



Produce of the  
Month

# Peaches

## Welcome!

They're sweet. They're fuzzy. They're low in calories but taste great. What are "they"? Peaches of course! These tasty morsels are a member of the rose family and have been both a popular food and an important cultural symbol for thousands of years. Enjoyed often as a flavoring for teas and other beverages, as well as the key ingredient in a wide variety

of baked goods, raw peaches are a delicious treat straight from your local farm market or grocery store!

While the pits of peaches are inedible (and in fact poisonous), the fruit of a peach is something to truly savor and a great addition to a well-rounded, healthy diet. If you haven't had a peach lately, now is a great time to cut one up and enjoy and its juicy goodness!

## The History of the Peach

Tracing the origin of peaches takes us back at least three millennia (3,000 years) to ancient China where the fruit was not only a popular food but peach trees themselves held a special significance. In Chinese culture, the peach tree is considered the tree of life and a symbol of unity and immortality, and it is tradition for Chinese brides to carry peach blossoms with them.

Peaches eventually traveled to Persia where they were discovered by none other than Alexander the Great, who described many varieties of the fruit and introduced it to the Greeks about 2,330 years ago. Three centuries later, peaches became popular among the ancient Romans who began cultivating them and sending them all throughout their empire. How exactly the peach came to North America is a matter of speculation however, as some claim the fruit arrived with Christopher Columbus, others suggest they came with Spanish explorers, while others maintain it was the British who first brought the fruit to the continent. Regardless of how they ended up in North America, the fruit is now cultivated in 32 of the 48 contiguous U.S. states, most famous of which is Georgia which has actually been officially nicknamed "The Peach State."

Sources: *The Nibble*™ ([www.thenibble.com](http://www.thenibble.com)),  
Michigan Peach Sponsors, Georgia Department  
of Agriculture



## A Tasty Treat To Try At Home

### Peach Barbeque Sauce

- 1 cup** Peaches (You can use fresh, peeled, or canned (drained))
- 1 cup** of your favorite Barbeque Sauce

#### METHOD

1. Place the peach chunks into a food processor.
2. Process until the peaches are well chopped (about the size of peas).
3. Carefully spoon the peaches into a bowl.
4. Add the barbeque sauce and stir to combine.
5. The BBQ sauce is now ready to use!
6. If you're going to use the sauce in the oven, spoon on before cooking. If you're grilling, brush the sauce on just before you're done cooking.
7. Enjoy!
8. Any leftover sauce may be kept in a covered bowl and in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.





## Peachy Goodness

It goes without saying that peaches are not only a delicious snack or ingredient in a wide variety of recipes, but also a truly nutritious food you can feel good about eating. According to NutritionData.com, one large raw peach about 2" in diameter packs 19% daily value of Vitamin C and 11% daily value of Vitamin A, while containing only 68 calories and no fat, cholesterol or sodium! Peaches are also an excellent source of potassium, copper and manganese.

Of course, many people enjoy canned peaches, which also offer significant nutrition when chosen wisely. While peaches canned in syrup tend to be relatively high in calories and sugar content, those packed in water or juice serve up less of both, while at the same time offering plenty of vitamins and minerals!

Sources: NutritionData.com, The Nibble™ (www.thenibble.com)

## Did You Know That ...

- Peaches are generally divided into two categories: clingstone and freestone.
- Clingstone peaches have fruit that "clings" to the pit, requiring it to be cut out before consuming. These peaches are usually reserved for canning.
- Freestone peaches have pits that can be easily pulled away from the fruit and is what you typically find in supermarkets.
- In ancient Rome, a single peach cost the equivalent of \$4.50 in U.S. currency, while in 19th-century England a peach would set one back by the equivalent of \$5.00!
- The cultivation of peaches in Georgia dates back to the colonial period in the 17th century.
- The nectarine is actually a type of peach, not a hybrid of the peach and plum as many believe. Unlike most peaches, nectarines do not have any fuzz and are thought to have originated as the result of a genetic mutation.
- The donut peach is so-named because it is relatively flat, round and indented in the center. The pit is also exposed and can be easily pushed out without cutting into the fruit, enhancing its resemblance to a small donut.
- China is the world's largest producer of peaches. Italy is second.
- More than 50% of the peaches in the U.S. are grown in California, even though Georgia has become known as "The Peach State".
- Peaches were brought from China to Persia by way of the Silk Road and as a result became known botanically as *Prunus persica*.
- The juice from a peach makes an excellent moisturizer.

Sources: The Nibble™ (www.thenibble.com), Michigan Peach Sponsors, Georgia Department of Agriculture

## Notable Quotable

"The ripest peach is highest on the tree." - James Whitcomb Riley

"Chocolate's okay, but I prefer a really intense fruit taste. You know when a peach is absolutely perfect... it's sublime." - Cathy Mattea

## Mind Your Peaches & Q's

No doubt peaches are on your mind, but are they in your memory? Let's find out! Write your answers to our "Qs" on each line.

1. What kind of peach has a pit that easily pulls away from the fruit? \_\_\_\_\_
2. In Chinese culture, the peach tree symbolizes unity and what? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Peaches were brought to Persia from China using what famous route? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What state grows more than half of all peaches in the United States? \_\_\_\_\_
5. One large peach provides 19% daily value of what? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What country is the world's second-largest producer of peaches? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What kind of peach is relatively flat, round and indented in the center? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is the botanical name for a peach? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Which state is "The Peach State"? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Some people believe peaches came to the New World alongside explorers from what country? \_\_\_\_\_

Answers to Mind Your Peaches and Qs: 1: Freestone, 2: Immortality, 3: The Silk Road, 4: California, 5: Vitamin C, 6: Italy, 7: Donut, 8: Prunus persica, 9: Georgia, 10: Spain



## For More Information

For more information about Peaches, please contact:

The Nibble  
Michigan Peach Sponsors  
Georgia Department of Agriculture  
NutritionData.com