Cinnamon Apple with Soft Oat Crumble

2 apple desserts, each with half the cooked fruit and soft oat topping | Active 16 min | Cook 15 min | Total 30 min (warm service)

Ingredients

• 300 g (10 1/2 oz) prepared eating apple, peeled, cored and cut into 1 cm/3/8 in pieces

• 130 ml water (1/2 cup plus 2 tsp), divided into 30 ml for apple and 100 ml for oats

• Up to 30 ml extra water (2 tbsp), only if the oat mixture dries before the grain is soft

• 1 g ground cinnamon (about 1/2 tsp)

• 40 g old-fashioned rolled oats (1 1/2 oz), not raw steel-cut oats

• 15 g unsalted butter (about 1 tbsp)

• 15 g light brown sugar (about 1 packed tbsp), divided into 5 g for fruit and 10 g for topping

• 0.3 g fine salt, a small pinch

Set out

1000 W microwave with turntable, Kitchen scale and measuring jug, Fork or small whisk, Spoon, Oven mitts, Food thermometer used outside the microwave, Microwave-safe fruit bowl, at least 1.5 L/about 1 2/3 US qt measured capacity, about 18 cm/7 in inside diameter, Second microwave-safe oat bowl, at least 1 L/about 1 US qt measured capacity, about 16 cm/6 1/4 in inside diameter, Two microwave-safe vented covers, Knife and board, Two shallow dessert bowls

Allergens

Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Put the apple, 30 ml/2 tbsp water, cinnamon and 5 g sugar in the 1.5 L bowl. Cover with a vent and microwave at 1000 W full power for 3 minutes. Stir, then heat 2-4 minutes more, stirring once, until the largest apple pieces are easily pierced with a spoon edge. Keep the fruit and all its juice covered while the oats cook.

2. Put the oats, remaining 100 ml water, butter, remaining 10 g sugar and salt in the 1 L bowl. Stir and microwave uncovered at full power for 1-2 minutes until the mixture begins to bubble. Watch for rising foam and pause sooner if needed.

3. Reduce to 50% power and cook for 4-6 minutes, stopping every 2 minutes to stir the bottom and sides. Follow any longer full cooking interval on the rolled-oat label and extend the total. The oats must be swollen and soft, with a thick mixture that leaves a trail when stirred. If the bottom dries while the grain is still firm, add 15 ml/1 tbsp of the reserve water at a time, up to 30 ml total, and continue in short bursts; this is separate from the starting 130 ml.

4. Stand the oat mixture for 2 minutes. Loosen it with a fork into small soft clumps. Divide all the cooked apple and juice between the two dessert bowls, then spoon half the topping over each. Serve warm, expecting a soft topping rather than a browned crust.

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Texture in plain language

This is a microwave-soft crumble. Do not serve it expecting a baked crisp top or add an unlisted toasted garnish to imitate one.

Keep the fruit juice

The small apple cooking liquid is part of each dessert. It is not drained away before topping.

Ingredient labels

Butter contains milk. Oats may have gluten cross-contact; use appropriately certified oats if needed. Check any plant-based spread for soy, milk or other allergens.

A useful detail

The 30-minute warm-service plan allows 10 minutes of preparation, up to 7 minutes of apple heating and 8 minutes of oat heating, the final 2-minute oat stand and 3 minutes to assemble. One 1000 W microwave handles the bowls sequentially. Longer oat-label instructions, a hard apple or corrective water bursts can extend the total.

Another way

Replace 300 g/10 1/2 oz prepared apple with 300 g ripe firm pear in the same 1 cm/3/8 in pieces. Start checking after the first 3 minutes because ripe pear may soften sooner.

Use 15 g/about 1 tbsp plant-based spread instead of butter, checking its ingredients. Milk is omitted from that formula only if the chosen spread and other labels support it; cross-contact is not guaranteed absent.

Keep it well

Refrigerate cooked apple and topping in separate shallow containers within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or below. Use within 2 days. Reheat the portions needed under vented covers in short stirred bursts; add 5-10 ml/1-2 tsp water to the oats if thick. Stand 2 minutes and verify 165°F/74°C throughout before assembling. Keeping the parts separate helps the topping retain its soft clumps.