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Apple Roses

Makes 12 Apple Rose pastries

INGREDIENTS:

1 box (2 sheets) puff pastry
Flour for dusting the rolling surface
1/2 cup butter, melted
1/2 cup white sugar
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
4 - 5 red apples
6 cups water
1 lemon
1/2 cup sugar
Confectioner's sugar for sifting
(Serve with vanilla ice cream or caramel sauce; garnish with mint leaves)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Prepare a 12-cup standard size muffin tin by lightly buttering each cup.
2. Defrost the puff pastry sheets at room temperature until softened and easy to roll out. Roll each sheet to an approximate dimension of 12" x 12". Cut the sheet into 2" x 12" strips. (If the dough becomes too soft at any point, re-chill in the refrigerator for 10-15 minutes before continuing.)
3. Melt the butter and allow to cool slightly while preparing the apples. In a small bowl, mix the sugar and cinnamon. Set aside until ready to assemble the roses
4. In a medium saucepan, add the water, squeeze and strain the juice of one lemon, and the sugar.
5. Cut each apple in half, remove the core, stem and blossom ends. With cut side down, slice the apples in 1/8-inch thick slices, or use a handheld slicer for precise, even slicing. Immediately place the apples in the ready saucepan filled with the lemon water.
6. Over medium heat bring the apples to a simmer and cook slightly, about 1-2 minutes, or just until the slices become pliable and easily bendable. (Do not overcook!) Drain the apples and spread on a pan to quickly cool; toss occasionally to so that the slices cool thoroughly.
7. Brush each strip of puff pastry with the melted butter leaving a free margin around the edges of each strip. Sprinkle the sugar and cinnamon over the buttered area.

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8. Place the apple slices at the top of each strip in an overlapping manner. Position the slices so that the top arch of the slice is about 1/4-inch above the puff pastry edge.
9. Fold the bottom half of the puff pastry strip over the apples, seal the ends of each strip with a firm finger press. Beginning at one end, loosely roll up the filled strips. Place each "rolled rose" in a buttered muffin cup.
10. Bake the roses in a 375°F oven on a lower rack for 30 minutes or until the pastry is puffed and thoroughly baked. Cool the roses in the pan for 5 minutes or until able to handle easily, then transfer to a cooling rack to continue cooling. Dust with confectioner's sugar and serve with vanilla ice cream, or place on a puddle of caramel sauce.