Durham woman wins Apple Growers Association dessert contest


Catie Armstrong of Raleigh took home second place and $150 for her Apple Dapple Cake with Salted Caramel and Honey Glaze, while Pamela Cash of Youngville won $75 and third place for a 2021 State Fair Apple Cake.
Gail Fuller of Raleigh earned an honorable mention along with $25 for her Apple Pie Cheesecake Tacos.

The competition asked contestants to create a dessert recipe using at least two cups of North Carolina apples.

The winning recipe follows:

**Caramel Apple Tarts**

**Dough:**
2/3 cup unsalted butter, softened  
4 tablespoons sugar  
2 egg yolks, room temperature  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
2 cups all-purpose flour

**Apple Filling:**
3 large apples, cored, peeled and small diced  
2 teaspoons lemon juice  
½ tablespoon brown sugar  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
2 ½ teaspoons cornstarch

**Caramel:**
1 cup white sugar  
6 tablespoons butter  
1/3 cup heavy cream  
1 teaspoon salt

**Toppings:**
Powdered sugar  
Apples, thinly sliced, cored and peeled  
Egg wash

**Instructions:**

Add butter and sugar into a medium sized bowl. Using a spatula, mix together and then add egg yolk and vanilla extract. Cover with cling wrap and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.

Take a piece of dough and press it evenly into a tart mold or muffin pan. Cut off excess dough with a knife. Using a fork, prick the base. Repeat with the rest of the dough. Put the pieces of dough on a baking tray and place them in the freezer.

Toss the diced apples and lemon juice in a medium bowl. In a separate small bowl, stir together the sugars, cinnamon and cornstarch. Pour the mixture over the apples and gently toss to combine. Set aside.

For the caramel, heat the sugar in a medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring frequently with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon. Once it starts melting, stir continuously as it cooks until all clumps are melted down. When the sugar is melted and turns a dark amber color, immediately add all butter. Stir until butter is completely
melted. Immediately remove pan from heat and carefully add in heavy cream. Stir until caramel is smooth. Stir in salt. Let cool, then pour in a jar and set aside.

Fill up the tarts halfway with apple filling. Add sliced apples and brush on egg wash. Bake in an oven preheated to 350 degrees F for 20 minutes on the highest rack. Remove from the oven and the mold. Let cool, then add powdered sugar for decoration and serve.

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