

APPLE HUCKLEBERRY COFFEE CAKE WITH COCONUT TOPPING

A Writer in the Kitchen with MK McClintock

Every bite of this cake is bursting with huckleberry and apple flavor and plenty of cinnamon and spice. It's really quite delicate and airy, and the addition of applesauce makes it oh-so-moist. Serve with hot cocoa, herbal tea, or coffee for a delicious treat at breakfast, lunch, or even after dinner for dessert.



MISE EN PLACE (everything in place; gather; getting the kitchen ready)

1. Read the recipe, including instructions. Make sure you have all your ingredients and tools on hand and enough of what you need.
2. Take your butter, eggs, and applesauce out an hour prior to baking so they come to room temperature. If you keep a warm house, $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour should suffice.
3. Prepare the topping in advance so you aren't scrambling to get it done later.

INGREDIENTS:

For the Topping

- 1/3 cup unbleached, all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- 1 cup coconut flakes
- 1/2 cup light or dark brown sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

For the Cake

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- 1 cup unbleached, all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1/4 cup applesauce
- ¾ cup skim milk (skim milk is what I keep on hand, but 1% or 2% also works. Do not use whole milk!)
- 1 cup huckleberries (if using frozen, allow to thaw in the refrigerator overnight or on the counter for a few hours; drain well)
- ¾ cup finely chopped apples (I like Gala or Honeycrisp)

INSTRUCTIONS:

For the Topping

1. Prepare the topping in advance.
2. Cut 1/4 cup of butter into small cubes.
3. Mix 1/3 cup flour, coconut flakes, brown sugar, and cinnamon. Stir until well combined.
4. Add the small cubes of butter, and combine using a small food processor, dough blender, or your fingers. If using a processor, only pulse a few times. You want some butter chunks remaining. I find the hand method works well.
5. Set aside.

For the Cake

1. Preheat oven to 375°F and prepare a 13" baking pan. I recommend baking spray because it's so easy to use *and* easy to clean, but you can also butter the pan and dust with flour.

2. Sift remaining 2 cups flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and allspice into a small bowl. Set aside.
3. Measure out the milk in an easy-to-pour measuring cup. Mix in the vanilla and applesauce. Set aside.
4. Using a stand mixer with paddle attachment or hand mixer with beaters, beat remaining 1/2 cup butter until fluffy. Depending on how soft the butter is, this will be 30 seconds to 2 minutes.
5. Gradually add 1 cup granulated sugar, beating on medium speed until blended.
6. Add eggs, one at a time, beating after each addition.
7. Mix dry ingredients into batter, alternating with milk mixture, in three additions, beginning and ending with the flour.
8. Gently fold in the huckleberries (or blueberries) and chopped apples. Transfer to the baking pan.
9. Sprinkle the coconut topping over the batter. There is enough to cover the whole cake, so make sure you do so evenly.
10. Bake 40-45 minutes, or until done. Do not over bake. 40 minutes works great with our oven, but if your oven runs hot, check after 35. If a knife carefully dipped in the center comes out clean, it's done.

NOTES:

- You may use fresh or frozen huckleberries or blueberries, but do not add them frozen to the cake. Because huckleberries have such a short season, frozen is sometimes the only way to go. Make sure to defrost frozen huckleberries or blueberries at room temperature, or overnight in the fridge. Allow them to drain for about an hour. They produce a lot of juice, and too much will make a mess of the cake.
- The original source of this recipe, before modifications, is unknown. I've tried to remember, but it was so long ago that I have had to give up.
- Nutritional info may vary based on the type of ingredients used. If you have specific dietary needs or restrictions, you may need to calculate the nutritional info based on the exact ingredients you use.