

APPLES for DINNER

SEASON: Late August through November.

GROWING: Apples are sensitive to spring frost - if trees get a freeze in the spring after blossoming, kills the proto-apples, thus the crop. And once that happens, there's nothing a farmer can do to except hope for better luck the next year.

WHAT TO EXPECT: Crisp and juicy raw, apples can range from very sweet to puckery-tart. Cooked, some kinds cook to a pulp, while others retain their shape (see reverse for examples).

VITAMINS AND MINERALS: High in fiber and vitamin C, most of both in the skin or just underneath its surface.

STORAGE: Optimal storage is 33 degrees, high humidity, and they can keep months. If you get a couple bushels apple picking, think of cool places: basement, garage, a cool closet, back hall, under the couch, or the produce drawer.

WHY BUY IT LOCALLY? Because Rhode Island has so many orchards, of course! Why pay to ship from Washington when they grow in Scituate?



Cooking with Apples

PREPARATION

* Ladies and Gentlemen, choose your apple: Soft-fleshed, cooks down to pulp: Macintosh, Macoun, Mutsu, Gala. Firm-fleshed, holds shape: Baldwin, Cortland, Cox's, Empire, Golden Delicious, Jonagold, Ida Red, Northern Spy, RI Greening, Rome, Winesap

* Wash; to core cut in quarters & cut a wedge from it around the seeds.

BASIC COOKING

* Sautéed apple slices: Choose a firm-fleshed variety that holds its shape. Cut prepped apple into thick wedges. Heat a little butter or veg oil in a skillet, & add apple. Cook 'til golden-brown, then do other side.

* Cita's apple sauce: Chop up peeled apples - my grandmother used a mix of soft and firm varieties to make a textured sauce. Simmer in a saucepan with a splash of water until it's a texture you like. Add water if it gets dry & might stick/burn. Season with pinch of cinnamon & other sweet spices, or try cardamom, curry, lemon or orange, vinegar, maple...

SERVING IDEAS

* Serve slices or sauce alongside milder sausages, pork chops, chicken breasts, winter squash, johnnycakes, omelets, blintzes, and fritters.

* Apple sauce cans & freezes beautifully, so make extra for snacks.

* Dice; cook covered on low heat with shredded cabbage, $\frac{1}{2}$ c. cider, bay leaf, salt and pepper. When tender (30 min), splash with cider vinegar.

AN ACTUAL RECIPE - Normandy-style chicken

4 chicken thighs 1-2 T cooking oil 4-6 firm apples, peeled, chunked
1 onion, diced 1 cup cider (opt: 2 T brandy; 1 T butter)

* Heat oil in a skillet over high heat. Sprinkle salt & pepper on chicken, & set skin-down in skillet. Sear to a golden brown, then turn & brown other side. Remove to a plate. Add a little more oil to pan if needed, then onions. When they are softened and translucent, add apples & stir a minute. Nestle chicken down in the apples, add cider, cover, & simmer 30-45 minutes, until chicken is cooked through. Remove chicken pieces & finish sauce by turning up heat to cook it down, if needed, & stir in brandy or butter if you're using them. Serve spooned over chicken.

Thank you for doing your shopping from RI farmers.