Subject: Apricots
Posted by jmeadows on Sat, 04 Apr 2009 23:20:07 GMT
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Apricots

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by southdowner on Sat, 04 Apr 2009 23:41:10 GMT
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Looking for foods naturally containing vitamin D (a discussion from a previous blog post) I roamed the wholefoods counter today, and nearly brought home some apricots, but they were treated? with some sulphurous compound and I just wasn't sure if I was being unreasonable wanting apricots au nature? :)

Apricots and ginger sound so yummy, I'm regretting those squidgy little fruit which I left on the shelf... but I have got a bar of Green & Blacks with ginger bits in... *scurries off to kitchen so fast that I leave spelling errors in my wake*

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by GraceNotes on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 00:15:13 GMT
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This looks so yummy! I'd rather bake cookies though. Can any of you clever, natural cooks out there tell me how to do that? Just what is the difference between cake batter and cookie dough as far as ingredients and proportions go?
Thanks in advance!

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by skating librarian on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 00:30:51 GMT
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Our food co-op carries dried apricots, sulphered and un-sulphered, organic and conventionally grown, from Turkey and the US. That creates a real arrrgh moment.

The unsulphered ones are usually from Turkey, non-organic, and may have a larger carbon footprint.

Even if I plant an apricot tree this year, I'm still a couple of years away from fruit.

Thin apricots to a spacing of 5 to 7 cm. or your crop will suffer ... in April or May when they are the size of a gooseberry (obviously an English gardening book, the National Trust always suckers me in with deals on gardening books). Protect from birds. Do not pick until ripe ... late July or August. Does that help? I must admit that not thinning is something I am at last getting over, as my nectarines really suffer if I don't.

This year I may even thin the grapes!

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by southdowner on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 00:40:48 GMT
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skating librarian wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 01:30 ... when they are the size of a gooseberry (obviously an English gardening book, the National Trust always suckers me in with deals on gardening books)
Are there no gooseberries in the States? *ducks after showing such ignorance*

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Black Bear on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 00:48:48 GMT
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They're extremely uncommon, some specialty grocers carry them. I've never tried one.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by southdowner on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 00:51:10 GMT
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Oh I love every hairy little morsel, they're a lovely combination of fruit sugar with tartness - why I like rhubarb if not too much sugar is added :)

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Nurse Jane on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 01:53:19 GMT
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What is orange essence? It is the orange version of vanilla extract?

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by cgbookcat1 on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 02:24:44 GMT
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Nurse Jane wrote on Sat, 04 April 2009 21:53What is orange essence? It is the orange version of vanilla extract?

It sounds like it. I have some orange blossom water that I intend to substitute for the essence.

Thanks, Robin! I was looking for a good breakfast recipe, and anything containing both molasses and apricots has to be good.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by katinseattle on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 02:34:33 GMT
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[quote title=southdowner wrote on Sat, 04 April 2009 17:40][quote
Are there no gooseberries in the States? *ducks after showing such ignorance*[/quote]

I have a gooseberry bush, which theoretically produces gooseberries. It hasn't.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by abigailmm on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 04:57:30 GMT
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Gooseberries are in the currant family, of which several species grow in the US (I have collected them wild in botany class in California) but I don't think they are much cultivated here. Some species are the alternate host in the life cycle of a fungus that affects pines, so the forestry folks discourage them. Of course, the real solution to that is to not grow massive monoculture "forests," i.e. "farms" of pines, but modern agrubusiness doesn't tend to think that way.

The currants of this family are NOT the same as the little tiny raisins called currants, which are true raisins dried from grapes. Botanical common names – a source of fascinating research into history, folklore, ethnology, etc., but not reliable at all for talking about plants across cultural and geopraphical boundaries!

Abigail

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Diane in MN on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 06:55:02 GMT
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This looks very good, thanks Robin. I like the combination of orange with ginger and orange with apricots very much. I'd guess dried sour cherries would be good in this--I substitute them for raisins in molasses cookies with similar spices, and they work very nicely there.

