

Vermontish Apple Crisp

Recipe 264 of 365

Sweetened with maple syrup, the crisp topping is a bit unusual: it comes together like cookie dough before baking, and gets sprinkled onto the apples over a layer of shredded cheddar cheese, of all things, in deference to the Vermont tradition of topping hot apple pie with a slice of sharp white cheddar. It forms a wonderfully crunchy, breakable crust. Underneath, the apples are tart and tender, with enough juice to make them slide over each other in your mouth. In my book, this is everything apple crisp should be. Vanilla ice cream seals the deal.

TIME: 20 minutes active time, plus baking

MAKES: 6 to 8 servings

For the filling:

Vegetable oil spray

7 large tart apples (about 2 3/4 pounds), chopped (peeled or unpeeled)

1/4 cup flour

1/3 cup sugar

1 teaspoon cinnamon

For the topping:

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 cup old-fashioned oats

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1/2 cup good maple syrup

1/2 stick (4 tablespoons) unsalted butter, melted

2 loosely packed cups grated sharp cheddar cheese (about 1/4 pound)

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Spray an 8" square baking pan lightly with the vegetable oil spray, and set aside.

Stir the remaining filling ingredients together in a large mixing bowl until the fruit is coated with the flour. Transfer to the baking dish and bake on the middle rack for 20 minutes.

While the fruit bakes, make the crisp topping (you can use the same big bowl): Mix the flour, oats, and cinnamon together in the bowl. Pour the syrup and melted butter over the dry ingredients, and mix until all the dry ingredients are moistened. (It should feel a little like cookie dough.)

When the fruit is done, sprinkle the cheddar cheese in an even layer over the apples. Break the topping into small pieces and scatter it in an even layer over the cheese. Bake the crisp an additional 35 to 40 minutes, or until the top is nicely browned and the filling is bubbling. Serve warm.