



Camarillo Certified Farmers Market

Supporting grief and bereavement services at Camarillo Hospice:
A program of Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association



Source: www.gracelinks.org

“It is remarkable how closely the history of the apple-tree is connected with that of man, “ wrote Henry David Thoreau in “Wild Apples,” an essay posthumously published in *The Atlantic’s* November 1862 edition.

A century and a half later, Thoreau’s observation is as true as ever. For a diminutive fruit, the apple is a force to be reckoned with, and we humans have been fascinated with it for millennia. It has inspired Biblical myth; despite no mention of the word “apple” in the Book of Genesis, it is widely assumed the notorious forbidden fruit from the Garden of Eden.



The apple also inspired scientific theories, as falling-apple-from-the-tree witness Sir Isaac Newton told the world in 1666 (or was it his niece, who told Voltaire?), as well as practical advice, including the old Wales proverb (1866) “Eat an apple on going to bed, and you’ll keep the doctor from earning his bread” that later morphed into “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.”

And what would have become of New York City if called by any other fruit name? (The Big Pear just doesn’t have the same ring to it.) Since a 1970 public relations campaign, the world has known New York as the Big Apple. (For a detailed chronology of this iconic marketing venture, check out etymologist Barry Popnik’s site.)

From art to science, politics to religion, the apple has figured into countless aspects of the human experience since antiquity. Could the ubiquitous fruit be rightfully described as the apple of our collective eyes?

Brief History

There is great debate among scientists and food historians about where the apple got its start. Many point to the area just south of the Caucasus Mountains in south-central Asia, but according to the late food historian Waverley Root, it’s not climatically possible, and in his encyclopedic book *Food* he suggests more northerly points around the Baltic Sea. Others have honed in on the wild apple forests of the Tian Shan mountains in Kazakhstan, an area that has been described as the “real Garden of Eden.”

There’s great consensus, however, that the apple is as ancient as fruit gets. To wit:

- The apple (or its wild ancestor, the crab apple) figured into the diet of Neolithic era and Bronze Age settlers along lakes in Switzerland. Based on carbonized remains that were discovered in the 1800s, apples were presumably dried for winter consumption.
- During the reign of Egyptian pharaoh Ramesses II (1279-1213 BC), apple trees were planted along the Nile River delta.
- The apple got its first mention in the western canon around 800 BC, in *The Odyssey*, the epic poem written by Homer.
- According to culinary historian Jonathan Roberts, dried apples threaded on a string were uncovered in a Babylonian tomb at Ur (ancient Mesopotamia), around 200 BC.
- First century Roman naturalist-philosopher Pliny the Elder describes several varieties of apples in his *Historia Naturalis*.
- Meanwhile, the Celtic people of ancient Britain were turning crab apples into hard cider and showed Julius Caesar a thing or two about fermentation around 55 AD.
- The Romans planted apple trees not just for the fruit but for the blossoms and shade, too. The apple spread throughout Europe, proving its versatility as both beverage and foodstuff, throughout the Middle Ages. Apples were among the 89 plants that Charlemagne (aka Charles the Great) insisted be planted on the grounds of his royal estates in 9th century France.
- When the Normans invaded England in 1066, they brought seeds of several apple varieties from France, which set the stage for a long love affair with the fruit, as well as its fermented byproduct, “hard” alcoholic cider. For hundreds of years, hard cider was the default beverage and used as currency.
- The hard cider tradition continued when the English established colonies on the other side of the Atlantic. Not long after establishing the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1620, settlers started planting apple trees, primarily for alcoholic cider production. Until the end of the 18th century, cider would be the default beverage, even for children, as it was considered safer than water. By 1700, New England was apple cider country.
- Thomas Jefferson planted apples on orchards at Monticello for both cider production (Hewes Crab and Taliaferro) and eating (Newtown Pippin and Spitzenburg). Writing from Paris, Jefferson compared European apples to those growing in America: “They have no apple to compare with our Newtown Pippin.” He also said that “Malt liquors & cyder are my table drinks.”
- Johnny Appleseed, aka John Chapman, is credited for spreading the gospel about apples in the late 18th century. Portrayed as a folk hero, Appleseed did not sprinkle apple seeds like fairy dust, but he did set up apple seedling nurseries from Pennsylvania to Indiana by the time of his death in 1845.

Apple Squares

Source: allrecipes.com, recipe by BarbiAnn

Ingredients

- 1 cup sifted all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup chopped apple
- 1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease a 9x9 inch pan. Sift together flour, baking powder, salt, and 1/4 teaspoon of cinnamon; set aside.
2. In a large bowl, mix together melted butter, brown sugar, and 1/2 cup of white sugar with a wooden spoon until smooth. Stir in the egg and vanilla. Blend in the flour mixture until just combined, then stir in the apples and walnuts. Spread the mixture evenly into the prepared pan. In a cup or small bowl, stir together the remaining cinnamon and sugar; sprinkle over the top of the bars.
3. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes in preheated oven; finished bars should spring back when lightly touched. Cool in the pan, and cut into squares.