

Pure Maple Syrup Cooking Tips

When one thinks of pure maple syrup, Vermont maple often comes to mind. However, maple trees are native throughout the Northeastern United States and Southeastern Canada. If you live in or near these areas, you can find local maple syrup being made and maple festivals galore in the early spring. It's worth seeking out...and it's not just for pancakes!!

- Pure Maple Syrup can be substituted for any sweetener in cooking or baking when you want a pure, natural sweetener with an earthy taste.
- When baking you can substitute pure maple syrup for granulated sugar: Instead of 1 cup of granulated sugar, use $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 cup of pure maple syrup (to taste). When using maple in baking, reduce other liquid by 2-4 tablespoons per 1 cup of maple syrup and add $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of baking soda and reduce the oven baking temperature by 25 degrees.
- When grilling or broiling meats or seafood glazed with maple syrup, add the glaze towards the end of cooking to avoid the natural sugars burning. As with other sweeteners (sugar, honey, etc.), the natural sugars in maple syrup burn easily.
- Pure Maple syrup should be refrigerated after opening.
- You will find pure maple syrup in several "grades" that relate to the syrup's color and flavor:
 - **Grade A Light Amber/ Fancy Syrup** is usually made from the first sap run of the season. The maple flavor is a mild and delicate bouquet. Excellent syrup to be appreciated on foods such as ice cream which allows its flavor to be enjoyed.
 - **Grade A Medium Amber** is slightly darker than Fancy and the maple flavor is more evident. This is the most popular grade of syrup for the table and all around use.
 - **Grade A Dark Amber** has a much more robust maple flavor. This hearty flavored syrup is very popular for table use and is often used in cooking.
 - **Grade B** syrup is the strongest and darkest with a very hearty maple flavor. It is used mainly for cooking and is sold for commercial use in other products.