts with apples. The next time you go to a potluck dinner, bring an apple crisp.

Nothing tastes better than a crisp, juicy, crunchy apple when you're out hiking in the brisk autumn air or relaxing with a good book.

Whether you are picking your own apples in an orchard this fall or buying them at the market, this is the season to load up. The variety of ways you can use apples is endless - from smoothies and snacks to salads, side dishes, sauces and even entrees.

Americans can't seem get enough of this fiber-filled, nutritious fruit. Cultivated since ancient times and brought to the United States by the Pilgrims in 1620, today over 7,000 varieties of apples are grown in the United States - unfortunately, few of them are found in most supermarkets.

Red Delicious, the most popular variety, is great for eating out of hand or in uncooked dishes. Add sliced apples to low-fat yogurt or slip them into a sandwich. For a child's snack, slice an apple in half, scoop out the core and add peanut butter. Or make a smoothie by pureeing apples in a blender with bananas, juice and ice.

Combine sliced apples with canned sliced beets in a salad.

Mix chunks of apples with any mixture of leafy greens and drizzle with your favorite low-fat dressing. Add chopped apples to a pilaf or cooked mixed vegetable dish just before serving.

Other types of apples are better suited for cooking and baking, like Rome Beauty, Braeburn, Jonathan, Empire, McIntosh, Granny Smith and Golden Delicious. Add some during the last few minutes of cooking a stir-fry or a curry. You can also make great, low-fat desserts with these apples. Next time you go to a potluck dinner, bring an apple crisp and watch your friends indulge in a dessert that's a treat for their health as well as their taste buds.

APPLE CRISP

Canola oil cooking spray
4 Granny Smith apples, cored and cut into thin slices or bite-size pieces
1/2 cup raisins
3 tablespoons apple juice
1/4 cup whole wheat flour
1/4 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
1/4 cup brown sugar
3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

3/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
3/4 tablespoons cold butter, cut into small pieces

Preheat oven to 375°F. Coat 8-inch square baking dish with cooking spray.

Combine apples, raisins and apple juice in bowl, toss well and set aside. In another bowl, combine flour, rolled oats, brown sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg. With pastry blender or knife and fork, cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse meal.

Transfer apple mixture to baking dish. Sprinkle flour mixture evenly over surface. Lightly coat top with cooking spray.

Cover and bake 30 minutes. Uncover and bake for 20 minutes more or until apples are tender. Remove from oven and let stand on wire rack at least 20 minutes. Cut into squares and serve warm or at room temperature. Makes 6 servings.

Nutritional information per serving: 196 calories, 2 g. fat (1 g. saturated fat), 46 g. carbohydrate, 2 g. protein, 4 g. dietary fiber, 20 mg. sodium.

Recipe courtesy of the American Institute for Cancer Research.

Grilling chicken gets a new twist

BY DANA JACOBI
SPECIAL WRITER

Grilling is great. Enveloping a chicken breast and vegetables in a foil packet before setting them on the grill is even better. This method, which my family favored long before a foil manufacturer recommended it, gives food appealing, concentrated flavor and leaves little or no clean-up.

GRILLED CHICKEN PACKETS

- 1 Spanish onion, cut in 1/2-inch slices
- 1 large Granny Smith apple, peeled, quartered and cored
- 1 large green bell pepper, seeded and cut in 1/2-inch strips
- 12 ounces skinless and boneless chicken breast, cut in 4 pieces

- 1 cup "lite" coconut milk
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 teaspoons finely minced fresh ginger
- 4 teaspoons curry powder
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 cups cooked brown long-grain rice

Heat grill or preheat oven to 400°F.

Lay out a 40-inch long sheet of heavy-duty, wide foil. Place one-fourth of onion slices in center of each piece of foil. Cut each apple quarter into 4 slices and arrange over onion. Lay one-fourth of pepper strips over apple. Cut each chicken piece into 4 strips. Arrange over peppers.

In small bowl, combine coconut milk, curry powder, ginger,

cilantro, and salt and pepper to taste. Season to taste with pepper. Pour a quarter of mixture over chicken and vegetables in each packet.

Bring sides of foil together and roll down over center of packet. Roll each end in to seal.

Place packets on grill, cover grill and cook until chicken is cooked through, about 15 minutes. Or set packets on baking sheet and bake until chicken is done, about 20 minutes.

Divide cooked rice among 4 plates. Open packets carefully to prevent steam from scalding skin. Spoon contents of each packet over each bed of rice and serve. Makes 4 servings.

Nutritional information per serving: 395 calories, 6 g. fat (3 g. saturated fat), 59 g. carbohydrate, 27 g. protein, 6 g. dietary fiber.

Make vegetables 'kid-friendly'

Having trouble getting finicky children to try new vegetables? Then it's time to stop prodding and start plotting. From the start to the finish of the meal-making process, a wide range of strategies and techniques will help get them - and maybe yourself as well - to eat more health-protective vegetables.

If your fussy eaters love pasta, add shredded carrots and zucchini, or other finely chopped vegetables, to the tomato sauce, cook briefly and serve it over their favorite noodles. When making bran muffins, blend some mashed sweet potatoes into the batter. Add extra vegetables to your child's alphabet soup.

