



Cranberry Apple Walnut Holiday Relish

A Bowl Full of Autumn

Hello, my dear. Come sit a spell. I want to tell you about my favorite holiday bowl. It is not fancy. It holds a bright, ruby-red relish. We call it Cranberry Apple Walnut Relish. It tastes like a crisp autumn day in a spoon.

It is tart, sweet, and crunchy all at once. The smell fills the whole kitchen. It smells like holidays and happy times. Doesn't that smell amazing? I think so. What is your favorite holiday smell? Tell me, I would love to know.

Why We Stir in Stories

Food is more than just eating. It is about the stories we share. This relish reminds me of my granddaughter's first Thanksgiving. She was so small. She tried a bite and her whole face puckered up! Then she asked for more. I still laugh at that.

That is why this matters. The dishes we make hold our memories. They connect us to people we love. Every family has a special recipe. This one is mine. Do you have a family food story? I am all ears.

The Simple Joy of Making It

Let's get to the fun part. Making it is easy. You just simmer everything in a pot. The cranberries pop like tiny balloons. It is very satisfying to watch. *Fun fact: Cranberries float because they have little air pockets inside!*

Do not worry if it looks too juicy. It will get thick as it cools. Trust the process. That is another life lesson. Good things often need a little patience. Add the walnuts last so they stay nice and crunchy.

A Little Sweet, A Little Tart

The flavors here are friends. Tart cranberries meet sweet apple juice. Crisp celery meets chewy raisins. Then, toasted walnuts join the party. They add a warm, nutty crunch. Every bite is a little different.

That is why this matters. Life is a mix of flavors. The sweet and the tart make each other better. This relish is a happy reminder of that. Which part do you think you'd like best: the tart berries or the sweet raisins?

Your Kitchen, Your Rules

You can make this your own. Use orange juice instead of apple. Try dried cherries instead of raisins. No walnuts? Pecans are lovely too. Cooking is not about being perfect. It is about making something you will enjoy.

See also Crimson Snowflake Sorbet Noel

Make it ahead if you like. Just keep the walnuts aside. Stir them in right before you serve. This gives you more time with your guests. And that is the best ingredient of all. Time with people we love.

Ingredients:

| Ingredient | Amount | Notes |
|----------------|--------------------|--|
| Apple juice | 3/4 cup | |
| Sugar | 1/2 cup | |
| Salt | 1/2 teaspoon | |
| Cranberries | 12 ounces (3 cups) | Fresh or frozen |
| Apples | 2 apples | Peeled and cored; 1 cut into 1/2-inch pieces, 1 shredded |
| Celery ribs | 2 ribs | Chopped fine |
| Golden raisins | 1/4 cup | |
| Walnuts | 1/2 cup | Toasted and chopped |



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Instructions

Step 1: Grab a medium saucepan. Pour in the apple juice, sugar, and salt. Bring it all to a gentle boil. I love the sweet smell that starts to fill the kitchen. It always reminds me of autumn afternoons.

Step 2: Now, add your cranberries, both apple pieces, celery, and raisins. Give it a good stir. Let it simmer over medium heat for about 5 minutes. You'll know it's ready when most berries have popped open. (Don't worry if it looks runny—it thickens as it cools!)

Step 3: Carefully pour the hot relish into a serving bowl. Let it cool completely. This takes about an hour. Patience is the secret ingredient here. **What kitchen job teaches you the most patience? Share below!** I use this time to tidy up.

Step 4: Once your relish is completely cool, stir in the toasted walnuts. This adds a lovely crunch. Now it's ready to serve! You can make this up to a week ahead. (Just add the walnuts right before serving so they stay crisp.)

