

Fried Apple Rings, with icing

These are essentially ring-shaped, batter-dipped apple fritters. Fry up one or two, taste them, and then add more spices to the batter at that point, to your liking. Eat them hot or they will soften, and then your heart will sink to your feet.

Makes 18 to 24 rings, depending on the size of your apples

Plenty of vegetable oil, for frying

1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour

1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

3/4 teaspoon cardamom

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice (or more cinnamon/cardamom, or a little nutmeg/ginger/clove)

2 tablespoons turbinado sugar (or granulated sugar, or brown sugar)

1 cup milk (whole preferable, or 2%)

1 whole egg plus 1 egg yolk

1/2 teaspoon almond extract (or vanilla)

3 Fuji apples, peeled, cored, sliced into 1/4" thick rings

1 cup confectioners' sugar, sifted

1 teaspoon amaretto (or other liqueur of your choice, or more extract)

1-2 tablespoons milk

To make the apple rings: Affix a candy thermometer to the side of a deep saucepan. Fill with 1 to 1-1/2 inches oil, set over medium-high heat, and bring the oil up to 375 degrees while you make the batter.

Set out a large sheet of wax paper. Sift the flour, baking powder, salt, and all the spices onto the paper. If using turbinado or brown sugar, fluff it in with your fingers. If using granulated sugar, you can sift that with the other ingredients, or fluff it in afterwards.

In a large bowl, whisk the milk, the whole egg, the yolk, and the extract. Gather the edges of the wax paper and slide the dry ingredients into the wet. Fold everything together with a rubber spatula, being sure to moisten any bits at the bottom of the bowl. Drop in 4 or 5 apple rings and turn to coat.

When the oil has reached 375 degrees (you'll need to maintain this temperature throughout frying, so keep an eye on the thermometer), use a fork to lift each apple ring and let the excess batter drip back into the bowl. Set the apples in the oil and fry for 1 to 3 minutes, until golden brown, flipping carefully once or twice. Use a spider, slotted spoon, or a clean fork to lift the fried rings onto a paper-towel lined plate, and repeat with the remaining apples and batter.

To make the icing: Whisk the confectioners' sugar, liqueur, and enough milk to make a pourable but thick-ish glaze. Drizzle the glaze over the apple rings. Serve immediately.