

# In The Garden

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## Apple

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Apples that we eat today are not native to North America. They originated in central Asia east of the Caspian Sea. In 1300 BC Egyptians began planting apple orchards along the Nile River. The Greeks and Romans cultivated apples. In 800 BC Ancient Greeks learned apple tree grafting techniques. In 200 BC Ancient Romans began planting apple trees in Britain. During the 1500s and 1600s Spaniards brought apples to Mexico and South America. The only apples native to North America are crabapples, which are not typically eaten due to their small size, sour flavor and woody texture. Worldwide production of apples in 2018 was 86 million tons, with China growing nearly half of the total.

Today there are more than 7,500 known apple varieties. Different varieties are bred for various tastes and uses, including cooking, eating raw, and cider production. Apples are not usually grown from seeds. Instead they are grafted onto root stock. Grafting is when



the branch of one tree is attached to the base of another tree. Grafting provides beneficial qualities from both trees. This ensures consistent fruit quality, production and tree health. Apples bloom in the spring and fruit is ready to harvest in the late summer or fall. Apple trees are deciduous, which means they lose their leaves in the winter. Today apples are kept in controlled atmosphere facilities to keep them fresh year round. The controlled atmosphere facilities use high humidity, low oxygen, and controlled carbon dioxide to maintain fruit freshness. These facilities were first used in the United States in the 1960s.

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Fresh apples make great snacks. They are typically available year-round, are easy to store, and transport easily. Apples are a good source of fiber, Vitamin C and other antioxidants.

When buying apples, make sure they feel firm and heavy. The skin should not have bruises, cuts, or soft spots. The color should be vibrant and they should have a pleasant sweet smell.

Whole apples can keep fresh for up to a week on the counter but will last much longer in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Once cut apples can be kept in the refrigerator up to 3 days. A little lemon juice will help keep cut apples from turning brown. Apples can also be made into applesauce, baked into pies and added to savory dishes.

## Cinnamon Baked Golden Apples

### Ingredients:

- 4 large Golden Delicious Apples, cored
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon lemon peel grated
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup apple juice
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg

### Directions:

1. Place apples in a microwave safe baking dish.
2. Fill each apple with an equal amount of raisins.
3. Combine all remaining ingredients in a small bowl and pour over apples. Cover with plastic wrap and microwave on high for 5 minutes or until apples are tender.
4. Carefully remove apples from dish with a slotted spoon and set aside on a platter.
5. Place baking dish back in the microwave and cook on high, uncovered, for 3 to 5 minutes more or until mixture has

<https://eatfresh.org/recipe/desserts/cinnamon-baked-goldens-apples>



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