Creative Twists

This recipe is wonderful as-is. But sometimes, a little change is fun. Here are three simple ideas for you. Try adding a spoonful of orange zest for a sunny citrus note. You could swap the walnuts for pecans for a richer, buttery flavor. Or, for a festive sparkle, stir in a handful of pomegranate arils after it cools. Doesn't that sound pretty? Each twist makes it just a little bit special. **Which one would you try first? Comment below!**

See also Christmas Chocolate Chip Cookie Perfection

Serving & Pairing Ideas

This relish is a holiday superstar. It's perfect next to a slice of roasted turkey or baked ham. I also love it on a leftover turkey sandwich the next day. For a cozy dinner, try a spoonful over a block of cream cheese with crackers. It's a wonderful, easy snack for guests. To drink, a crisp hard cider pairs beautifully. For a non-alcoholic treat, sparkling apple cider is just right. The bubbles cut through the relish's sweetness so nicely. **Which would you choose tonight?**



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Keeping Your Relish Happy and Ready

This relish is a wonderful make-ahead friend. It keeps in your fridge for a full week. Just pop it in a sealed container. Always add the walnuts right before you serve it. This keeps them wonderfully crunchy.

You can even freeze it for later. I freeze mine in small jars. Thaw it overnight in the fridge when you need it. I once made a triple batch for a big family party. Having it ready in the freezer saved my day!

Batch cooking like this saves you time and stress. It means more moments to enjoy with your family. **Have you ever tried storing it this way? Share below!**

Simple Fixes for Common Relish Hiccups

Is your relish too runny? Do not worry. It will thicken a lot as it cools. Just let it sit for the full hour. I remember when I first made it. I panicked because it looked like soup! An hour later, it was perfect.

Are the walnuts getting soft? You added them too soon. Stir them in just before serving. This keeps their nice, toasty crunch. Is it too tart for you? You can add one more tablespoon of sugar next time.

Getting the texture right matters. It makes every bite more enjoyable. Fixing small problems builds your kitchen confidence, too. **Which of these problems have you run into before?**

See also [Blackberry Cinnamon Holiday Ribbons](#)

Your Quick Questions, Answered

Q: Is this relish gluten-free?

A: Yes, all the ingredients are naturally gluten-free.

Q: Can I make it ahead?

A: Absolutely! Make it up to three days ahead. Add walnuts on serving day.

Q: What can I swap for raisins?

A: Dried cherries or chopped dried apricots work beautifully.

Q: Can I double the recipe?

A: You can! Use a bigger pot. The cooking time stays the same.

Q: Any optional add-ins?

A: A tiny pinch of cinnamon or orange zest is lovely. *Fun fact: Cranberries bounce when they are fresh!* **Which tip will you try first?**

From My Kitchen to Yours

I hope this recipe finds a spot on your holiday table. It is a little bowl of sweet, tart, and crunchy joy. Making food for others is an act of love.

I would love to hear about your cooking adventures. Tell me all about it. **Have you tried this recipe?** Please share your story in the comments below.

Happy cooking!

—Elowen Thorn.



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Author: Elowen Thorn

Cooking Method:[Stovetop](#)



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Cuisine:[American](#)



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Courses:[Side](#)

Difficulty: **Beginner**



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Prep time: **15 minutes**

Cook time: **5 minutes**



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Cooling time:**1 hour**

Total time: **1 hour 20 minutes**



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Servings: **8 servings**



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Calories: **140 kcal**

Best Season: Summer

Description

A festive and flavorful Cranberry-Waldorf Relish, combining tart

cranberries, sweet apples, crunchy celery, raisins, and toasted walnuts.

Ingredients

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup apple juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 12 ounces (3 cups) fresh or frozen cranberries
- 2 apples, peeled and cored, 1 cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces and 1 shredded
- 2 celery ribs, chopped fine
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup golden raisins
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup walnuts, toasted and chopped

Instructions

1. Bring apple juice, sugar, and salt to boil in medium saucepan. Add cranberries, chopped apple, shredded apple, celery, and raisins and simmer over medium heat until slightly thickened and two-thirds of berries have burst, about 5 minutes.
2. Transfer to serving bowl and let cool completely, about 1 hour. Stir in walnuts. Serve. (Relish can be refrigerated for up to 1 week.)

Notes

If you're using frozen cranberries, cook for 1 to 2 minutes longer. Use the large holes of a box grater to shred 1 apple. Don't worry if the relish looks thin—it thickens significantly as it cools. If you're making the relish ahead of time, add the walnuts when you're ready to serve it.

Keywords:Cranberry, Apple, Walnut, Relish, Holiday, Thanksgiving