



eat. drink. live.



I have always had an inexplicable yearning to own an apple farm and produce organic baby apple purée. Well, the baby purée might have been a more recent add-on to the plan. Paul tends to harrumph very loudly and noticeably whenever I mention this. He likes to point out his shortcomings in DIY as a good excuse not to release him into the wild of an agrarian environment. Since I grew up on a farm though, I just love the idea of farming something as deliciously comforting and wholesome as apples. The way to Paul's heart (like all men) is through his stomach however and so I suspect I might still win in the end but just to be sure, I have dedicated this mailer to the greatest, single hint-dropping offensive of 2009, so far. Even if it is only for a retirement plan that's still far away, let's hope Paul is listening... Enjoy!

flavour files



apples

Apples, perhaps one of the most ubiquitous and culturally popular fruits has been a central part of man's history for apparently over 4000 years! There are many mythological associations over various cultures and religions, with the apple in the Garden of Eden being the most widely-known, not to mention the Wicked Witch tempting Snow White with a poisoned apple.

The unassuming apple comes in multiple shades of green, red and yellow and there are now literally hundreds of varieties worldwide. The types most common and available to us in South Africa are the Golden Delicious, the Granny Smith and the Starking.

Apples are forever obliging in the kitchen, equally suited to both sweet and savoury dishes. It's the culinary marriage of apples and cinnamon however that I find totally irresistible. Not much compares to a slice of warm home-baked apple pudding served with a dollop of thick cream or rich apple crumble with home made custard and of course, who could forget the thrill of a deliciously sticky and sweet toffee apple. Apples also provide the base for many popular drinks from apple cider to Calvados and of course, apple juice.

There is also a lot of truth in the old adage, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away" since apples are packed full of vitamins and minerals. Most health benefits derive from eating the skin along with the flesh, so don't toss the peel!

apple crisps

2 Granny Smith apples
250g sugar
250ml water

Make a stock syrup by stirring the sugar into the water until dissolved. Bring to the boil, turn down the heat to low and simmer for 5 minutes. Set aside to cool before using.

Preheat your oven to the lowest setting.

Cut the apples into very thin, even slices. Cover a large baking sheet with a non-stick silicone liner. Dip the apple slices one at a time into the stock syrup and lay on the silicone mat so that they do not touch or overlap. Place in the oven until dry and crisp, about 2 hours. Place on a wire rack to cool and crisp.

Note: The stock syrup can be kept in an airtight container for further use or used to make cocktails!

Makes approximately 30 slices.

Tip: Use apple crisps for garnishing desserts, as a delicious drinks snack or as a simple dessert by layering apple slices with cream that has been combined with Greek yoghurt flavoured with honey.



apple sorbet

375ml apple sauce
(see recipe below)
70ml sugar
125ml water

In a saucepan, add the sugar & water and heat until sugar has dissolved. Leave to cool.

Using a beater, whisk the sugar syrup with half of the ready-made Apple sauce. Once combined, add the rest of the apple sauce and mix together well.

Transfer into a metal bowl or dish and place in the freezer. Every hour, beat the apple sorbet for 5 minutes to break up the ice crystals and place back into the freezer until ready to serve.

Tip: Alternatively, and far easier, you could use an ice-cream machine!

Serves: 4 - 6



apple and cinnamon spritzer



- ¼ cup apple cider
- 5 pumps **NoMU Vanilla Paste**
- 1 cinnamon stick
- ¼ cup **NoMU Sweet Rub**
- 1 red apple, thinly sliced
- 3 cups soda water

Place the cider, NoMU Vanilla Paste, cinnamon stick and NoMU Sweet Rub in a saucepan over low heat.

Allow the sugar to dissolve, stirring continuously. Simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow to steep for an hour.

Place the apple slices in a jug with the soda water. Divide syrup among 4 glasses and top up with apple soda mixture.

Serves: 4

Tip: For added elegance add ½ tot of Calvados (apple liquor) to each glass before topping up with soda.

roast leg of lamb with apples and cider

- 1 leg of lamb, about 2kg, fat trimmed and skin scored
- olive oil, to drizzle
- 3 tbsp **NoMU Lamb Rub** or **NEW NoMU Roast Rub**
- NoMU Just Salt**
- NoMU Just Pepper**
- 3-4 garlic cloves, skins on and halved
- a few sprigs of thyme
- juice from half a lemon
- 4 Granny Smith apples, quartered
- 500ml apple cider
- 60ml honey, to drizzle
- 300ml lamb or chicken stock

This is one of my favourite Gordon Ramsay recipes from his book "Cooking for Friends", with an added NoMU touch of course. It is very easy and truly delicious.

Preheat the oven to 220°C.

Weigh the lamb and calculate the final cooking time at 12 minutes per 450g for medium-rare, 15 minutes per 450g for medium. Score the fat in a criss-cross pattern, then drizzle with a little olive oil and rub all over with NoMU Rub, salt & pepper. Place in a deep roasting pan and scatter the garlic and thyme over and around. Pour over the lemon juice and drizzle again with olive oil. Sprinkle with a little more NoMU Lamb Rub, then roast in the hot oven for 20 minutes.

