



APPLE CRISP

Although there are a dozen or more kinds of baked fruit desserts with crusts (or other toppings) on top, they all have as their goal a simple topping that usually does not require rolling and complements the fruit with contrasting flavors and textures. You can top fruit with almost any pastry before baking, but if I love the way its sweet, crunchy granola-like topping works with fruit, especially soft, tart fruit such as blueberries, or apples spiked with lemon.

You can make this crisp with apples, pears, stone fruits, berries, or a combination; in any case, start with six cups of fruit, somewhere between two and three pounds. If you use more watery fruits, such as berries, toss them with a tablespoon or two of flour or cornstarch before cooking. If you use very tart fruits, such as rhubarb, increase the sugar.

SIX TO EIGHT SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

6 cups peeled, cored, sliced apples or other fruit
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
Juice of ½ lemon
2/3 cup brown sugar, or to taste
5 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into bits, plus butter for greasing the pan
½ cup rolled oats
½ cup all-purpose flour
¼ cup shredded unsweetened coconut (optional)
¼ cup chopped nuts (optional)
Dash salt



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METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 400° F. Toss the fruit with half the cinnamon, the lemon juice, and 1 tablespoon of the sugar, and spread it in a lightly buttered 8-inch square or a 9-inch round baking pan.
2. Combine all the other ingredients – including the remaining cinnamon and sugar – in the container of a food processor and pulse a few times, then process a few seconds more until everything is well incorporated but not uniform. (To mix the ingredients by hand, soften the butter slightly, toss together the dry ingredients, then work in the butter with your fingertips, a pastry blender, or a fork.)
3. Spread the topping over the apples and bake 30 to 40 minutes, until the topping is browned and the apples are tender. Serve hot, warm, or at room temperature.

Taken from *How to Cook Everything, Simple Recipes for Great Food* by Mark Bittman

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