If I had patio fruit trees they would be seriously unhappy right about now, because it's snowing and the wind is supposed to pick up overnight. "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?" asks the poet. Answer: YOU BET.

I was wondering why Betty Crocker and Fanny Farmer never tell you to adjust if your batter looks too runny/ too dry. And it’s probably because Betty and Fanny are expecting you to buy standard white flour at the standard white shop

Probably also because Fanny was one of the first, if not the first, to standardize measurements and recipes, and because they were writing for new cooks who'd want guaranteed results and wouldn't dream of experimenting with ingredients.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Diane in MN on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 07:14:01 GMT
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GraceNotes wrote on Sat, 04 April 2009 19:15This looks so yummy! I'd rather bake cookies though. Can any of you clever, natural cooks out there tell me how to do that? Just what is the difference between cake batter and cookie dough as far as ingredients and proportions go? Thanks in advance!

If you have a real batter (i.e., something more-or-less pourable), it's probably not worth trying to change it enough so that it could be baked as cookies. But recipes for bars that produce a fairly stiff dough can be baked as cookies--if the dough holds together when you scoop it out of the bowl, you can just try it as drop cookies and see how much it spreads. You might be interested in The King Arthur Flour Cookie Companion, which has tons of recipes for cookies and bars and gives you some ideas about baking a bar recipe as cookies or a cookie recipe as bars.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Susan from Athens on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 08:56:23 GMT
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Oh so good! A recipe after all this time. And a spring-like recipe too! These would be fabulous with cinnamon ice cream. Or apricot granita... Sinful thoughts abound.

Do take days off Robin! And more recipes is a very easy way to do it (and we always are willing to eat more!).

That said, I hope your apricot tree bears fruit and you get to eat some of it (instead of feeding the local birds). I have a lovely little apricot tree, that flowers beautifully but has only borne one fruit in ten years :(

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Melissa Mead on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 14:50:02 GMT
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southdowner wrote on Sat, 04 April 2009 20:40skating librarian wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 01:30
... when they are the size of a gooseberry (obviously an English gardening book, the National Trust always suckers me in with deals on gardening books)
Are there no gooseberries in the States? *ducks after showing such ignorance*

My parents used to have a bush in the back yard, but apparently growing gooseberries too near white pines kills one or the other...?

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Melissa Mead on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 14:53:51 GMT
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I must learn to finish the thread before posting.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Fake Frenchie on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 18:51:12 GMT
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Susan from Athens wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 10:56Oh so good! A recipe after all this time. And a spring-like recipe too! These would be fabulous with cinnamon ice cream. Or apricot granita...

Sinful thoughts abound.

Do take days off Robin! And more recipes is a very easy way to do it (and we always are willing to eat more!).

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Cinnamon ice cream? Where? In Greece? I'm booking a flight!

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by southdowner on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 18:55:28 GMT
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Melissa Mead wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 15:53I must learn to finish the thread before posting. Enthusiasm :)
It's probably why I have to edit many of my posts - that and my speed typing ("speed typing" ROFL!!)

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by southdowner on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 18:58:11 GMT
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Susan you horror - I'm just making resolutions to be good and eat well, and now this!
Susan from Athens wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 09:56 These would be fabulous with cinnamon ice cream. Or apricot granita... Sinful thoughts abound.
Oh well, I could always eat the Green and Blacks which I put at the back of the cupboard for emergencies :p

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Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by AJLR on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 19:23:46 GMT
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Susan from Athens wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 09:56 I have a lovely little apricot tree, that flowers beautifully but has only borne one fruit in ten years :(

Have you tried giving it a high potash feed regularly during the spring, Susan? A handful of sulphate of potash, watered in, if you can find it. Otherwise, any liquid feed recommended for tomatoes would be good.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Guest on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 21:30:01 GMT
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southdowner wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 11:41Looking for foods naturally containing vitamin D (a discussion from a previous blog post) I roamed the wholefoods counter today, and nearly brought home some apricots, but they were treated? with some sulphurous compound and I just wasn't sure if I was being unreasonable wanting apricots au nature? :)

No you are not being unreasonable :) If you can find them, NZ dried apricots are not usually treated. The Sulphur compound makes them keep the bright orange colour - if you see dried apricots of a dark orange/brown colour they probably arent treated.

