

TARHEEL KITCHEN

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Through the years the apple has been a favorite subject of artists, musicians, poets, and authors—and good cooks. It has probably received more attention than any other member of the vegetable kingdom except perhaps the rose, to which it is related. The apple may have a romantic reputation but the practical enjoyment is far greater. For eating out of hand, for quick and easy fried apples, or for any favorite use, apples are a blessing to family meals.

Possibly you have had your taste buds set to enjoy a fresh apple or an apple dish only to suffer disappointment. What went wrong? An apple isn't just an apple. In buying it is well to consider how the fruit will be used for some are excellent to eat raw, others are better for cooking, and others are more for general purpose use. Guidelines can be given for buying, but personal preference among the different varieties of apples is a matter to be decided by the individual. Do you like your eating apple tart and crisp, or sweet and juicy? Do you prefer your cooking apple to keep its shape? Are you restricted in sugar and want a cooking apple that requires sweetening?

The process of becoming familiar with apples and choosing favorite varieties is a delightful and interesting experience. Once you become attached to several varieties you will be able to recognize them in the store immediately, just as you recognize a good friend in a crowd, even even though you could not accurately describe the friend to someone else.

Of course, a favorite way to buy North Carolina apples is to make a fall pilgrimage to the mountains where production is heaviest, and buy in quantity from the growers. They know their apples and are gracious to explain the various kinds and their uses. When we buy in the grocery store we can inquire of the produce manager if labels do not give adequate information. Usually this manager, who actually buys the produce, will be able to give excellent assistance.

Unfortunately, our wonderful

N. C. apples have not been as highly publicized as they should be. We rank in the top eight states in production and prospects are for an even larger growth in the apple industry within the next five years. Four varieties make up the bulk of production in North Carolina. They are Red Delicious, Golden Delicious, Rome Beauty and Stayman. Even though these are the major apples there are many others available in different parts of the state.

The Red Delicious are sweet, juicy and firm and have five knobs on the blossom end. They

are probably the most popular eating out-of-hand apple and are good in salads or other uncooked apple dishes.

The Golden Delicious are sweet and firm and will not turn brown quickly when sliced. They are good for eating fresh, cooking, and general purpose. They are inclined to hold a firm shape when cooked which is often desired. In cooking, use less sugar than with tart apples.

Rome Beauty are red striped, mingled with yellow. They are mildly tart, crisp and moderately juicy. Suggested uses are for baking and cooking.

Staymans are dull red with white dots concentrated near the

blossom end. They are firm, crisp and tart. They are delicious for dessert, baking and general purpose.

There are numerous plain and fancy ways with apples. Apple pie is one of America's favorite dessert. Just to show how simple cooking apples can be two old time recipes are given for fried apples. The first is from Old Salem Cookery by Mrs. Elizabeth Sparks and the second from the Hand-Me-Down Cookbook by Parker and Bradsher. Nothing could be much easier or better for modern cooks who are managing several jobs. These are not only fast but delicious at any meal, including breakfast.

FRIED APPLES
(Old Salem Cookery)
Some cooks meticulously leave the apple rings in pretty circles but most often the apples are stirred together for in this case, it is the flavor rather than the form which counts.

To fry apples, wash and core and slice into a little hot grease. Cook over medium heat, stirring gently, as they cook. Just before they are done, sprinkle sugar over the top to sweeten.

FRIED APPLES
4 strips lean bacon
8 to 10 tart apples
1-2 cup sugar

1-4 cup water,
Fried pork chops,
Fry bacon until crisp, remove from skillet. Core apples but do not peel. Slice very thin and put into hot grease. (Note: You may wish to pour off part of the grease before adding apples.) Pour sugar on top but do not stir. Add 1-4 cup of water, cover and cook until apples are slightly brown on bottom. With a wide spatula turn apples over. Do not replace cover. Let apples brown, and when tender put in center of platter with bacon strips on top and surround with pork chops. (Apples are delicious with other meats also).

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