

Irish Apple Cake with Custard Sauce

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While I can take credit for sharing this recipe, I must give credit to my British sister-in-law, Julia, for the recipe. Jim, my brother, and Julia spent the better part of 3 years traveling around Europe. Visiting England, Ireland, Scotland, France and I can't remember where else. They ate this cake at a small restaurant in Ireland and knew I would love it too. They were able to convince the baker to share the recipe for this yummy cake. Hope you enjoy it as well.

Cake Ingredients

3 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon each of ground ginger, nutmeg & allspice
¾ cup unsalted butter, cold, diced into small pieces
1 cup + 2 tablespoons granulated sugar, divided
1½ pounds granny smith apples (about 5 medium)
¾ cup milk
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Custard Sauce Ingredients

1½ cups whole milk
1 pinch salt
6 large egg yolks
½ cup granulated sugar
1½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions for the cake:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Butter and flour a 9-inch springform or cheesecake pan, set aside.

In a very large mixing bowl whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, ginger, nutmeg and allspice for 20 seconds. Add butter pieces and rub into mixture using fingertips until it resembles fine crumbs. Stir in 1 cup sugar.

Peel apples, slice in half, core and stem, then laying apples on flat side, slice downward into pieces slightly less than ¼-inch thick, then dice those pieces into smaller chunks (about 2 or 3 chunks depending on size of apples). Add apples to flour mixture and toss well to evenly coat, while working to separate any apples that may be stuck together.

In a separate mixing bowl, whisk together milk, eggs and vanilla until well combined. Pour milk mixture over apple/flour mixture and using clean hands, toss just until combined (batter will be slightly lumpy but that's fine, just don't over-mix or the cake will be heavy and dry).

Pour batter into prepared baking dish and spread into an even layer. In a small bowl stir together remaining 2 tablespoons sugar plus ½ teaspoon cinnamon, sprinkle evenly over cake. Bake in preheated oven 45 - 50 minutes until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool about 5 minutes on a wire rack then remove ring from springform or cheesecake pan and allow cake to cool to desired temperature. Serve warm, drizzled with warm custard sauce (or cool with cold custard sauce, however you prefer).

For the custard sauce:

Heat milk with a pinch of salt over medium heat, and bring just to a light boil (keep an eye on it and remove from burner, if needed before letting it rapidly boil). Meanwhile, add egg yolks and sugar to a medium mixing bowl and whisk vigorously until pale and fluffy, about 2 - 3 minutes. Reduce burner to medium-low heat, then while whisking egg yolk mixture, slowly pour in ½ cup hot milk mixture. Then, while whisking milk in saucepan slowly pour egg yolk mixture into saucepan. Cook mixture, whisking constantly, until thickened and mixture coats the back of a wooden spoon, about 3 - 4 minutes (be careful not to over-heat it, if you cook it too long or don't whisk well the eggs will curdle). Immediately pour into a glass container, stir in vanilla and whisk about 20 seconds to cool slightly; then cover with plastic wrap pressing against surface to prevent a skin from forming. Serve warm over cake (or cold). Store in a refrigerator in an airtight container.

Serving Size:

About 10 - 12 servings 🍷