



AP photo/Chris Rosica

McIntosh Apple and Date Chutney has a sweet taste that accentuates chicken.

Savor the sweet fruit flavors of chutney

The Associated Press

It sounds so simple: A chutney is a sweet-and-sour condiment made of fruits or vegetables cooked in vinegar, sugar and spices until the combination has the consistency of jam.

Chef Kenneth Trickilo, of the Napa Valley Grille, Paramus, N.J., thinks it is just that simple. But he still thinks chutney is misunderstood.

"People don't realize how easy it is to make, and that they can easily find the ingredients in their local supermarket, or even in their refrigerators and spice racks," he said.

In addition, Trickilo says, he finds people are sometimes not sure how to serve chutney.

His answer: That, too, is easier than you might think.

"It goes with almost everything. It's great with a cheese platter, on fish, beef, game and roasted chicken. This year, I have had chutney with venison and roasted duck on the menu at the Napa Valley Grille."

Cranberry and Apricot Chutney

2 cups (½ pound) fresh cranberries
4 ounces (about ½ cup) dried apricots cut into thin strips

½ cup chopped shallots (2 medium)
¼ cup sugar
¼ cup cranberry juice
1 tablespoon grated orange zest
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
2 ½ teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
1 teaspoon grated lime zest
1 teaspoon minced, peeled fresh ginger

root

¼ teaspoon ground coriander seed
¼ teaspoon chopped garlic
1 bay leaf

Combine all ingredients in a nonreactive saucepan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium low. Simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until reduced and jam-like consistency, about 30 minutes. (Remove bay leaf after cooking.)

Makes about 1 quart.

McIntosh Apple and Date Chutney

5 McIntosh apples (peeled, seeded, and cut into small dice)
1 cup finely diced dried dates
½ cup finely chopped shallots (2 medium)

Chutney tips and hints

◆ Keep in mind that the sugar in chutney will caramelize. Add the final glaze when the meat is nearly done to avoid charring and flare-ups on the grill.

◆ When using a chutney mixture as a marinade, be sure to boil it again and cool before using it as a glaze.

◆ Mix with homemade or packaged mayonnaise for accenting cold meats or poultry.

◆ Most chutneys will last weeks in the refrigerator due to the acid/vinegar content. If you wish to preserve them, be sure to use recommended instructions for canning in a water bath, usually 10 minutes in sterilized jars.

◆ Use nonreactive pots when making chutneys. The acid in the mixtures will react to iron, copper and brass causing discoloration and pitting to the pot and imparting a metallic taste to the chutney.

◆ Wooden spoons or plastic utensils are recommended for the same reasons as nonreactive pots.

— About.com

½ cup cider vinegar
¼ cup sugar
2 tablespoons minced, peeled fresh ginger

root

1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh thyme leaves

1 tablespoon grated lemon zest
¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
¼ teaspoon ground allspice
Pinch cayenne pepper
Salt and pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients in a nonreactive saucepan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium low. Simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until reduced and jam-like in consistency, about 30 minutes.

Makes about 1 quart