

Autumn Fruits Crisp

Harvest Dance | October 2006



The star anise and combination of fresh fall fruits and dried fruits make this country-style dessert something to talk about. Find star anise in the spice aisle or order it from www.penzey.com.

- 1/2 CUP APPLE CIDER OR JUICE
- 2 STAR ANISE
- 3/4 CUP DRIED FRUIT, SUCH AS DRIED APRICOTS, CUT INTO STRIPS; DRIED PLUMS (PRUNES), QUARTERED; DRIED TART CHERRIES; AND/OR GOLDEN RAISINS
- 5 JONATHAN OR GRANNY SMITH APPLES, PEELED IF DESIRED
- 3 FIRM, RIPE BOSCH OR RED BARTLETT PEARS, PEELED IF DESIRED
- 1 CUP FRESH CRANBERRIES
- 2 TBSP. MAPLE SYRUP OR HONEY
- 1/4 TSP. APPLE PIE SPICE OR GROUND CINNAMON
- 1 CUP REGULAR ROLLED OATS
- 1/2 CUP PACKED DARK BROWN SUGAR
- 1/2 CUP ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
- 1 TSP. APPLE PIE SPICE OR GROUND CINNAMON
- 1/2 CUP BUTTER
- 3/4 CUP COARSELY CHOPPED ALMONDS OR PECANS
- SWEETENED ORANGE WHIPPED CREAM* OR VANILLA ICE CREAM (OPTIONAL)

For filling, heat cider and anise in a small saucepan until just simmering on the edges. Remove from heat. Add dried fruit; cover and let stand 10 minutes. Remove and discard star anise. (Do not drain fruit.)

Meanwhile, core and thinly slice the apples and pears. Place apples, pears, and cranberries in a 3-quart rectangular baking dish. Add dried fruit mixture, maple syrup, and 1/4 teaspoon apple pie spice or cinnamon; toss gently to combine. Spread evenly in the dish.

For topping, in a medium bowl stir together oats, brown sugar, flour, and 1 teaspoon apple pie spice. Cut in butter until crumbly. Stir in nuts. Sprinkle evenly over filling.

Bake in a 375° oven for 40 to 45 minutes or until fruit is tender and bubbly and topping is golden. Cool on a wire rack about 30 minutes. Serve warm with *Sweetened Orange Whipped Cream* or ice cream, if desired. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

***SWEETENED ORANGE WHIPPED CREAM:** In a chilled medium bowl combine 1/2 cup whipping cream, 1 1/2 teaspoons sugar, 1/2 teaspoon finely shredded orange peel, and 1/2 teaspoon vanilla. Whisk or beat with an electric mixer on low speed until soft peaks form.