

This apple crisp gets an unlikely boost from cranberries

Although it's hard to imagine that apple crisp needs much improvement, we liked the tartness and texture that cranberries added to one of our favorite standard dessert recipes. The challenges were balancing the fruit flavors and making sure that the filling baked evenly while the topping stayed crisp.

We achieved the perfect fruit mix by combining fresh and dried cranberries, and we precooked all the fruit and added tapioca to thicken the juices. This step shortened the oven time and ensured that the classic butter, flour, sugar, cinnamon, and oat topping lived up to the name "crisp." If you can't find Braeburn apples, Golden Delicious will work. While old-fashioned rolled oats are preferable in this recipe, quick oats can be substituted; do not use instant oats. Serve with vanilla ice cream or whipped cream.

CRANBERRY-APPLE CRISP

Ingredients

Servings: 8

Start to finish: 1 hour 30 minutes

Topping:

3/4 cup (3 3/4 ounces) all-purpose flour

1/2 cup packed (3 1/2 ounces) light brown sugar

1/2 cup (3 1/2 ounces) granulated sugar

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

12 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch pieces and chilled

3/4 cup (2 1/4 ounces) old-fashioned rolled oats

Filling:

1 pound (4 cups) fresh or frozen cranberries

1 1/4 cups (8 3/4 ounces) granulated sugar

1/4 cup water

2 1/2 pounds Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and cut into 1/2-inch pieces

2 1/2 pounds Braeburn apples, peeled, cored, and cut into 1/2-inch pieces

1 cup sweetened dried cranberries

3 tablespoons Minute Tapioca

Preparation:

For the topping: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400 F. Pulse flour, sugars, cinnamon, and butter in food processor until mixture has texture of coarse crumbs (some pea-size pieces of butter will remain), about 12 pulses. Transfer to medium bowl, stir in oats, and use fingers to pinch topping into peanut-sized clumps. Refrigerate while preparing filling.

For the filling: Bring cranberries, 3/4 cup sugar, and water to simmer in Dutch oven over medium-high heat and cook until cranberries are completely softened and mixture is jam-like, about 10 minutes; transfer to bowl. Cook apples, remaining 1/2 cup sugar, and dried cranberries in now-empty Dutch oven over medium-high heat until apples begin to release their juices, about 5 minutes. Off heat, stir in cranberry mixture and tapioca.

Transfer filling to 13-by-9-inch baking dish set on rimmed baking sheet. Smooth surface evenly with spatula and scatter topping evenly over filling. Bake until juices are bubbling and topping is deep golden brown, about 30 minutes. (If topping is browning too quickly, loosely cover with piece of aluminum foil.) Let cool slightly. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutrition information per serving:

639 calories; 165 calories from fat; 19 g fat (11 g saturated; 1 g trans fats); 46 mg cholesterol; 11 mg sodium; 120 g carbohydrate; 12 g fiber; 86 g sugar; 4 g protein.



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