

## Turkish poached apricots with clotted cream

*Turkey is the world's leading apricot producer, and the town synonymous with their production is Malatya, in eastern central Anatolia. The orchards around Malatya provide some 95% of all of Turkey's dried apricots. I try to buy the dark brown dried apricots as the bright orange ones have been treated with sulphur. If you can get mulberry or grape molasses – called 'pekmez' in Turkish – add some to the syrup to make this dessert extra delicious. In Turkey these apricots would be served with buffalo milk clotted cream, called 'kaymak' in Turkish. You can use regular cow's milk clotted cream, crème fraîche, whipped cream or mascarpone. This recipe is adapted from Ghillie Basan, a cookbook writer.*



**Serves: 6-8**

250g dried apricots, preferably unsulphured

200g sugar

juice of one lemon

2 tbsps orange blossom water (optional)

225g clotted cream (see notes above)

1. Unless they are already very soft, soak the apricots in cold water overnight or in hot water for an hour. Drain apricots and measure the juice. Make it up to 250ml if needed.
2. Place sugar and apricot juice in a medium saucepan along with the lemon juice. Heat over low-moderate flame, stirring occasionally, to dissolve the sugar. Then bring to a boil and boil for a few minutes.
3. Add apricots and orange blossom water (if using) to saucepan, cover and simmer gently until apricots are tender, about 20 minutes. Let cool.
4. Open up an apricot using your fingers or a paring knife. Push in a heaped teaspoon of clotted cream, in place of the kernel, spilling out so clearly visible. Put the apricot in a serving dish and repeat with remaining fruit. Pour the syrup around the apricots, trying to avoid getting it on the cream, and chill before serving.