

Apples with Honey and Crushed Walnuts

Serves 8–10

Tradition is a beautiful thing, unless it requires you to make something you don't enjoy making or eating. For me, that's charoet. Classically, it's an apple-walnut mixture (occasionally including a touch of cinnamon or dried fruit, or a combination) that ranges from chunky-relish to chunky-paste, and it's never been my favorite thing on the table. I've always wanted it tangier, crunchier and, well, I wanted a salad. This is that salad. It's meant to be more acidic than sweet, but adjust with vinegar and honey as needed to suit your preference. A note: Nearly everyone who ate this salad said it was their favorite part of the whole meal, which bruised my matzo ball ego, but I thought you should know.

1 cup raw walnut pieces or halves

4 Honeycrisp or Pink Lady apples, or a comparable sweet-tart variety

2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar, plus more to taste

Flaky sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons honey, plus more to taste

Olive oil, for drizzling

1. Heat oven to 325 degrees. Spread walnuts in an even layer on a rimmed baking sheet. Toast walnuts until golden brown and fragrant, 8 to 10 minutes. (You can also do this in a toaster oven.) Let cool. Using your hands or a knife if you like, crush or finely chop walnuts. Set aside.

2. Thinly slice apples (with a mandoline or a sharp knife) any way you please. (Rounds are excellent if you don't mind eating the edible core.) Scatter the slices onto a large serving platter or bowl. Drizzle 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar over apples, and season with salt and pepper; give them a little toss and drizzle with 2 tablespoons honey. Taste an apple slice and adjust seasoning with more vinegar or honey, as needed. Sprinkle with walnuts, and finish with a drizzle of olive oil, flaky salt and pepper.

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