

Apple treats are for adults

Bobbed, taffied or rolled into Mom's pie, the apple has harvested a barrel of good times for children. Kids are even taught that no matter how it's sliced, the apple is often the needed ingredient, be it to keep the doctor away or to become the teacher's pet.

Adults would do well to re-learn the lesson of "A stands for apple." Apples are a natural source of vitamins and minerals. This low sodium, cholesterol-free snack is high in fiber yet only contains about 80 calories. A fruit that also can help clean teeth and massage gums should be the apple of the adult eye once again.

With 20 billion apples harvested in America each year, it's smart to load up on this bumper crop. Apples are cheaper by the bushel and when refrigerated, will keep for several weeks. Two elegantly-easy recipes that are sure to become season repeats are the Comfort Baked Apple and a Ham Steak with Apple Comfort Sauce. These recipes will score before a football game or win after a day at the races. Both can quickly be prepared between a hand of Bridge or a turn of Trivial Pursuits.

The Comfort Baked Apple will "spoil" everyone in the bunch. It's stuffed with a Southern Comfort/brown sugar center and baked in a flaky crust. It's as elegant as it is delicious and easy to make. The Rome Beauty, known as the "baker" for holding its shape under heat, is a good variety to choose for this recipe.

The Ham Steak recipe is one to serve after completing a project with the next door neighbors or to compliment a lazy afternoon of B-movies and old TV shows that only the older set can appreciate.

COMFORT BAKED APPLES

- 1 (8 ounce) tube refrigerated crescent roll dough
- 4 medium baking apples (about 1 1/2 pounds), cored
- 1/4 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 4 tablespoons plus 1/2 cup Southern Comfort
- 1 cup cream (Half and half, light or heavy cream may be used)

Using a rectangle of dough for each apple, unroll dough, separate triangles. Wrap long side of one triangle around top edge of apple; fit second triangle around rest of apple. Pinch edges together. Place wrapped apple on foil-lined shallow pan. Wrap remaining apples.

Combine brown sugar and flour; cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Spoon crumbly mixture into apples, pressing down so all the mixture is used. Bake at 350 deg. for about 30 minutes, until apples are tender. TURN OFF oven. Pour 1 tablespoon Southern Comfort into center of each apple. Keep in oven for 10 to 20 minutes. Meanwhile, combine remaining 1/2 cup Southern Comfort with cream. Let stand 10 to 20 minutes (this sauce will thicken slightly). Serve warm apples with sauce. Makes 4 servings.

HAM STEAK WITH COMFORT SAUCE

- HAM STEAK (14-20 ounces)
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 (20) ounce can sliced pineapple in unsweetened juice
- 1/2 cup apple juice
- 1/4 cup plus 1/2 cup Southern Comfort
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 tablespoons coarse mustard
- Apple slices (optional)

In large skillet saute ham in butter

and oil, turning several times. When ham is cooked through, remove to serving platter and keep warm. Quickly saute pineapple slices in skillet; place on platter with ham. Combine pineapple juice, apple juice and 1/4 cup Southern Comfort; stir into skillet. Bring to a boil. Blend flour into mustard to make a smooth paste. Stir mustard paste into skillet. Cook and stir until sauce boils and begins to thicken. Reduce heat and simmer for 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in remaining Southern Comfort to taste. Serve small amount of sauce over the ham. Pass remaining sauce

separately. Garnish with apple slices, if desired. Makes 3 to 4 servings.

THE BARNBURNER

- 1 jigger (1 1/2 oz) Southern Comfort
- Small stick cinnamon
- Slice lemon peel
- Hot cider

Put cinnamon, lemon peel and Southern Comfort in mug. Fill with hot cider. Stir (put spoon in mug before pouring cider, to absorb heat).



Today's Adams & Eves, Teds & Alices shouldn't resist the good taste of apples. These spirited apple recipes have a Southern Comfort ingredient to tempt the adult taste bud and makes fun meals blossom for grown-ups again.



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