Remove the lamb from the oven and reduce the heat to 180°C. Scatter the apples around the pan and pour the cider and honey over the lamb. Continue to roast for the calculated time. To check, insert a skewer into the thickest part of the lamb, then press the meat lightly, the redder the juices, the rarer the meat. Lift the lamb onto a carving board and cover with a piece of kitchen foil. Rest it in a warm place while you prepare the gravy.

Pour the contents of the pan, including the apples and garlic into a fine sieve set over a saucepan. Push down with the back of a ladle to extract all the juices and flavour and then discard the pulp. Place the pan over a medium heat and add the stock. Bring to the boil and let it bubble vigorously until it has thickened. Taste and adjust the seasoning, then pour into a warm serving jug. Carve the lamb into thin slices and serve drizzled with the apple and cider gravy. Alternatively only use half the apples to make the gravy and keep the rest to serve whole with the lamb.

Serves: 8-10



WINE PAIRING: Roast lamb is an excellent pairing to a wide range of structured reds, which would bring out our Karoo lamb's succulent, mild and meaty flavours, making it even more irresistible! Try a traditional Cape Blend or Arabella 'In Unison' Reserve which is a Cabernet Sauvignon/Shiraz blend.

pork skewers with apple horseradish sauce



Skewers

- 500g trimmed pork fillet
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 heaped tablespoon **NoMU Pork rub**
- 12 bamboo skewers, pre-soaked in water for 1 hour

Apple Horseradish Sauce

- ½ cup crème fraîche
- ½ cup classic apple sauce, see recipe
- ¼ cup horseradish sauce

In a large bowl, combine the olive oil and NoMU Pork Rub. Add a grinding of salt. Slice the pork fillet lengthways into thin strips and add to the bowl, rubbing the marinade into the meat until well smothered. Leave to marinate in a cool place for at least ½ hour.

Thread the meat onto the skewers and grill on a pre-heated griddle pan until nicely browned on the outside and just cooked on the inside. Alternatively cook the skewers over the coals or place the skewers onto a baking tray and cook under the grill for 5 -6 minutes, turning once during cooking.

Serve with Apple Horseradish sauce.

Makes: 12

To make the sauce, simply combine all the ingredients in a bowl and mix thoroughly.

Tip: Also delicious as an accompaniment to roast beef, turkey or chicken.

WINE PAIRING: Arabella Viognier, being a typically full-bodied wine characterized by powerful flower and fruit aromas will flatter the apple and spice in this dipping sauce. Alternatively our Sauvignon Blanc will hold up equally well.

whole baked apples

100g sultanas
 50g hazelnuts, lightly toasted and roughly chopped
 3 tbsp **NoMU Sweet Rub**
 5 pumps **NoMU Vanilla Paste**
 2 tbsp honey
 25g butter, melted
 juice of half an orange
 8 medium golden delicious apples, washed and cored

Preheat your oven to 180°C.

Combine the sultanas, hazelnuts, NoMU Sweet Rub, Vanilla Paste, honey, butter and orange juice in a medium bowl. Place the cored apples into an ovenproof dish and spoon the sultana mixture into the centre of the apples to fill.

Bake in a pre-heated oven for 35-45 minutes or until the apples are tender when tested with a skewer and beautifully golden.

Remove from the oven and place an apple onto each serving plate. Spoon the cooking liquid from the ovenproof dish over the apples and serve immediately with double cream.

Makes: 8



pain perdu with caramelized apples

4 large red apples, peeled
 100g butter
 3-4 tbsp icing sugar, plus extra to dust
 1 tbsp **NoMU Sweet Rub**
 2 eggs, beaten
 1-2 tablespoons sunflower oil
 4 slices brioche loaf
 Mascarpone or whipped double cream, to serve

Cut the peeled apples into sixths. Heat half of the butter in a saucepan and add the apple segments, icing sugar and NoMU Sweet Rub. Caramelize over low heat for about 10 minutes or until the apples are golden and soft to the touch. Remove from the pan and set aside.

In the same pan melt the remaining butter with the oil. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl. One at a time, dip either side of the brioche slices into the egg and fry each slice in the pan for 40-60 seconds per side or until golden.

Serve the caramelized apples on the pain perdu with a generous dollop of mascarpone and an extra dusting of icing sugar.

Serves: 4

WINE PAIRING: For me, most desserts have an element of seduction...expect the flavours of the pain perdu with caramelized apple and the soft yet tangy notes of cinnamon, nuts and the citrus of an off-dry Sherry to flirt in your mouth!

apple strudel

4 tart green apples, peeled and coarsely grated
 6 fresh dates, seeded and chopped
 ¾ cup caster sugar
 1 tsp **NoMU Vanilla Extract**
 1 tbsp **NoMU Sweet Rub**
 150g ground almonds
 1 egg yolk
 5 sheets phyllo pastry
 100g butter, melted
 ½ cup flaked almonds

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Place the apples, dates, sugar, NoMU Vanilla extract, NoMU Sweet Rub, almond meal and egg yolk into a bowl and mix thoroughly. Layer the phyllo sheets on top of one another, brushing with melted butter between each layer. Spoon the apple mixture along the middle of the length of the phyllo pastry. Fold over the ends and roll to enclose.