NZ apricots are dried much more than the turkish ones I have seen - those are moist and plump - ours are dry and leathery (and chewy and delicious) but will plump up if soaked in warm water for a while if thats your thing

http://www.21food.com/userImages/chidafang/chidafang$3101542 1.jpg

Those are not what NZ dried apricots look like. But YMMV as to your preference :)

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by southdowner on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 22:52:39 GMT
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BlueRose wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 22:30If you can find them, NZ dried apricots are not usually treated. The Sulphur compound makes them keep the bright orange colour - if you see dried apricots of a dark orange/brown colour they probably arent treated.

NZ apricots are dried much more than the turkish ones I have seen - those are moist and plump - ours are dry and leathery (and chewy and delicious) but will plump up if soaked in warm water for a while if thats your thing

Thank you BlueRose, this does ring a bell - I vaguely remembered that dark apricots are the ones to look for, but these were a vivid orange, and made me think I should pass... but drat you Robin, I now want apricots and will have to go out apricot-tracking in the morning :)

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Robin on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 23:25:14 GMT
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Orange blossom water is much milder. Orange essence is STRONG. It's roughly speaking equivalent to vanilla, but GOOD vanilla--which over here anyway is often called vanilla essence. Orange oil is either the same thing or similar. You DON'T want 'orange flavouring'.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Robin on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 23:28:41 GMT
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Diane in MN wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 02:55

I was wondering why Betty Crocker and Fanny Farmer never tell you to adjust if your batter looks too runny/ too dry. And it’s probably because Betty and Fanny are expecting you to buy standard white flour at the standard white shop

Probably also because Fanny was one of the first, if not the first, to standardize measurements and recipes, and because they were writing for new cooks who'd want guaranteed results and wouldn't dream of experimenting with ingredients.

But that's exactly my point: you won't get guaranteed results if you *aren't* using the personality-less grade nothing standard white flour. And the new cooks might buy organic unbleached white flour because they have a vague idea it's better for them--which it is--and then follow the recipe blindly and get a strange result.

(I wonder if new editions of Fanny or Betty--I assume there ARE new editions--talk about this at all?)

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Robin on Sun, 05 Apr 2009 23:32:06 GMT
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Yes, I'm busy making . . . er . . . not-new-year's resolutions. Again.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by b_twin_1 on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 00:57:17 GMT
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southdowner wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 18:52BlueRose wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 22:30If you can find them, NZ dried apricots are not usually treated. The Sulphur compound makes them keep the bright orange colour - if you see dried apricots of a dark orange/brown colour they probably arent treated.

NZ apricots are dried much more than the turkish ones I have seen - those are moist and plump - ours are dry and leathery (and chewy and delicious) but will plump up if soaked in warm water for a while if thats your thing
Thank you BlueRose, this does ring a bell - I vaguely remembered that dark apricots are the ones to look for, but these were a vivid orange, and made me think I should pass... but drat you Robin, I now want apricots and will have to go out apricot-tracking in the morning :)

The sulfur dioxide helps to preserve the orange colour for a while. It isn't "forever". If you buy a pack of treated apricots and put them, say, in the fridge, and forget them you will find that they will go "not orange". They aren't "off" just the sulfur has worn off. But it may take a year!!
And I'm with BlueRose - ours are leathery too and I much prefer the flavour. :) And if you want to be extravagent then soak in them in apricot nectar... mmmmmmm I used to add them to porridge. :d (They didn't need soaking then!!)

