



## CARAMEL APPLE CAKE

I don't often devote my efforts to a cake, but this one, well this one is the exception. I whip it out each autumn for a few months when our apple tree is loaded with apples and the smell of caramel is most welcomed in the air. Getting the caramel right can be a bit tricky, but hang with it. Once you learn to make it there's no stopping you!

### INGREDIENTS

#### For the cake

- 135 grams butter (about 10 tablespoons), room temperature
- 4 eggs, plus 1 egg yolk, room temperature
- 200 grams maple sugar (or sugar of choice, about 1 cup)
- ½ cup applesauce
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 225 grams flour (about 2 cups)
- 45 grams cornstarch (about ¼ cup)
- 1 ½ teaspoon baking powder

- Pinch sea salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 tart apples, such as Granny Smith

#### For the Caramel

- 1 cup maple sugar (or sugar of choice)
- ¼ cup water
- ¾ cup heavy cream
- ½ cup butter
- 1 cup toasted pecans, for serving

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Butter a 9" springform cake pan. Set aside.
2. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
3. Combine the butter, egg, egg yolk, and sugar together in a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Whip the mixture together for 5 minutes, or until it's light in color, smooth, and fluffy. Add in the applesauce and vanilla extract and whip to combine.
4. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, cornstarch, baking powder, and sea salt.
5. Pour the flour mixture into the butter mixture and whisk together on low until just combined.
6. Chop 2 of the apples into ½" pieces. If your apple is fresh, no need to peel it. If the skin has gone thick and tough, take the time to peel it. Add the pieces from the 2 apples into the cake batter and whisk until they're incorporated evenly.
7. Pour the cake batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 40 minutes or until the cake is just set. Do not overbake the cake, which will make it dry.
8. While the cake is baking, peel (if desired) and slice the 2 remaining apples into thin slices. Add them to a saucepan with ¼ cup of water, put a lid over the top, and over medium heat steam the apples for just 3-4 minutes - until they're just barely tender. Set aside.
9. Next, combine the maple sugar and water in a saucepan. Turn the heat onto medium-high and allow the mixture to melt and come up to a simmer. Continue to cook the sugar until it's the color of caramel that you like - this will likely take about 3 minutes. Keep an eye on it! Caramel can easily burn once it starts to dark. Once it's a shade of caramel you like and is smelling wonderful caramel-like, turn off the heat and add in the heavy cream and butter. Stir to combine. Turn the heat back on and cook the caramel mixture, stirring constantly over medium heat, for an additional 3-5 minutes. The caramel will begin to thicken (it will continue to thicken as it cools). Set aside.
10. To assemble the cake, move the cooled cake onto a platter or cake pan. Place the steamed apples on top of the cake. Drizzle the entire cake with the caramel. If the caramel has thickened too much, you can reheat it over low heat until it's once again melted and able to be drizzled.