

Perfect Caramel Apples



1. Line a baking sheet (#5957) with parchment paper (#1153).
2. Press a caramel apple stick into each apple. Be sure that the stick does not come out the bottom. If it does, juice will escape from the apple and the caramel will liquefy on the bottom.
3. Bring a medium pot of water to a boil. Dip each apple and allow to cool to room temperature. This process will ensure that the caramel properly adheres to the apple.
4. Melt $\frac{1}{2}$ a brick of caramel (#9068) in a large microwave-safe bowl. (Glass is best.) Melt for 2 minutes, then stir. Melt for another 2 minutes, then stir again. Now, melt for 30 seconds at a time until the caramel reaches a temperature between 180 and 185F. *The temperature is very important. If it's too hot, it will firm up too hard. If it's too cool, it will be difficult to evenly coat the apple.
5. Dip each apple into the caramel, slowly spinning the apple to evenly coat it. I like to dip all the way to the stick because I feel like this completely seals the apple, preventing possible pokes to the apple, which would leak juice and liquefy the caramel. But you can dip your apples as far up as you like. If you want a little apple showing through the top, go for it!
6. Remove the apple from the caramel to allow it to drip for a bit. Scrap the excess caramel off the bottom. As long as the caramel is warm enough, it will continue to fall down the sides of the apple, so don't be afraid to scrape off a lot. This will keep the "foot" of caramel at the bottom of the apple to a minimum.
7. If you want to add toppings to your apple, this is the time. Dip into toffee bits, M&M's, sprinkles, etc. If you want too long to add toppings, the caramel will be too cool to allow the toppings to stick well. So, work quickly. (Now is not the time to add chocolate).
8. Place each apple onto your parchment lined baking sheet and allow to completely set.
9. Depending on the temperature of your room, the caramel should be completely set and cool within 30-60 minutes.
10. If you want, you may now dip your caramel apple in chocolate or drizzle chocolate over the top. Place the apples back on the parchment paper and allow to set again.
11. Place each apple in a baking cup liner and then into a cellophane bag (#7803). Tie off with a ribbon and present your lovely caramel apples to your friends and family!
12. Enjoy! A few words of wisdom when it comes to perfecting caramel apples:
 - Don't Refrigerate: Many people recommend refrigerating your apples. I've had the best results keeping them at room temperature. If your apples are cold before you dip them in caramel, when the caramel warms up, it tends to get condensation on it. See "Wet = Mess" below. When the apple condenses under the caramel, it will liquefy and slip off your apple. I also don't refrigerate after dipping in caramel.
 - Wax = Mess: Usually, most apples purchased in the store are coated with a waxy film to prevent spoilage. This film often prevents the caramel from sticking to the surface of the apple. Dipping each apple into boiling water for about 10 seconds will remove this film. Dry thoroughly and allow to cool to room temperature.
 - Wet = Mess: It's important that the apples are washed and then thoroughly dried prior to plunging them into the hot caramel. Any trace of moisture on the apples will cause the caramel to slip and slide right off.
 - Tiny Toppings: The smaller, more finely chopped your toppings, the better shot you have at them staying in place as the caramel cools.
 - Cool Avoids a Pool: ... of caramel, that is! If you're opting for a second layer of deliciousness in the form of melted chocolate, always allow the first layer of caramel to cool completely before plunging your apple into a warm bath of chocolate.

From: Kitchen Kneads



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