Fall 11-1-2018

Apple Crisp

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“Apple Crisp”

Foodways

Informant:

Deanna Wright is the mother of five children, four girls and one boy. She has worked in the food industry all her life, up until six years ago, when she started working in the family healthcare business. The career change has allowed her to spend more time at home and actually enjoy cooking. She loves spending time in the kitchen, especially when it comes to trying out a new English pastry recipe she saw on the latest episode of The Great British Baking Show. When she's not working or in the kitchen, she's outside landscaping.

Context:

Two days prior, I texted and asked Deanna to think of a particular comfort food that has been passed down their family. Following that time, I conducted an interview with her over the phone. I called later in the afternoon, because she spends the earlier afternoon working at home making phone calls for the healthcare business. As with all phone conversations with Deanna, she first regales me with how her work calls went. After a few minutes, I lead the interview through a series of different questions: history of the recipe, how you got it, how often you made it, why you would consider it comfort food, who has made changes to it, and funny or horrific stories regarding the chocolate pie.

Text:

The apple crisp recipe belongs to my grandma Brock. She was a terrible cook but made up for it in baking. Since my grandpa was English, he loved it when she made English pastries and desserts. Since they lived on a large farm in upstate New York, apples were about the only fruit they ever used in cooking and baking. Brock would make it occasionally, usually when the apples were ripe. We had a lot of cows and a few horses on that farm, and it was my mom's job to pick all the apples before the calves and houses would eat them all.

Apple Crisp

In a buttered 8x8 greased baking dish
4 cups sliced apples (Johnathan and Macintosh are the best)

1 tsp cinnamon

½ tsp salt

¼ cup water

Drop mixture over apples

Bake at 350 for 40 minutes

Serve warm with ice cream

**Texture:**
She told me that this recipe is her second go-to comfort-food recipe because it reminded her of her grandmother Brock. She usually has a harder tone of voice on the phone, but her voice was soft and thoughtful as she shared the memories of her grandmother. Every time she visited her grandma Brock, she’d open the door and the smells of baked goods rushed out. She said that Brock was always in the kitchen baking something. While on the phone, she sent me picture of grandma Brock, and recalled to me sitting on the porch and skinning apples, all the while smelling Brock’s cigarette smoke. She concluded by saying her mom continues to make it because it reminds her of the farm.

This is the same farm that is popular in the family as being haunted. It was initially used as a Pony Express station before it was passed on to my family. I have had the pleasure of visiting it last year, but unfortunately was not able to enter the barn. While visiting, my family was able to reminisce about memories of past generations with family members who still live in the barn; all except my father, who was busy trying to pet one of the, now undomesticated, barn cats.