



Apple Strudel

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

Most modern phyllo-based versions of strudel have tough layers of phyllo on the underside, while the sheets on top shatter before you even cut a slice. Meanwhile, fillings collapse and leak everywhere, despite the bread crumbs supposedly added to soak up liquid and prevent leaking (instead, they just make the filling taste pasty). We warmed our apples through in the microwave in order to activate an enzyme that allows them to bake until tender without collapsing, and we stirred in ultradry panko bread crumbs instead of homemade toasted crumbs since we could use less of them (thus avoiding pastiness) to soak up a comparable amount of liquid. To avoid a compressed, tough underside, we used fewer sheets of phyllo and changed the typical wrapping technique so the seam was on the top instead of on the bottom. To minimize the flyaways on top, we dusted a small amount of confectioners’ sugar between the phyllo layers so that they fused in the oven, and we sliced our strudel while it was warm. Making two smaller strudels further simplified assembly.



INGREDIENTS

1 ¾ pounds Golden Delicious apples, peeled, cored, and cut into 1/2-inch pieces

INSTRUCTIONS

Gala apples can be substituted for Golden Delicious. Phyllo dough is also available in larger 18 by 14-inch sheets; if using, cut them in half to make 14 by 9-inch sheets. Thaw phyllo in the refrigerator overnight or on the counter for 4 to 5 hours; don’t thaw it in the microwave.

SERVES 6

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| <p>3 tablespoons granulated sugar</p> <p>½ teaspoon grated lemon zest plus 1 1/2 teaspoons juice</p> <p>¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon</p> <p>¼ teaspoon ground ginger</p> <p>Salt</p> <p>3 tablespoons golden raisins</p> <p>1 ½ tablespoons panko bread crumbs</p> <p>7 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted</p> <p>1 tablespoon confectioners' sugar, plus extra for serving</p> <p>14 (14 by 9-inch) phyllo sheets, thawed</p> | <p>1. Toss apples, granulated sugar, lemon zest and juice, cinnamon, ginger, and 1/8 teaspoon salt together in large bowl. Cover and microwave until apples are warm to touch, about 2 minutes, stirring once halfway through microwaving. Let apples stand, covered, for 5 minutes. Transfer apples to colander set in second large bowl and let drain, reserving liquid. Return apples to bowl; stir in raisins and panko.</p> <p>2. Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position and heat oven to 375 degrees. Spray rimmed baking sheet with vegetable oil spray. Stir 1/8 teaspoon salt into melted butter.</p> <p>3. Place 16 1/2 by 12-inch sheet of parchment paper on counter with long side parallel to edge of counter. Place 1 phyllo sheet on parchment with long side parallel to edge of counter. Place 1 1/2 teaspoons confectioners' sugar in fine-mesh strainer (rest strainer in bowl to prevent making mess). Lightly brush sheet with melted butter and dust sparingly with confectioners' sugar. Repeat with 6 more phyllo sheets, melted butter, and confectioners' sugar, stacking sheets one on top of other as you go.</p> <p>4. Arrange half of apple mixture in 2 1/2 by 10-inch rectangle 2 inches from bottom of phyllo and about 2 inches from each side. Using parchment, fold sides of phyllo over filling, then fold bottom edge of phyllo over filling. Brush folded portions of phyllo with reserved apple liquid. Fold top edge over filling, making sure top and bottom edges overlap by about 1 inch. (If they do not overlap, unfold, rearrange filling into slightly narrower strip, and refold.) Press firmly to seal. Using thin metal spatula, transfer strudel to 1 side of prepared baking sheet, facing seam toward center of sheet. Lightly brush top and sides of strudel with half of remaining apple liquid. Repeat process with remaining phyllo, melted butter, confectioners' sugar, filling, and apple liquid. Place second strudel on other side of prepared sheet, with seam facing center of sheet.</p> |
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5. Bake strudels until golden brown, 27 to 35 minutes, rotating sheet halfway through baking. Using thin metal spatula, immediately transfer strudels to cutting board. Let cool for 3 minutes. Slice each strudel into thirds and let cool for at least 20 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature, dusting with extra confectioners' sugar before serving.

Phyllo Without Fear

Delicate phyllo can be difficult to work with. When developing our Apple Strudel recipe, we came up with some tricks.

1. WARM UP SLOWLY: For even thawing, let the phyllo defrost overnight in the refrigerator, and then let it rest on the counter for 30 minutes before opening the package and unrolling the leaves.

2. KEEP COVERED: To keep phyllo from drying out, most recipes recommend covering the stack with a damp towel, but the dough can easily turn sticky. We prefer to cover the stack with plastic wrap and then a damp towel to weigh it down and keep the plastic flush against the phyllo.

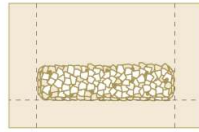
3. STAGGER CRACKS: Because phyllo is so fragile, some sheets inevitably crack or even tear while still in the box. Don't worry—just make sure to adjust the orientation of the sheets as you stack them so that cracks in different sheets don't line up.

4. TRIM STUCK EDGES: When phyllo sheets emerge from the box fused at their edges, don't try to separate the sheets. Instead, trim the fused portions and discard them.

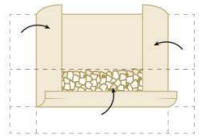
That's a Wrap

Most strudel recipes call for rolling the strudel up like a log

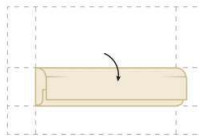
and placing it seam side down on a baking sheet. This risks tearing the phyllo and creates too many layers on the underside where the seam overlaps, which we found leads to toughness. Here's our better, easier way.



1. Mound half of filling along bottom third of 7 layered phyllo sheets on parchment paper, leaving 2-inch border at bottom edge and sides of phyllo.



2. Using parchment, fold sides of phyllo over filling, then fold over bottom edge of phyllo. Brush folded portions with apple liquid.



3. Fold top edge of phyllo over mounded filling, which should overlap the bottom edge by about 1 inch. Press to seal. Repeat with second strudel.