

Kabak Tatlisi (Candied Pumpkin with Tahini and Walnuts)

Turkish · Dessert · Easy · 50 min total · Serves 6

Kabak tatlisi is pumpkin simmered slowly in sugar syrup until glossy and tender, then served with a tahini drizzle and toasted walnuts. It is a traditional sweet in Turkish home cooking, especially in the cooler months.

Ingredients

- 2 lb pumpkin (kabocha or butternut) (peeled, seeded and cut into 1/2-inch (1.3 cm) slices)
- 1 cup sugar
- 0.5 cup water
- 4 tbsp tahini (sesame paste) (well stirred)
- 2 tbsp warm water (for thinning the tahini)
- 0.5 cup walnuts (toasted and chopped)
- 0.5 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 pinch fine salt (for the tahini)

Method

1. Peel the pumpkin, scoop out the seeds, and cut the flesh into slices about 1/2 inch (1.3 cm) thick and 2 inches (5 cm) long.
2. Arrange the pumpkin in a wide heavy pot in as close to a single layer as you can. Scatter the sugar over the top, add the 1/2 cup water, and let it rest for 20 minutes so the sugar begins to draw out juice.
3. Set the pot over medium heat, bring to a gentle simmer and cover for 10 minutes, until the sugar has dissolved into a syrup and the pumpkin starts to soften.
4. Uncover, reduce the heat to low and simmer for 25 to 30 minutes, turning the pieces gently and spooning syrup over them, until they are fork-tender and glossy and the syrup coats a spoon (about 220°F / 104°C).
5. Stir the cinnamon into the syrup and cook for 1 minute. Lift the pumpkin onto a serving platter with a slotted spoon and spoon the syrup over it.
6. Whisk the tahini with the warm water and salt until smooth and pourable, then drizzle it over the pumpkin.
7. Sprinkle with the toasted walnuts and serve warm or at room temperature.

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