

Authentic Chicago-Style Bakery Apple Slices: A Nostalgic Midwest Treat

Chicago-Style Bakery Apple Slices



OVEN
350°F

TIME
40 to 45 min

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INGREDIENTS

Apples: 2 large apples (peeled, cored, and thinly sliced).

All-Purpose Flour: 1 cup.

Granulated Sugar: 1/2 cup.

Brown Sugar: 1/4 cup, packed (this adds a hint of molasses depth).

Baking Powder: 1 teaspoon.

Salt: 1/4 teaspoon.

Unsalted Butter: 1/2 cup, melted.

Egg: 1 large egg, room temperature.

Vanilla Extract: 1 teaspoon.

Milk: 1/2 cup (whole milk provides the best richness).

Ground Cinnamon: 1 teaspoon.

Ground Nutmeg: 1/4 teaspoon.

Powdered Sugar: For a final, snowy dusting.

Swaps and Notes:

The Apple Choice: For the best results, use a firm, tart apple like Granny Smith or a crisp Honeycrisp. They hold their shape and won't turn into mush during the 45-minute bake time.

Spice it Up: If you want a more "intense" fall flavor, feel free to add a pinch of ground cloves or ginger.

Dairy-Free Options: You can substitute the melted butter with a neutral oil (like avocado oil) and the milk with oat or almond milk. The texture will

be slightly different but still delicious.

Add Crunch: If you prefer a bit of texture, folding in 1/2 cup of chopped walnuts or pecans is a classic Chicago bakery move.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Prep the Oven and Pan:
2. Whisk the Dry Ingredients:
3. Combine the Wet Ingredients:
4. Form the Batter:
5. Fold in the Apples:
6. Bake to Perfection:
7. The Finishing Touch:

Tips for Success:

Thin is In: Slice your apples thinly (about 1/8th of an inch). This ensures they soften completely and integrate into the batter rather than sitting as hard chunks.

Don't Overmix: As with most soft-crumb bakes, overworking the gluten in the flour will result in a tough, rubbery bar. Mix until you no longer see streaks of dry flour, then stop.

Parchment is Your Friend: If you want those perfectly clean, "bakery-case" edges, use parchment paper to lift the entire block out of the pan once cooled, then slice on a cutting board.

Serving Suggestions and Pairings:

Nutritional Information (Per Serving):

Calories: 320 kcal

Total Fat: 14g

Saturated Fat: 8g

DIRECTIONS

1. **Prep the Oven and Pan:** Preheat your oven to 350°F. Grease a 9x9-inch baking pan thoroughly with butter or non-stick spray. For the easiest removal, you can line the pan with parchment paper, leaving an overhang on the sides.
2. **Whisk the Dry Ingredients:** In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, granulated sugar, brown sugar, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Use a whisk to ensure there are no clumps of brown sugar and that the spices are evenly distributed.
3. **Combine the Wet Ingredients:** In a separate medium bowl, whisk together the melted butter, egg, vanilla extract, and milk. Ensure the melted butter isn't hot when you add the egg, or you might accidentally scramble it!
4. **Form the Batter:** Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients. Stir with a spatula or wooden spoon until just combined. You want to avoid overmixing here; a few small lumps are perfectly fine.
5. **Fold in the Apples:** Gently fold your thin apple slices into the batter. The batter will be relatively thick, and the apples should be well-coated.
6. **Bake to Perfection:** Spread the batter evenly into your prepared pan. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes. You're looking for a beautiful golden-brown top and a toothpick inserted into the center to come out clean.
7. **The Finishing Touch:** Allow the bars to cool in the pan for at least 20 minutes. This helps the structure set. Dust generously with powdered sugar before slicing into nine even squares.
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9. Don't : Overmix: As with most soft-crumble bakes, overworking the gluten in the flour will result in a tough, rubbery bar. Mix until you no longer see streaks of dry flour, then stop.
10. Parchment is : Your Friend: If you want those perfectly clean, "bakery-case" edges, use parchment paper to lift the entire block out of the pan once cooled, then slice on a cutting board.
11. Serving Suggestions and Pairings: These bars are versatile enough to be served at any time of day. For a truly indulgent experience, serve a warm slice with a scoop of vanilla bean ice cream or a dollop of fresh whipped cream.
12. If you're serving these for brunch, they pair exceptionally well with a hot cup of coffee or a spiced chai latte. For a fall-themed dessert spread, I love pairing these alongside other treats like Caramel Apple Pie Cookies to give your guests a variety of apple textures to choose from. You could even drizzle a little extra caramel sauce over the top to turn it into an ultra-premium dessert.
13. Nutritional Information (Per Serving): Calories: 320 kcal
14. Total : Fat: 14g
15. Saturated : Fat: 8g
16. Cholesterol: 55mg
17. Sodium: 125mg
18. Carbohydrates: 45g
19. Fiber: 2g
20. Protein: 4g
21. Storage and Leftover Tips: One of the best things about these apple slices is that they actually taste better the next day as the moisture from the apples seeps into the cake.
22. Room : Temperature: Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.
23. Refrigeration: These will keep for up to 5 days in the fridge.
24. Freezing: You can freeze individual slices by wrapping them in plastic wrap and then foil. They stay fresh for up to 2 months.
25. Reheating: A quick 15-second zap in the microwave will bring back that "fresh from the oven" soft texture.

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