Heirloom Apple Varieties

Our Apples Make History!

Gravenstein: The Gravenstein is considered to be one of the best all-around apples for baking, cooking and eating. It has a sweet, tart flavor and juicy, crisp texture. The Gravenstein is native to Denmark, discovered in 1899. It traveled to America with Russian fur traders, who planted orchards at Fort Ross, CA in the early 1800’s.

Pink Pearl: Cut or bite into this apple and you are in for a surprise. In fact, it is an offspring of another variety called ‘Surprise’, Pink fleshed, pearly skinned, good tasting with sweet to tart flavor. Makes pink applesauce and pretty fruit tarts. Aromatic flavor with a hint of grapefruit.

Cox’s Orange Pippin: This apple still dominates the English markets. Got its name from creator Richard Cox, a retired brewery worker in the early 1800’s. The skin takes on an orange tinge at ripening. Has a juicy, nutty taste and firm cream-colored flesh. Its intriguing aroma and complex yet balanced flavor make Cox’s Orange Pippin a great eating apple, but don’t count it out for baking! it can also be baked into pear-scented pie.

Cortland: The Cortland heirloom apple was developed in 1898 by Professor S.A. Beach of New York. It is another high quality red apple, which often will have dark red streaks on the outside. Inside you will find a crisp, white flesh and a somewhat tart, sweet flavor. Very juicy.

A good salad apple because it does not brown for hours after slicing.

King David: Discovered by farmer Ben Frost on a fence row tree in Arkansas in 1890. Believed to be a cross of Jonathan/Arkansas Black. Cream colored flesh is coarse, crisp and has a spicy, almost wine-like flavor. Suitable for dessert, great for a golden-yellow pie and apple sauce, as well as making cider.

Ribston Pippin: This apple was grown in 1708 from one of three 'pips' (seeds) sent from Normandy to Sir Henry Goodricke of Ribston Hall, Yorkshire, England. It has one of the highest Vitamin C contents, 70mg/100mg. Its yellow flesh is firm and sweet, with a pear taste. Intense, rich and aromatic flavor. Ribston is also the parent of Cox’s Orange Pippin.

Orleans Reinette: A very old apple, probably originating in France where it was first described in 1776. Small size; round and greenish-yellow color skin with creamy white flesh. Juicy, with a taste of sweet orange followed by a walnut-like flavor.

Mutsu: A late maturing offspring of Golden Delicious from Japan’s breeding program (crossed with an Indo tree seedling brought to Japan by an Indiana school teacher). Renamed ‘Crispin’ in the U.K. and U.S.A. A very large, firm greenish/yellow apple with a sweet cocktail of flavors. Juicy and refreshing, with outstanding dessert qualities. Also known in Japan as ‘The Million Dollar Apple’. If you like a sweet apple with a hint of tartness, the Mutsu is a must.

Grimes Golden: If you are a Golden Delicious fan, try the parent, Grimes Golden. A clear, deep yellow skin covers a fine grained, spicy flesh. Very juicy and excellent for cider. Its tender flesh keeps it from holding up well for baking. The Grimes Golden’s exceptional flavor keeps it a favorite dessert apple of many. Discovered in Brook County, Virginia in 1804 by Thomas Grimes.

Calville Blanc: This world renowned dessert apple dates from 16th century France. It’s flattened round shape makes it distinctive looking, so much that Monet put it in his 1879 painting “Apples and Grapes”. It has a tart, effervescent flavor, and is good for eating. With overtones of pear and pineapple, it claims to be the “best apple pie apple grown”. The sharp, complex flavor of the Calville Blanc goes well with cheese and is sure to impress you. Higher in Vitamin C than an orange.

Roxbury Russet: In the early 17th century, Roxbury Massachusetts developed and named the first American apple! An excellent old cider apple, and good for eating. Roxbury Russet is medium sized, elliptical in shape, with a unique flavor. This rugged apple has a crisp, tart flavor with nutty overtones and a hint of pine. Its russeted skin can exhibit in two or three shades.

Spitzenburg: This ‘apple of connoisseurs’ was discovered in upstate N.Y. in the early 1700’s. Rumored to be the favorite of Thomas Jefferson, and definitely grown in his orchards at Monticello. Produced in the Hood River Valley, OR in the early 1900’s. Rich, fruity aromatic flavor and crisp meat scores high in a taste test. A great dessert apple with aromatic, spicy characteristics, it is often a favorite at Christmas time. Good all purpose apple for eating fresh, baking, and drying.

Ashmead’s Kernel: One of the very best of the old European apples from the late 1800’s to early 1900’s, this small to medium sized apple has an outstanding rich, high flavor. It is rated for the connoisseur, and has not been offered commercially. Sharp flavor, with a wonderful aftertaste. It has green, russeted skin and crisp, juicy flesh. This is a gusty apple, with a bold, tart but sugary taste.

White Winter Pearmain: There is some confusion as to the origin of this apple; some say it originated in Indiana around 1849, others that it came from 1800AD England. Medium to large in size, the White Winter Pearmain has a pale yellow skin with streaks of reddish blush. The skin is waxy and tough. Yellowish flesh is crisp, juicy, and tender with a sub-acidic flavor with a hint of sweetness. One of the premier dessert apples. Striking to both the eye and the taste buds.

Golden Russet: An old American cider apple with delicious, sugary juice, believed to have sprouted from a seed of English Russet. Skin turns a golden bronze when ripe. Also good for eating and drying. Holds up well when cooked. Crisp yellow, sweet flesh of very good quality.

Arkansas Black: This unique apple dates to 1870’s Arkansas. It is a lively red color, deepening to a purplish black when ripe. Known for a hard, slick exterior, apple expert Tom Burford remembers being warned as a boy not to hit anyone in the head with it, as it could kill! It is juicy, with a distinctive aromatic flavor you will find sweet but not overpowering. Its firmness holds its shape in baking, but is also a great eating apple.

Northern Spy: An American apple native to the Northern East Coast discovered around 1800 in East Bloomfield, N.Y. Its name comes from the codename of an Underground Railroad operator, who guided former slaves through New England into Canada. Flaky and thin, Northern Spy and flesh is harder and crunchier than most, staying firm. Thin-skinned and aromatic, it is a consummate pie apple, and an old favorite for eating out of hand.

Winesap: Unknown in origin, this apple was probably brought in seed form from Europe over 200 years ago. Deep red in color, it was noted as a great cider apple in writings as far back as 1837. Good for pie, sauce and eating out of hand. Flesh is a fruity, crisp yellow; sometimes featuring red streaks on the inside. The blossoms on Winesap trees are mostly pink, instead of white. One of the parents of ‘Arkansas Black’. This delicious apple has a powerful sweet and sour contrast, and many say its rich flavor is comparable to wine, a flavor that keeps even through baking.

Try these apples sliced with cheese. All apples taste better sliced. More delicate flesh and less skin assures full apple flavor in every bite.