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Apple tarte tatin



Ingredients

100g butter, softened

100g caster sugar

1 cinnamon stick, broken

1 star anise

1 vanilla pod

Pinch freshly grated nutmeg

4-5 cox's apples (depending on size) peeled, cored and halved (rub with lemon to stop them browning)

Plain flour to dust

200g readymade all-butter puff pastry

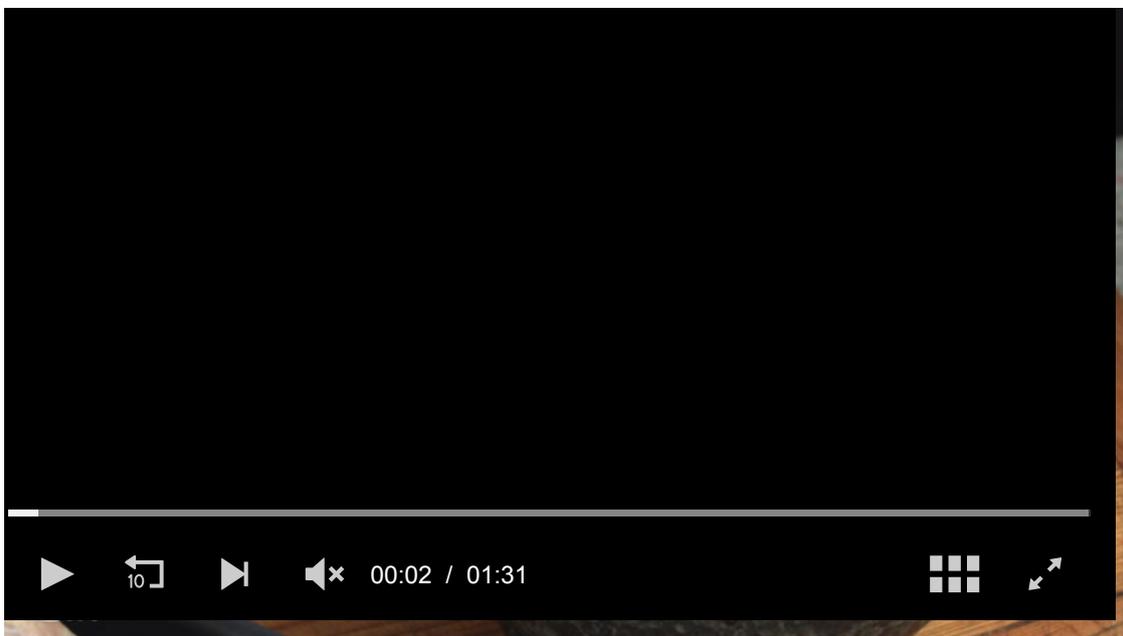
Clotted cream to serve

You'll also need...

20cm ovenproof copper/heavy-based frying pan

Method

- 1 Spread the butter over the base of the frying pan to cover it completely. Sprinkle over the caster sugar in an even layer. Scatter over the cinnamon stick, star anise, vanilla pod, nutmeg and a grinding of black pepper, then lay the halved apples on top, cut-side facing up.
- 2 Roll out the puff pastry on a lightly floured work surface to 3mm (no thinner) then cut out a circle using a plate about 2cm larger than the frying pan as a template. Lay the pastry over the apples in the pan, tucking in all the edges and making sure all the apples are tightly packed.
- 3 Prick the pastry top all over (this will allow the steam to escape during cooking), then chill for 30 minutes (see Make Ahead).
- 4 Heat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/gas 7. To cook, put the pan over a medium-high heat and, every few minutes, shake the pan to prevent the apples burning. Look for a golden caramel appearing around the sides of the pan after about 6-8 minutes. Don't worry if the pastry puffs up and melts a little (see tip).
- 5 Transfer the pan to the oven and bake for 20-25 minutes until the pastry feels firm and is a deep golden colour. The tatin can be halted at this stage and re-heated later (see Make Ahead) or turn it out onto a serving plate and serve warm with clotted cream.



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