

11/01/11 - Dairy Free Caramel Apple Cake

Yom Kippur breakfast at my sister-in-law's is always a dairy meal, so I first made a version of this cake with real butter and cream. Now for other holidays and especially dinners where some kind of meat or turkey is served I need a dairy-free version of this cake.

To satisfy my goal of getting away from margarine, shortening, and chemical infused dairy-free milk substitutes, I have been experimenting with baking dairy-free, using pure organic coconut oil, almond milk, and other liquids, fat, and flavor substitutes. It turns out that many members of my family are lactose intolerant and it is just a relief to be able to bite into a dessert or dish relatively care free, no chemical



Serves 12 to 16

For Cake:

Apple Filling

3 Granny Smith apples,

5 tablespoons granulated sugar

2 teaspoons cinnamon (try Saigon extra fancy, it pops in your mouth)

Cake Batter:

2 and 1/2 cups granulated sugar

5 large eggs

1 cup vegetable oil such as sunflower or safflower

1/4 cup fresh squeezed orange juice

1 teaspoon vanilla (try Madagascar bourbon)

3 cups flour

2 tablespoons fresh orange zest

3 1/2 teaspoons baking powder (be sure to check the expiration date)

1/2 teaspoon salt

Heat oven to 350° F. Peel apples (you could also use Pink Lady or Honey Crisp), cut them half, and core them. I find it easiest to core them with a melon ball tool. Dice apple halves into 1/3 inch cubes. Place apples in a medium bowl with sugar and cinnamon. Stir and set aside.

Combine sugar measured for cake, eggs, vegetable oil, orange juice, and vanilla in a large bowl. Whisk to blend. Combine orange zest and dry ingredients in a separate medium bowl. Stir dry ingredients into wet. Mix until just combined and smooth, do not over-mix. Gently fold in diced apples, using a rubber spatula. If any juice has accumulated in the dish of diced apples, leave it behind.

Spray a 12 cup Bundt pan with a non-stick spray. Pour apple cake batter into Bundt pan to about 2/3 to 3/4 of the way up the sides. The batter should be well below the top of the pan if it is a true 12 cup Bundt pan. If there is too much batter, spray one or two mini loaf pan molds and pour extra batter in them.

Many fancy shaped Bundt pans are not really 12 cups and you will have left over batter. Bake about 55 minutes to 1 hour and 5 minutes or until tester comes out with barely moist crumbs on it. I prefer to use a long tooth pick or skewer for a

tester. Remove cake from oven when ready and set on a cooling rack.

Cool cake in pan for 15 minutes. Turn the cake out onto rack, so air circulates underneath and it continues to cool. Cake can be stored after it is completely cool. Wrap in plastic wrap for freezing, or store in a cake keeper for the next day.

For caramel:

1 cup organic coconut oil

3/ 4 almond milk

1 1/3 cup granulated sugar

2 tablespoons corn syrup

1/ 2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon vanilla

To make caramel place room temperature coconut oil in a small heavy saucepan and add almond milk. Place pan over medium heat and bring to a simmer, do not boil, stir. Turn off the heat and set aside.

In another small but deep heavy bottom saucepan, heat sugar and corn syrup on medium heat. The sugar will slowly dissolve and blend with corn syrup. Do not stir; do not try to scrape down the side of the pan. You can swirl the pan a bit now and then. Do not walk away; all of a sudden, you will notice the edges of the melted sugar starting to turn gold. Watch mix very closely. Bit by bit the syrup will turn golden caramel color and all of sugar will be melted. When syrup is all rich caramel color, turn down heat to lowest setting. At this exact moment, add heated coconut oil and almond milk blend, stir in salt and vanilla using a wood spoon. The mixture will foam up almost to the top of the pan, keep calm, stir and it will settle down into rich opaque caramel. If caramel is foaming past the top of the pan, using a mitt, pull pan off the heat for a moment and stir with a wooden spoon. The caramel will go down immediately. Turn heat to medium-low and cook caramel for about 1 minute, it will thicken a little. Set the caramel aside to cool. For this cake I used half of this caramel. The rest I stored in a glass bowl with a lid in my refrigerator. Caramel keeps for several weeks and is delicious on other cakes, ice cream....

For Caramelized Apples:



1/2 orange

3 tablespoons organic coconut oil

1/3 cup packed light brown sugar

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Peel and core three Honey Crisp or Granny Smith Apples, (Pink Ladies work well also but I don't believe this is their season). Slice apples in 1/8 inch slices, place in a medium bowl and squeeze orange over top of apples. Toss to mix with juice. Heat a 12-inch skillet over medium heat, add in coconut oil. As coconut oil melts place apples in skillet with as many touching the surface of the pan as possible. Sprinkle cinnamon on apples and dump on brown sugar. Let apples sit for a moment and when bubbling and very hot, gently turn and toss apple slices to distribute brown sugar. Again make sure as many apple slices as possible are flat against the surface of the pan in order to caramelize. Leave apples to cook for a few moments and then, toss and redistribute again. Apples should become soft while coconut oil and brown sugar start to add color to apples. Turn off the heat when apple mix is caramelized and gooey. Place apple cake on the serving plate you are going to use. Fill center of cake with apples and distribute the rest around the cake

plate. Ladle approximately one half of the cooked and cooled caramel over the top of the cake, allowing it to run down the sides and pool here and there on the cake plate. Serve. This cake will be fantastic for Thanksgiving, along with pumpkin pie or Chanukah or any party you have coming up.

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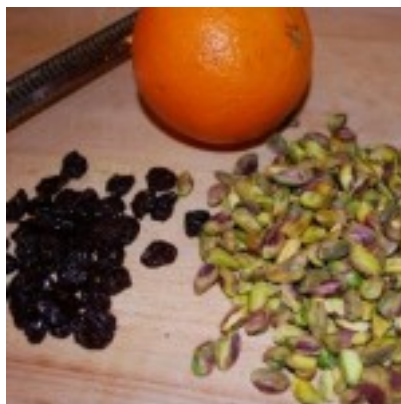
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