Brush the top of the pastry with butter and sprinkle with the almonds. Sprinkle generously with NoMU Sweet Rub. Place the strudel on a baking tray and bake in the oven for 20 to 25 minutes, until the pastry is crisp and golden.

Serves: 8

NOTE: This is a cheat's version. A true strudel should have wafer thin home-made pastry which is rolled out on a sheet or table cloth on your dining room table. Or at least that is how it was demonstrated to me. Although very impressive, I tend to go the slightly easier route!



toffee apples

6 little apples
 40g butter
 30ml water
 60ml golden syrup
 340g sugar

Push a wooden skewer securely into the stalk end of each apple. Have a greased baking tray ready.

Place all the ingredients in a heavy-based pan and cook stirring constantly until mixture begins to boil.

Wash down the sugar crystals from the side of the pan with a small brush dipped into water. Boil for 10 minutes until colour just begins to go golden.

Working quickly, dip and twist each apple in the toffee and place onto the greased tray.

Leave to set until completely cool and the toffee has hardened.

Serves: 6

apple pudding



60g butter
1 cup sugar
3 eggs
1 cup flour
1 ½ tsp baking powder
pinch of salt
1 cup milk
450g tin of pie apples

Sauce:

¼ cup NoMU Sweet Rub
¾ cup sugar
¼ cup butter
½ cup milk

Tip: Serve with home-made vanilla ice-cream. (See recipe mailer # 2).

My Mother used to make this for Sunday lunch to lessen the blow of having to go back to boarding school!

Preheat your oven to 180°C.

Whisk the eggs and the sugar together until pale in colour. Heat the milk and add the butter, heat until the butter has melted and gradually add to the egg mixture. Sift the flour and baking powder over the batter whisking well to form a smooth batter of dropping consistency. Pour the mixture into one large or 6 individual ramekins and carefully place the pie apples on top. Bake in the oven for 30 minutes or until golden and firm.

To make the sauce, boil all ingredients together in a saucepan for 10 minutes until syrupy and the sugar has melted. Using a fork or skewer, prick the apple pudding all over and then pour the syrup over the hot pie. The idea is for the syrup to drizzle all the way into the pudding.

Serves: 6

apple bread with cinnamon and walnut topping

150g sugar
150g butter, softened
2 eggs
180g flour
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
½ tsp baking powder
1 tsp NoMU Sweet Rub
Pinch of salt
400g / 2 apples, peeled, cored and coarsely grated
60g walnuts, lightly toasted and roughly chopped
5 pumps of NoMU vanilla paste

Preheat your oven to 180°C. Butter and flour a loaf tin 30 x 11cm. Cream the butter and sugar together until fluffy and creamy. Add the eggs and beat together well. Sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda, baking powder, NoMU Sweet Rub and salt into the butter mixture and mix well. Add the apples, walnuts and vanilla paste and mix through well again. Scrape the mixture into the prepared tin.

To make the topping, mix the walnuts with the NoMU Sweet Rub. Scatter this generously over the surface of the batter after about 20 minutes in the oven. Bake for approximately 45 minutes or until a skewer inserted comes out clean and the top is crispy and golden. (If the top is already brown after 30 minutes, cover with tin foil and continue baking).

Cool before turning the cake out of the tin directly onto the serving plate in order to preserve all the topping.

Serves: 10-12

Tip: Serve warm or at room temperature with cream, ice-cream or a spread of farm butter.



apple sauce

1kg Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, coarsely chopped
100g sugar
185ml (¾ cup) apple juice
1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
2 x 7cm cinnamon sticks
¼ tsp NoMU Sweet Rub

Tip: This apple sauce will keep in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 2 days. Alternatively store in sterilized jars to keep or to give as gifts.

Combine the apple, sugar, apple juice, lemon juice, cinnamon sticks and NoMU Sweet Rub in a large saucepan over low heat. Cook, stirring for 3 minutes or until the sugar dissolves.

Increase the heat and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes or until the apple is soft. Remove from heat. Remove cinnamon sticks and discard. Set aside, uncovered, for 5 minutes to cool slightly.

Transfer the apple mixture to the jug of a blender or the bowl of a food processor and process until pureed. Place in a clean saucepan and stir over low heat until heated through. Serve warm as an accompaniment to roast pork.

Makes: 750ml (3 cups)



CONTRIBUTOR OF THE MONTH

Our wine pairing contributor for this month is Stephen de Wet, founder and owner of Arabella Wine Estate situated in the beautiful Robertson Valley. A family run estate, Arabella is winning awards locally and internationally, thanks to the combined efforts of father, son Jamie and daughter Nicky. Although Stephen's primary focus is viticulture and wine making, his other love can be found grazing the pastures next to the vineyards. Stephen and Jamie's love for horses and competitive endurance riding enriches the texture of their wine farm. Apart from a voluminous and endlessly entertaining general knowledge and his generosity, Stephen is also, conveniently enough, my uncle. We decided to call on his incredibly refined palate and dry sense of humor to provide the wine pairing suggestions.

