

## **Inverted Caramelized Apple Muffins**

To make these hearty autumnal muffins, prep a caramelly apple topping, but place it in the bottom of your muffin cups. Scoop the batter over the apples, then bake. When they emerge from the oven, they'll look normal and unassuming, until the inversion changes everything, making the top the bottom and the bottom the top.

Makes 12 muffins

Soft butter, for the muffin tins

For the caramelized apple topping:

3 tablespoons butter

1/3 cup sugar

2 medium golden delicious apples, cored but peels intact, cut in small dice (about 2-3/4 cups)

For the muffins:

6 tablespoons butter

1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour

3/4 cup whole wheat pastry flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

3/4 teaspoon cinnamon

3/4 teaspoon kosher salt

1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats

1-1/4 cups yogurt or buttermilk, or a combination

2 eggs

2/3 cup sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla

Prep: Preheat the oven to 400°F with a rack in the center position. Generously grease a 12-cup muffin tin with soft butter. Set aside.

Make the caramelized apple topping: Set the 3 tablespoons butter and the 1/3 cup sugar in a small nonstick skillet over medium heat. As the butter melts, stir it a bit into the sugar. Once the butter has fully melted, add the apples and toss well to coat. Now leave it alone to bubble and caramelize, about 12 minutes or thereabouts, until the apples are thoroughly soft and the sauce is lovely and brown. Pull from the heat and immediately spoon into the muffin cups, dividing evenly. (Don't wash the skillet.)

Make the muffins: Add the 6 tablespoons butter to the still-warm skillet. Set it back on the burner (don't turn the burner on) and let the residual heat melt it while you carry on with the batter. Sift the two flours, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt into a large bowl. Stir in the oats. In a medium bowl, whisk the yogurt, eggs, sugar, and vanilla.

Slowly whisk in the now-melted butter. Pour the wet ingredients over the dry and fold to incorporate, taking care to moisten any floury bits hiding at the bottom of the bowl. Spoon the batter into the muffin cups (over the apples), dividing evenly.

**Bake and finish:** Bake the muffins for 20 to 25 minutes, until golden brown and firm. Cool on a rack for 10 minutes, then loosen the muffins gently with a spoon. They should remove easily. Lift and invert, placing apple-side up on a cooling rack. Some caramelly apple bits will surely hang out in the muffin tin, so ease them up with a spoon and drape over the muffins so they can join their brethren.