Get your children into the process from the start. Let them poke around the produce section of your supermarket and pick out vegetables. Once home, appoint them sous-chefs and show them how to make healthier pizzas. Teach them how to sauté vegetables, cook a simple tomato sauce, or assemble a pizza with a ready-made crust.

Change the way you prepare vegetables. Children may cringe at limp, pale broccoli but may love chomping on crunchy raw florets, especially if served with a flavorful dip. Peas - not always a favorite - are sweet and juicy eaten raw. Grilling and oven-roasting intensify the flavors and sweetness of vegetables and are easy techniques.

Use vegetables in wraps, which hold better than sandwiches if you keep the wrapper flexible and don't overstuff them. The following recipe uses cream cheese and a lettuce leaf to prevent the moist filling from turning the wrapper soggy. Cold wraps usually improve in flavor by sitting in the refrigerator overnight.

TUNA SALAD WRAP

- 1 can (6 1/2 ounces) water-packed white tuna, drained
- 1 small carrot, shredded
- 1/4 cup finely chopped celery
- 1/4 cup finely chopped green pepper
- 1/2 tablespoon dried chives or chervil
- 2-4 tablespoons nonfat mayonnaise
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 8-inch flour tortillas
- 4 tablespoons nonfat cream cheese



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Tuna salad wraps: This recipe includes cream cheese and a lettuce leaf to prevent the moist filling from turning the wrapper soggy.

cheese
4 well-dried leaves of leafy green lettuce slightly smaller than a tortilla
1/2 cup shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese
4 sprigs fresh mint, cilantro, or flat-leaf parsley

In small bowl, combine tuna, carrot, celery, green pepper, chives and enough mayonnaise to make a moist (but not wet) salad. Add salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.

On each tortilla, spread a thin layer of cream cheese (about 1 tablespoon) across the center two-thirds of tortilla's surface, leaving a 2-inch margin along edges. Center 1 lettuce leaf on top of each tortilla. Press leaf into cream cheese. Spread one-fourth of the tuna salad firmly over each lettuce leaf, leaving

a 2-inch margin at top and bottom of each tortilla. Sprinkle one-fourth of cheese over each tortilla and top with sprig of fresh mint or other fresh herb.

Fold the bottom of the tortilla up to cover the top of the filling. Fold in the two sides a quarter-inch. Roll tortilla up, holding side folds in. Roll wraps tightly and as firmly as possible to ensure packets stays closed. Tightly seal each in plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to serve or pack. Wraps made without wet ingredients can keep for 24 hours or more without getting soggy. Makes 4 wraps.

Nutritional information per wrap: 238 calories, 6 g. fat (3 g. saturated fat), 24 g. carbohydrate, 20 g. protein, 2 g. dietary fiber.

Pump up nutrition in smoothies

Recipes courtesy of Kelli Lewton. See related column on Taste front.

Pump up the nutritional value of your smoothie with any of the following additives: 1 tablespoon wheat germ, 1/4 cup uncooked oatmeal, 1/4 cup bran cereal, 1 tablespoon protein powder, tofu, milk (substituted for part of juice), (tomatop, blackstrap molasses (extra iron), brewer's yeast (protein), pirulina or chlorella (supplements), Royal jelly or green tea.

GIDGET'S GO-GO CREAM

- 1 1/4 cup frozen Yogurt
- 10 ounces ice
- 3/4 cup orange juice
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 banana
- 2 ounces peaches
- 2 ounces oranges

Blend ingredients and serve.

THE "OVER THIRTY"

- 1/2 cup soy milk
- 1/2 cup very berry soy milk
- 12 ounces ice
- 1/2 banana
- 1 ounce elgee

TEA-LICIOUS

- 1/2 cup soy milk
- 1/2 cup green tea
- 12 ounces ice
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 ounces orange
- 1 ounce peaches

Blend ingredients and serve.

Bananas, dried plums and peanut butter team up

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Making sandwiches at high speed can still get results that rise above routine.

Without stretching the pantry budget, have a bit of fun with easy but imaginative combinations of ingredients. Try this one for the lunch boxes or for a fast, nutritious snack for anyone (and remember that dried plums are what you used to call prunes).

PEANUT BUTTER, BANANA AND DRIED PLUM SANDWICHES

(Preparation time 10 minutes)

- 4 slices whole wheat bread, toasted
- 1/4 cup peanut butter
- 1 medium banana, sliced
- 1/4 cup (about 2 ounces) quartered pitted dried plums
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)

On each of two bread slices, spread 2 tablespoons peanut butter. Top with banana slices and dried plums. Mix honey with cinnamon if desired. Drizzle honey over dried plums. Top each with remaining bread slices.

Make 2 sandwiches.

Nutritional information per 1 sandwich serving: 688 cal., 18 g. fat, 0 mg. chol., 423 mg. sodium, 118 g. carbs., 9 g. fiber, 16 g. protein.

(Recipe from California Dried Plum Board)

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