

Grilled Gruyere with Maple-Caramelized Apples

I like serving this sandwich open-faced for breakfast with cups of strong coffee or for lunch with a seasonal salad. The two sandwich halves (on crusty baguette or slices of your favorite bread) can be served open-faced or they can be put together to make a more traditional-style sandwich. You can also use pears to give this sandwich a twist.

For the apples:

- 1 teaspoon salted butter
- 1 teaspoon olive or safflower oil
- 1 tart apple, peeled, cored, and thinly sliced
- 1 1/2 tablespoons maple syrup

For the sandwich:

- Two (4-inch) pieces of baguette or crusty bread, cut in half lengthwise or 4 slices of your favorite bread
- 2 1/2 ounces very thinly sliced Gruyere cheese

In a medium skillet heat the butter and oil over low heat. When sizzling, add the apple slices and cook, gently stirring once or twice, for 3 minutes. Drizzle on the maple syrup and raise the heat to medium-high. Cook for another 2 minutes, or until the apples are caramelized and just tender, but not mushy. Remove from the heat.

Preheat the broiler.

Place the bread on a small broiler pan. Divide the apples and the syrup in the bottom of the skillet between the four pieces of bread. Place the cheese on top of the apples and place the bread under the broiler. Broil for about 2 to 3 minutes, or until the cheese is bubbling and melted.

Serves 2 to 4.

Recipe from Kathy Gunst's new book, "Notes from a Maine Kitchen." (Down East Books 2011)