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Melissa Mead on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 01:20:56 GMT
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The sulfur can even be dangerous to some people.

http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/labeti/allerg/sulph e.shtml

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Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by b_twin_1 on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 01:31:47 GMT
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Melissa Mead wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 21:20The sulfur can even be dangerous to some people.

http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/labeti/allerg/sulph e.shtml

My sister in law won't have them because she is allergic to preservatives. But even if she wasn't allergic to that she would still not be able to have them because they are too high in fructose for her.

But I don't have a problems with them..... mmmmm dried apricots ..... :d

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Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Diane in MN on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 04:11:04 GMT
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Fake Frenchie wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 13:51
Cinnamon ice cream? Where? In Greece? I'm booking a flight!

If you get an ice cream maker--Cuisinart makes a nice one that produces a quart and a half at a time--you can make your own cinnamon ice cream, no sweat. That's what I do--but not too often because it's even easier to eat it. :)

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by cgbookcat1 on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 04:16:49 GMT
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Diane in MN wrote on Mon, 06 April 2009 00:11Fake Frenchie wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 13:51
Cinnamon ice cream? Where? In Greece? I'm booking a flight!

If you get an ice cream maker--Cuisinart makes a nice one that produces a quart and a half at a time--you can make your own cinnamon ice cream, no sweat. That's what I do--but not too often because it's even easier to eat it. :)

I have one of their ice cream makers, but haven't experimented any further than thin mint ice cream (which I keep making over and over). Do you have a favorite cinnamon ice cream recipe?

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Diane in MN on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 04:26:12 GMT
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Robin wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 18:28
(I wonder if new editions of Fanny or Betty--I assume there ARE new editions--talk about this at all?)

Fanny at least has gone through a few editions since I bought my first one forty-some years ago. And back then you would have had to hunt to find anything besides all-purpose or cake flour on a grocery shelf; if you were lucky, there'd be bread flour as well. Now that whole grain flour is widely praised and more readily available, I think it's lots more likely that these general-purpose books would have some discussion about their characteristics.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Diane in MN on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 04:35:16 GMT
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cgbookcat1 wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 23:16
I have one of their ice cream makers, but haven't experimented any further than thin mint ice cream (which I keep making over and over). Do you have a favorite cinnamon ice cream recipe?

Here it is: 1 cup heavy cream, 2 cups half and half, 1/2 cup sugar, 2 TBSP cinnamon (or to taste). Put it in the machine and that's it. :)

By the way, good going Spartans--I'll be rooting for them tomorrow night!

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Susan from Athens on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 11:40:11 GMT
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Fake Frenchie wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 21:51Susan from Athens wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 10:56Oh so good! A recipe after all this time. And a spring-like recipe too! These would be fabulous with cinnamon ice cream. Or apricot granita... Sinful thoughts abound.

Do take days off Robin! And more recipes is a very easy way to do it (and we always are willing to eat more!).

That said, I hope your apricot tree bears fruit and you get to eat some of it (instead of feeding the local birds). I have a lovely little apricot tree, that flowers beautifully but has only borne one fruit in

ten years :(

Cinnamon ice cream? Where? In Greece? I'm booking a flight!

Weeeeellllll, actually the first time I had cinnamon ice cream was in a little town called Rolle on the shores of Lac Leman (Lake Geneva) at an artisanal ice cream maker, back when those were quite rare some 25 years ago. I had a ball of cinnamon and a ball of apple and my, was it good. But here I actually meant to make my own like Diane said, though, probably with more milk and less cream. I find cream very hard to digest.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Mrs Redboots on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 11:41:38 GMT
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Robin wrote on Mon, 06 April 2009 00:25Orange blossom water is much milder. Orange essence is STRONG. It's roughly speaking equivalent to vanilla, but GOOD vanilla--which over here anyway is often called vanilla essence. Orange oil is either the same thing or similar. You DON'T want 'orange flavouring'.
If you have trouble finding it, go to your local health food store or the kind of chemist (pharmacy) that sells essential oils.

