

## APRICOT TART TATIN



This is an upside-down fruit tart, first cooked by the Tatin sisters at their restaurant in central France. The story goes that it was created by accident but was such a success with the guests that it became a much-loved classic. The apple version is the best known, but apricots work really well too – sunshine on a plate.

### Ingredients

75g/2¾oz caster sugar  
40g/1½oz unsalted butter, cubed  
300g/10½oz fresh apricots, halved and stoned (about 7 or 8 apricots)  
375g/13oz sheet of ready-rolled puff pastry, plain flour for dusting  
crème fraiche or ice cream, for serving

### Preparation method

- . For caramelising the apricots, you need a small ovenproof frying pan with a base that measures about 20cm/8in in diameter. Put the sugar in the pan and set it over a medium heat. Cook until the sugar first melts and then caramelises and turns golden brown. Don't stir the sugar but swirl it around the pan every now and then.
- . Remove the caramel from the heat and stir in the butter with a wooden spoon. The caramel will be extremely hot so watch out for splashes and don't dream of tasting it.
- . Continue stirring for 2–3 minutes as the caramel cools and thickens. It will look oily and separated to begin with, but will become smooth and toffee-like as you continue stirring. When the caramel is smooth, carefully arrange the apricots on top, cut-side down. Leave to cool for 20 minutes.
- . Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6.
- . Unroll the puff pastry sheet on a lightly floured surface and use a rolling pin to roll it out until it is 2cm/1in wider. Place a dinner plate or 25cm/10in cake tin on the pastry and cut around it.
- . Gently slide the pastry on top of the apricots and push down the sides with a round-bladed knife. Prick the surface to allow steam to escape
- . Bake the tarte tatin for 25 minutes until the pastry is golden-brown and the

apricots are cooked. Remove the pan from the oven using an oven cloth to hold the handle of the pan – don't forget - it will be very hot.

- . Leave the tart to stand for a couple of minutes to allow it to settle, then loosen the edges and place a large serving plate or board on top of the frying pan. Very carefully, but quickly, turn it over, using a folded dry tea towel to help you hold it, and allow the tarte tatin to drop gently on to the serving plate.
- . Serve warm with crème fraiche or ice cream.