

Applesauce

The best applesauce is made from a mixture of several varieties of apples, some sweet, some tart. Very good applesauce can be made from stored apples (even when they are too soft to enjoy out of hand). While we usually think of cooked apple dishes as desserts, they are very popular in northern Europe as accompaniments to meat, especially pork or goose. If you wish to serve applesauce with a roast, try seasoning it with grated horseradish or with white wine and grated lemon zest (substitute the wine for water in step 2 below as the Germans do. Apples also pair well with cabbage, potatoes, and turnips. If you add a quince you will make quince-flavored applesauce, another excellent variation. This recipe describes applesauce made on the stovetop, but it can also be conveniently made in a slow cooker. One peck of apples (10 pounds) yields 10–12 cups of sauce.

Fresh	From the Pantry
Apples	Honey (<i>optional</i>) Ground allspice or cinnamon (<i>optional</i>) Butter (<i>optional</i>)

1. Cut the apples into chunks—quarters if small, eighths if large. (With the organic apples, you need not remove the core.)
2. Place the apples in a heavy-bottomed pan with 1 centimeter of water (to prevent burning).
3. Simmer slowly with the lid on for 30–45 minutes until the apples are very tender.
4. Purée the apples using a food mill or force through a ricer; discard the separated peels and seeds.
5. Immediately before serving, you may sweeten to taste with honey if you wish, and add seasonings: cinnamon, allspice, or butter.
6. If necessary, add water to the applesauce to thin it to your desired consistency (applesauce is usually very thick—much thicker than a normal sauce—so that it can be served on its own).
7. Serve hot as a dessert or breakfast dish or use to prepare apple butter (see following recipe). Applesauce is also excellent with potato pancakes or roasted meat.

Apple Butter

Apple butter, also called apple molasses, should be dark brown in color and as thick as jam. It is one of the easiest preserves to make, as well as one of the most rewarding, since the individual aroma of whatever apple you use is distinct in the final product. One peck of apples (10 pounds) yields about one quart of apple butter.

Fresh	From the Pantry
Applesauce, unseasoned (recipe precedes this one)	Ground cinnamon (<i>optional</i>)

1. Prepare applesauce according to the preceding recipe.

2. Put the applesauce (free of skins and seeds) into a crock pot.
3. Cook on lowest heat for up to a full day; leave the lid cracked to allow steam to escape.
4. The apple butter will darken as it reduces. It is done when it has thickened enough to be spread.
5. Add cinnamon to taste, if desired.
6. Serve with toast. The apple butter may be refrigerated for several weeks or canned for winter use by the hot-water-bath method.

Grated Apples

I recommend late autumn Granny Smith apples for this simple dessert because these apples are both tart and sweet, producing a flavor of superiour complexity. If your apples are sweet enough, no sugar is needed. Grated apples are commonly served as a dessert in the Middle East, where rose or orange bolssom water would replace the cinnamon. The lemon juice is present not only for flavor but also to slow browning.

Fresh	From the Pantry
Crisp, sweet-tart apples, such as late-season Granny Smith Lemon juice Mint leaves	Ground cinnamon (<i>optional</i>) Sugar (<i>optional</i>)

1. Grate the organic apples using a mandoline or vegetable grater into matchstick-sized pieces; there is no need to peel them.
2. Mince the mint leaves, reserving a few attractive leaves for a garnish.
3. Toss the apples with the mint, lemon juice to taste, and a sprinkle of cinnamon and sugar to taste.
4. Garnish the dessert with reserved mint leaves.
5. Serve as a dessert within one hour to prevent excessive browning.

Baked Apples

A good holiday dessert. If you use sweet apples then very little added sugar is needed.

Fresh	From the Pantry
Cooking apples, such as Granny Smith or Cripps Pink A selection of nuts, such as almonds, hazel- nuts, & walnuts Red wine or juice of an orange	Raisins Sugar Cinnamon Butter or coconut oil for baking dish

1. Cut the apples in half.

2. Chop the nuts and raisins.
3. Grease a baking dish and pre-heat an oven to 350 °F.
4. Arrange the apples face-up in the dish and top with the nuts and raisins, sugar and cinnamon to taste, and enough wine or orange juice to keep the apples moist while baking.
5. Bake covered for about 30 minutes. Check periodically to ensure that the dish does not dry out.
6. Serve while warm.

Braised Apples

For this dessert you should use apples that do not fall apart when cooked. Granny Smith and Fuji are good choices. Although this is rarely done in the USA, northern Europeans commonly serve dishes like this as accompaniments to roasted meats. It is important to use organic apples so that there are no pesticide residues in the skin.

Fresh	From the Pantry
Apples, pref. a mixture of sweet & tart varieties, such as Granny Smith & Fuji	Butter Ground allspice or cinnamon (<i>optional</i>) Honey (<i>optional</i>)

1. Cut the apples into slices (eighths to sixteenths depending on size). There is no need to peel them.
2. Braise slowly for 10–15 minutes until the apples are tender but still hold their shape.
3. Sprinkle with allspice or cinnamon to taste.
4. You may sweeten with honey if you wish; sweet apples do not require this.
5. Serve as a dessert or breakfast dish; these are excellent with pancakes.