Lakeland used to do it in lovely big bottles, but I think they've stopped selling it now. :(

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Susan from Athens on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 11:42:47 GMT
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southdowner wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 21:58Susan you horror - I'm just making resolutions to be good and eat well, and now this!
Susan from Athens wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 09:56 These would be fabulous with cinnamon ice cream. Or apricot granita... Sinful thoughts abound.
Oh well, I could always eat the Green and Blacks which I put at the back of the cupboard for emergencies :p

I am so easily carried away by other people's temptations, I feel only right in returning the favour. Anyway, apricot granita can be quite healthy if made at home (low fat) and you can always serve it with the biscuits and shavings of your Green and Blacks on top (I would use Valrhone single estate, but that's just me: Green and Blacks rarely does it for me, with the exception of the dark

chocolate with ginger variety).

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Susan from Athens on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 11:45:06 GMT
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Robin wrote on Mon, 06 April 2009 02:25Orange blossom water is much milder. Orange essence is STRONG. It's roughly speaking equivalent to vanilla, but GOOD vanilla--which over here anyway is often called vanilla essence. Orange oil is either the same thing or similar. You DON'T want 'orange flavouring'.

What you can do, however, is add the orange water (which is a by-product of making orange essential oil and is thus saturated with that essence) and add it along with a nice amount of orange zest. In Greek cakes and biscuits we also add some vanilla when we add orange zest and that brings out both flavours in a very discreet yet aromatic way. (if you can't wait for essence to arrive or have a hard time finding it)

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Susan from Athens on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 11:46:29 GMT
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AJLR wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 22:23Susan from Athens wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 09:56 I have a lovely little apricot tree, that flowers beautifully but has only borne one fruit in ten years :(

Have you tried giving it a high potash feed regularly during the spring, Susan? A handful of sulphate of potash, watered in, if you can find it. Otherwise, any liquid feed recommended for tomatoes would be good.
I think we've tried every kind of plant food there is! But thanks for the hint.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by AJLR on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 12:22:18 GMT
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Yes, I thought you probably would have done, but this might be worth a try. :) I suppose you do get enough bees for the pollination, six floors up?

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by cgbookcat1 on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 12:22:36 GMT
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Diane in MN wrote on Mon, 06 April 2009 00:35cgbookcat1 wrote on Sun, 05 April 2009 23:16
I have one of their ice cream makers, but haven't experimented any further than thin mint ice cream (which I keep making over and over). Do you have a favorite cinnamon ice cream recipe?

Here it is: 1 cup heavy cream, 2 cups half and half, 1/2 cup sugar, 2 TBSP cinnamon (or to taste). Put it in the machine and that's it. :)

By the way, good going Spartans--I'll be rooting for them tomorrow night!

Thanks, Diane!

Susan, I found the extract at the grocery last night, but I might add some orange zest anyway.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Susan from Athens on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 17:24:32 GMT
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ajlr: Well, peculiarly enough, we do. We get bees and bumblebees (as well as wasps and mosquitoes).

cgcookbook glad you found what you needed!

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by shalea on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 17:54:53 GMT
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GraceNotes wrote on Sat, 04 April 2009 20:15This looks so yummy! I'd rather bake cookies though. Can any of you clever, natural cooks out there tell me how to do that? Just what is the difference between cake batter and cookie dough as far as ingredients and proportions go? Thanks in advance!

One of my favorite cookies involves blobs of apricot jam encased in folded cream-cheese-based cookie squares. Will try to dig up the recipe.

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by anef on Mon, 06 Apr 2009 22:03:54 GMT
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"Some day when I say I Must Spend Less Time on the Blog I’m going to have to mean it. Why can’t I learn to write short?"

I merely remark that you are in the best company. George Bernard Shaw once added to the bottom of a letter, "Forgive this long letter; I don't have time to write a short one."

Subject: Re: Apricots
Posted by Robin on Tue, 07 Apr 2009 00:16:16 GMT
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Yes! I used to get mine from Lakeland! Arrrgh!