

## Caramelized Apple Strudel

1 phyllo package	2 teaspoons lemon zest
7 Granny Smith apples	1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 cup sugar	1 pinch salt
2 teaspoons cinnamon	1 tablespoon cornstarch
½ teaspoon nutmeg	6 tablespoons unsalted butter
¾ cup ground almonds	½ cup fresh breadcrumbs or panko
¾ cup raisins	Powder sugar for dusting
1 tablespoon water	

Defrost the frozen phyllo dough according to the package instructions.

If you choose to use fresh breadcrumbs, lightly brown them in a 350° oven.

Plump the raisins (preferably white) in hot water for about ten minutes, then drain.

Peel and chop the Granny Smith apples. Place in a large bowl with ¾ cup of the sugar, the cinnamon, nutmeg, raisins, lemon zest and juice, and a pinch of salt. Mix well.

Melt four tablespoons of butter in a large skillet. Add the apple mixture and cook over medium-high heat until the sugar is dissolved and the apples begin to simmer. Lower the heat, gently mix in the cornstarch, and cover. Cook for about five to seven minutes until the apples have released most of their juices. They should still retain a slight crispness. Place a strainer over a large bowl, and drain the apples, stirring gently. Set aside both the apples and the juices.

*(Optional extra caramelization)*. Heat the same skillet over medium heat. Pour in the remaining ¼ cup of sugar, plus 1 tablespoon of water. Stir just until the mixture comes to a boil. Then swirl the pan until you get a deep amber-colored caramel.

Pour the juices from the bowl back into the skillet with the caramelized sugar, averting your face to avoid burns. Continue cooking over medium heat, whisking the juices until they thicken and are fully caramelized. With the heat off, combine the apple mixture and the caramelized juices, and let cool to room temperature.

Preheat the oven to 400°, and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

Unroll the thawed phyllo dough according to the package instructions, being certain to keep the dough covered with a damp towel so that it won't dry out.

Melt the remaining two tablespoons of butter. Place one sheet of phyllo on a large lightly floured cloth. (I use a pillowcase.) Brush with the melted butter, and sprinkle with the browned bread crumbs or panko crumbs.

Place a second sheet of phyllo on top of the first sheet and brush with butter. Sprinkle more bread crumbs on top.

This recipe will make either two or three strudels, depending on the size of your phyllo sheets. Sprinkle either ⅓ or ½ the ground almonds on a three-inch-wide strip along the

long side of the phyllo nearest you. Then spread  $\frac{1}{3}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the filling over the almonds in a log shape.

Using both hands, lift the cloth and begin rolling the the dough around the filling, jelly-roll fashion. Brush the the top of the roll with melted butter. Carefully place the roll on your parchment-lined baking sheet, seam-side down.

Proceed to make either one or two more strudels with two more sheets of phyllo for each. Butter and place the remaining roll or rolls on your baking sheet.

Bake in the center of the oven for about 25-30 minutes, or until golden brown. When cool sift confectioners' sugar over the tops of each strudel. Slice into serving pieces with a serrated knife.

Leftover strudel can be recrisped in a 350° oven for about five minutes.