

Apple Kuchen

Serves 8

Active Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour 5 minutes

1¼ cups plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

½ cup plus 6 tablespoons sugar

1 tablespoon cornmeal or semolina

2 teaspoons baking powder

¼ teaspoon fine sea salt

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened

1 large egg

5 apples (about 2 ½ pounds)

1 tablespoon lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Sift the 1 ¼ cups flour, ½ cup sugar, cornmeal, baking powder, and salt into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Add the butter and beat at medium speed until partially incorporated, then add the egg. Increase the speed to medium-high and beat until a soft dough forms, about 30 seconds. Press about two-thirds of the dough into the bottom and partially up the sides of a 9- or 10-inch tart pan with a removable bottom (or any round baking dish of the same dimensions). Wrap the remaining dough in plastic wrap, and chill both the dough-filled tart pan and the remaining dough for 15 minutes.

While the dough is chilling, Peel, core and thinly slice the apples and toss them with the lemon juice 4 tablespoons sugar, and 1 tablespoon flour; let sit for 30 minutes. Arrange the apples freely on the dough, pressing slightly to adhere them to the dough. Divide the remaining dough into 8 equal small balls and scatter them randomly over the top of the tart. Sprinkle the top with the remaining 2 tablespoons sugar and bake until the apples look soft and the dough appears golden and crisped on top, approximately 35 minutes.

Chewy Tahini Blondies

Makes 16 Blondies

Active time: 15 minutes

Total time: 45 minutes

1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted and cooled, or 1/2 cup olive oil or vegetable oil, plus more for buttering the pan

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour

3/4 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom (or more to taste if you really like this flavor)

1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons lightly toasted black sesame seeds

2 tablespoons lightly toasted white sesame seeds

1 1/4 cups lightly packed light brown sugar

2 large eggs

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1/2 cup pure tahini paste

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter an 8-inch square baking pan, then line the pan with 2 crisscrossing strips of parchment paper, buttering between each layer and leaving a 2-inch overhang on all sides. Butter the top and sides of the parchment.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, cardamom, salt, pepper, and the black and white sesame seeds. In another medium bowl, whisk together the brown sugar, 1/2 cup melted butter, eggs, and vanilla until smooth. Fold the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients until just incorporated, then fold in the tahini until smooth. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake until golden on the outside and the center doesn't jiggle but is still soft, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from the oven, cool in the pan, and cut into 16 equal squares.