

APRICOTS

HEALTH BENEFITS:

Apricots, also known as Armenian plums, are stone fruits that resemble a smaller version of a peach but share the tartness of purple plums. These round, yellow fruits are packed with vitamins A and C, which promote glowing skin, strong immunity, and sharp vision. They also contain potassium for healthy blood pressure and muscle function, along with vital minerals like vitamin E, vitamin K, and manganese. Apricots are rich in fiber, aiding digestion and preventing constipation, and they deliver antioxidants like beta-carotene, which protect cells from damage. Despite being low in calories, apricots are high in hydration, making them a smart choice for weight management and overall health. They support heart health by regulating blood pressure and lowering cholesterol levels, while promoting bone strength with calcium and phosphorus. Don't miss out on the delicious and nutritious benefits of apricots.

SELECTION & STORAGE:

When selecting apricots, look for fruits that are firm yet yielding to gentle pressure, with a vibrant orange color and a fragrant aroma. Avoid apricots that are overly soft, bruised, or have blemishes. To store apricots, keep them at room temperature if they are not yet ripe, and once ripe, store them in the refrigerator to slow down the ripening process. They can be kept in a plastic bag or container to prevent them from drying out. Enjoy apricots within a few days of purchase for the best flavor and texture.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH: SEARED CHICKEN WITH APRICOT SAUCE

INGREDIENTS (4 servings):

- 4 chicken breasts
- ¼ teaspoon salt, divided
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- ¾ cup dry white wine
- 1 medium shallot, minced
- 4 fresh apricots, pitted and chopped
- 2 tablespoons apricot preserves
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh tarragon, or ½ teaspoon dried

DIRECTIONS:

1. Place chicken breasts between 2 pieces of plastic wrap. Pound with a rolling pin, meat mallet or heavy skillet until flattened to an even thickness, about ½ inch. Sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon salt and pepper.
2. Place flour in a shallow dish. Dredge the chicken in the flour, shaking off excess. (Discard any leftover flour.)
3. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the chicken and cook until browned and no longer pink in the center, 3 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate, cover and keep warm. (If necessary, cook the chicken in two batches with an additional 1 tablespoon oil.)
4. Off the heat, add wine and shallot to the pan. Return to medium heat and cook, scraping up any browned bits, until slightly reduced, about 3 minutes.
5. Add apricots and cook until the fruit begins to break down, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in preserves, tarragon and the remaining ½ teaspoon salt.
6. Return the chicken to the pan and cook until heated through, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve the chicken with the sauce.

