

The Good For You Gourmet Apple Butter Recipe 2011

Start with four or five pounds of apples, trim away bruises, gucky bits, and cores, (no need to peel) then place into a medium stock pot. Cover with water and cook until mushy, 25-30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and let cool until lukewarm, then squeeze pulpy mass through cheesecloth. Be sure to feed your red wigglers with all the peel extracted. Collect all the pulp and drippings into same or smaller pot. Get your kids involved: my six year old son LOVES this part!

Now place pot over low heat and simmer this pulp for an hour or so, or until volume has reduced by 1/3 - 1/2. This is a good time to add a bit of fresh ginger, and/or cinnamon, for an added spicy tingle. Chef Laura recommends a total of 1/3-1/2 tsp spices per cup of apple butter pulp.

As the moisture evaporates, the pulp and the sugars at the bottom of the pot thicken, so it is necessary to stir every 10 minutes or so, to prevent scorching. This is a great way to make your house smell like apple pie. If you have an indoor wood stove, I suggest you use the stovetop and reduce over low burning fire.

Once the mixture is custard thick, it may be preserved in small canning jars, or simply cool and refrigerate. This finished product requires refrigeration, and even then only has a shelf life of a week or two, so perhaps give away to friends and family. For a longer shelf life, pour into small sterilized canning jars, cover with clean, sterilized fitted lids, and set aside until seals pop. To allow for a proper seal to set, let them cool over night before moving. If you have a few pounds of windfall apples, and a bit of time on your hands, this homemade goody makes a tasty, inexpensive Christmas gift.

Need help with this project? Have Chef Laura lead you and a small group of your friends through an Apple Butter making adventure. See our Classes & Lessons page for details!

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