

Here I am making more fruit dessert! It is the time of year. I am still amazed at the flavour that blackberries are still giving us. No rain, lots of sun – a perfect science!

Having just picked our Bartlett Pears today, and still plucking blackberries, I thought I should share the best crisp I've ever eaten. Seriously. I've combined these fruit with Bramley Seedling Apples – an amazing cooking apple. Transparents work really well in this recipe. Store apples – well, Galas always do in a pinch, and the lovely Pink Lady's and Sunrise work well, too.

I'm sorry but I can't remember where I found this recipe, as I've been baking it for years. I've tweaked it here or there, and it can be made with just a ¼ c lemon juice. Living on an island, I can't always follow recipes, I just have to make do!

We've made enough for a hundred guests, and portioned it down to just enough for some fruit I had at hand. Don't be afraid to experiment with fruit combinations. The topping seems to work no matter what!

I usually double the topping, and put the other half in the freezer for those "just in case" times. It makes a wonderful topping for pies, a great scattering for ice cream, and is amazing to stuff baked apples with.

Fruit Crisp

Ingredients:

2 lbs ripe pears (4 pears)

2 lbs firm apples (6 - 8 apples)

½ lb blackberries or a heaping cup of cranberries – you'll need enough mixed prepared fruit to make at least an inch of mixed fruit when in the baking dish. It doesn't matter exactly how much you use of each.

3T juice & 1T zest of an orange

3T juice & 1T zest of a lemon

¾ c granulated sugar – this is less than you would use for the same amount in a pie, because the crisp's topping has a fair amount of sugar in it.

⅓ c all-purpose flour

1t ground cinnamon

½ t ground nutmeg

For the topping:

1½ c all-purpose flour

¾ c granulated sugar

¾ c light brown sugar, lightly packed

½ t salt

1c old-fashioned oatmeal

½ lb cold butter, diced

Directions: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

For the filling:

In a large bowl, add the zests & juices, sugar, flour, cinnamon & nutmeg.

Whisk together until well blended.

Peel, core, and slice the pears and apples, add to the juice & flour mixture as you work. This will keep the fruit nice and bright.

When all the core fruit is prepared and combined with the juice & flour mixture, gently fold in the berries.

Pour the coated fruit into a buttered 9" by 12" by 2" oval baking dish or a 9" x 13" x 2" rectangular dish.

Let rest while you prepare the topping.

For the topping:

Combine the flour, sugars, salt, oatmeal, and butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Mix on low speed for about 3 - 4 minutes, until the mixture is in large crumbles. If you need to hand mix the topping, cut the butter in until the size of peas.

Sprinkle the topping evenly over the fruit, covering the fruit completely.

Place the baking dish on a parchment lined sheet pan (so much easier to clean up than your oven) and bake for an hour, until the top is brown and the fruit is bubbly.

Serve warm. It will take at least two hours to cool to a comfortable temperature.

Even though this is a fantastic dessert, it is also great for breakfast, served with a big dollop of Greek yogurt. And of course, breakfast is a great time of day to eat something that you have the whole day ahead of you to work off!

Gluten free – substitute cornstarch or tapioca flour for the flour in the fruit mixture, and substitute amaranth for the flour in the topping. Large flake oatmeal is typically cleaner from wheat than quick or instant oats.