

PEACH PAVLOVA



Makes 10 servings

For the Pavlova

- 2 egg whites, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 cups superfine sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon vinegar or strained lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- 4 tablespoons boiling water

For the Sauce

- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 half-pint baskets raspberries

Juice of 1 orange
2 teaspoons kirsch (optional)

Remaining Ingredients

4 or 5 large, ripe peaches
2 tablespoons granulated sugar
1/2 cup heavy cream, whipped (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a large baking sheet with aluminum foil, shiny side down. Place all the meringue ingredients in an impeccably clean bowl of an electric mixer, and beat on high speed until very stiff and glossy, 7 to 15 minutes, depending on the power of your mixer. Working quickly, and using a spatula, spread the mixture onto the prepared baking sheet into a circle or oval about 10 inches in diameter, swirling the edges of the meringue into free-form peaks and creating a "valley" in the center. Or, for individual shells, spoon 10 dollops of meringue mixture several inches apart on the pan, and shape as directed.

Bake for 10 minutes and reduce the heat to 250 degrees. Bake a large Pavlova for 45 minutes longer in an electric oven, or for 1 hour longer in a gas oven. Bake individual shells 30 or 45 minutes, respectively. Allow to cool completely in the oven with the oven door ajar, about 3 hours or up to overnight, then peel the foil away. The shell(s) may be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 weeks.

To make the sauce, in a small pot, heat the granulated sugar and water over medium heat, stirring frequently, until the sugar dissolves, about 1 minute. Remove from the heat and let cool slightly. Put the sugar syrup, berries, orange juice, and kirsch in a blender and process until smooth. Strain the sauce through a fine-mesh sieve. You should have about 1 1/2 cups.

To assemble the dessert, peel the peaches and cut into 1/2-inch-thick slices. Place in a bowl, stir in the granulated sugar, and let stand, or macerate, until the juices run, 30 to 60 minutes. Place the large shell on a platter, or the smaller shells on individual plates. Spread the center with the whipped cream and pile the peaches on top, allowing some to tumble onto the edge

of the plate. Cut the large Pavlova into wedges to serve. Pour raspberry sauce over, or around, each serving.

From ["The Santa Monica Farmers' Market Cookbook"](#) by Amelia Saltsman, Blenheim Press © 2007