




Old-Fashioned Apple Cake with Brown Sugar Frosting

This cake is an old, old favorite of ours. It's a cake where the whole is definitely more than the sum of the parts. The moist, semi-chunky cake, spread with the frosting equivalent of brown sugar fudge, is perfect served with a cup of coffee or, better still, a glass of ice-cold milk. Our thanks to the wonderful *Bakery Lane Soup Bowl* cookbook for the inspiration for this recipe.



PREP	BAKE	TOTAL	YIELD
 20 mins	42 to 47 mins	2 hrs 2 mins	one 9" x 13" cake

Ingredients

Cake

- 2 1/3 cups (280g) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 1 2/3 cups (330g) granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Apple Pie Spice or 1 teaspoon cinnamon + 1/4 teaspoon each ginger and nutmeg
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 8 tablespoons (113g) unsalted butter, softened
- 4 cups (425g) peeled, cored, finely chopped apple (1/4" to 1/2"), about 1 1/3 pounds whole apples*
- 2 tablespoons (43g) boiled cider, optional
- 1 cup (113g) walnuts or pecans, toasted and diced

*For a cake with more texture, leave the peels on the apples, and chop them coarsely rather than finely.

Frosting

- 7 tablespoons (99g) butter
- 2/3 cup (142g) light brown sugar or dark brown sugar, packed

Instructions

- ① Preheat the oven to 325°F. Lightly grease a 9" x 13" pan or two 8" round pans.
- ② **To make the cake:** Mix all of the ingredients except the apples and nuts in a large bowl. As soon as the mixture comes together and becomes pretty uniformly crumbly, stop mixing; you don't want it to turn into a cohesive mass.
- ③ Add the apples, boiled cider, and nuts, and mix until the apples release some of their juice and the stiff mixture becomes a thick, creamy batter, somewhere between cookie dough and brownie batter in consistency. Don't worry if the mixture doesn't immediately loosen up; this will take about 3 minutes at low speed in a stand mixer.
- ④ Spread the batter in the prepared pan(s), smoothing it with your wet fingers.
- ⑤ Bake the cake for 45 minutes for 9" x 13" pan or for 38 minutes for two 8" round pans. A toothpick or paring knife inserted into the center should come out clean, or with just a few wet crumbs clinging to it. The temperature at the center of the cake will be about 205°F.
- ⑥ Remove the cake from the oven and place it on a rack to cool a bit while you make the frosting.
- ⑦ **To make the frosting:** Sift the confectioners' sugar into a bowl or onto a piece of parchment or wax paper; set it aside. (This guarantees lump-free frosting.)
- ⑧ Melt the butter in a medium-sized saucepan over medium heat. Stir in the brown sugar and salt and cook, stirring, until the sugar starts to melt and the mixture becomes fairly smooth. While you may still notice a bit of grittiness from the sugar, you shouldn't see any melted butter pooled atop the sugar. Add the milk and boiled cider, and bring to a boil.

- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup (57g) milk or 2 tablespoons (28g) milk + 2 tablespoons (43g) boiled cider
- 2 1/4 cups (255g) confectioners' sugar, sifted*
- 3/4 teaspoon King Arthur Pure Vanilla Extract

*For a lower-sugar version, use between 1 1/2 cups (171g) to 1 3/4 cups (200g) confectioners' sugar and 2 tablespoons milk.

- ⑨ Remove the syrup from the heat and pour it into a medium-sized mixing bowl (large enough to accommodate the confectioners' sugar). Let the syrup cool in the bowl for 10 minutes.
- ⑩ Pour the confectioners' sugar into the warm syrup in the bowl, then add the vanilla extract. Whisk until everything is thoroughly combined. You need to work fast here; the frosting stiffens up quickly as it cools.
- ⑪ Pour the warm frosting onto the cake(s), spreading it over the entire surface.
- ⑫ Cut the cake — either warm or at room temperature — into slices to serve. Store the cake, covered, at room temperature for several days; freeze for longer storage.

Tips from our Bakers

- ☆ Looking for a gluten-free version of this recipe? Find it here: [Gluten-Free Old-Fashioned Apple Cake](#).
- ☆ To toast nuts, place them in a single layer in a cake pan. Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 6 to 9 minutes, until they're golden brown and smell "toasty." Or dry-fry them (no oil) in a skillet set over medium heat. Done this way they can go from perfectly browned to burned quickly, so keep your eye on them.
- ☆ Want to substitute whole wheat flour for some (or perhaps all) of the all-purpose flour in this recipe? For best results, see [How to substitute whole wheat flour for white flour in baking](#).

We're here to help. King Arthur Baker's Hotline: (855) 371 2253