

SALAD SEASONS

VEGETABLE-FORWARD DISHES ALL YEAR



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RIZZOLI
NEW YORK



Bourbon-Baked Apples with Cinnamon Toast Croutons

SERVES 4

2 large tart apples,
such as Honeycrisp,
Gala, or Pink Lady
(12 to 16 ounces total)

4 tablespoons unsalted
butter, melted, divided

2 tablespoons packed
light or dark brown sugar,
divided

1 tablespoon plus
½ teaspoon ground
cinnamon, divided

Freshly grated nutmeg
(optional)

¼ cup bourbon

¼ cup hot water

2 to 3 slices brioche
or challah bread, cut
into ½-inch cubes
(about 2 cups)

Kosher salt

Vanilla ice cream,
for serving

This playful dessert ensures your entire kitchen will be filled with the heady aroma of spiced baked fruit and all the cozy, sweater-weather feels that come with it. A big splash of bourbon in the bottom of the baking dish prevents the apples from burning in the oven, and, as it reduces, combines with the butter and brown sugar to become a nutty pan sauce for the fruit. Topping each warm apple half with a scoop of vanilla ice cream is an obvious finishing touch, but it's the scattering of sweet and crunchy cinnamon toast-inspired croutons that surprise and delight.

ARRANGE 2 RACKS to divide the oven into thirds and heat the oven to 375°F.

Cut the apples in half and cut out the cores using a sharp paring knife or spoon (a grapefruit spoon works perfectly). Place the halves cut side up in an 8 x 8-inch baking dish.

Drizzle 2 tablespoons melted butter on top of the apple halves. Sprinkle with 1 tablespoon brown sugar, ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon, and a few grates of nutmeg, if desired.

Pour the bourbon and hot water into the bottom of the baking dish and cover the dish tightly with aluminum foil. Bake on the top rack for 30 minutes. Carefully uncover and continue to bake until the apples are tender and the liquid has reduced slightly, 10 to 15 minutes more.

Meanwhile, place the bread cubes on a rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle with the remaining 2 tablespoons melted butter. Sprinkle with the remaining 1 tablespoon brown sugar, 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon, and a pinch of salt. Toss to coat, rubbing the sugar and cinnamon into the bread. Spread out in an even layer and bake on the bottom rack, tossing halfway through, until golden brown, 8 to 10 minutes.

Place each apple half in an individual serving bowl and drizzle generously with the pan juices. Top each with a scoop of ice cream and a handful of the brioche croutons.