

MONTGOMERY'S INN
RECIPE FROM THE HISTORIC KITCHEN

APPLE-PIE

ORIGINAL RECEIPT

Catharine Parr Traill, *The Canadian Settler's Guide*, New Canadian Library No. 64, McClelland and Stewart, 1964, page 65, first published as *The Female Emigrant's Guide*, 1854 [1855]

“Every one knows how to make a common apple pie or pudding. -- But in case there may be a few among my emigrant friends, who have been unused even to this simple process in cooking, I will say: peel and core your apples; good acid cooking-apples are better than sweet ones; drop them into a pan of clean water as you pare them; in the pie-dish place a tea-cup, turned bottom upwards; put in a large table-spoonful of sugar, and two or three cloves, or a bit of lemon peel, if you have these things at hand; fill your dish with the cored apples; a very small quantity of water -- a large table-spoonful will suffice; add two or three more cloves, and more sugar; cover with your paste, rolled thin; finely crimp the edge, and scallop with your finger and the edge of the knife. A few delicate leaves, cut and marked to resemble apple leaves, placed in the centre, give a pretty look to the dish; but this is a mere matter of taste. If you have any cause to think that the fruit is not quite soft, when the crust is baked, set the dish on the top of one of your stove griddles, and let it simmer a while ...

The reason for inserting a cup in the pie is this: the juice and sugar draws under the cup, and is thus kept from boiling out: paring the apples into the dish of water preserves them from turning brown or black, and the moisture they imbibe renders no other water necessary, or very little. The Canadians season their pies with nutmeg and allspice, making them sickly tasted; they stew the apples till they are an insipid pulp, and sweeten them till the fine acid is destroyed.”

Dried apples: “When [dried apples are] required for use, they are steeped for some time in hot water.” [page 66]

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

In Mrs Traill's words, “The planting of an orchard ... [was] a matter of great importance to the future comfort of the settler's family ...” Apples were an abundant crop and had many culinary uses, from sauces and cider to pies and puddings. In Ontario, in the first half of the 19th century (and diminishing in use as the century progressed), it was common to dry large quantities, threaded on string and festooned from the kitchen ceiling and walls. The dried apples were then stored in bags and rehydrated as needed. Mrs Traill's recipe is good made with fresh or dried apples.

The method of using an upside down tea-cup to prevent juices boiling over was not endorsed by every 19th-century cookery writer. The recipe works well without the tea-cup.

OUR MODERN EQUIVALENT

Our modern equivalent is made in a standard glass pie dish. The pie has no bottom crust. Mrs Traill suggests that, if the pastry has cooked on top but the apples need more cooking, one can set the pie to cook a little longer on top of the stove; however, this can only be done with a tin pie plate. In our experience, McIntosh apples cooked completely. The filling is only fruit, sugar, water and spices (no flour or butter as is usual in modern pies); the richness of the puff pastry is a perfect complement to the simple fruit filling.

1 L	peeled, cored, and sliced apples	4-4 ½ cups
	water	
30 mL	sugar	2 tbsp
1 mL	nutmeg	¼ tsp
1 mL	allspice	¼ tsp
	Rich Puff Paste	
	(Our Modern Equivalent)	
	egg yolk mixed with a little water	

Wet: the apple slices with water; drain (the moisture on the fruit becomes part of the sauce as the fruit cooks)

Add: the apple slices to the pie plate

Sprinkle: over the apples 30 mL (2 tbsp) sugar, 15 mL (1 tbsp) water, and the nutmeg and allspice; stir slightly to distribute the flavourings

Cover: with a circle of Rich Puff Paste, crimping the edge all round and adding decorative leaves, if you wish

Glaze: by brushing with egg-yolk-and-water mixture

Bake: in a hot oven 200° C (400°F), for about 25 minutes, until the crust is puffed up and golden brown

