

Health Benefits of Peaches



There is nothing better than a peach during summer. Peaches originate in China, where it is seen as a symbol of long life and immortality. In the US, the first peach tree was planted in Florida in the early 1500s.

A peach is a stone fruit because of the pit/stone in the middle of the fruit. Peaches are classified as either clingstone or freestone. As the names suggest, the pit either “clings” or is “freely” separated from the flesh of the fruit.

Although there are hundreds of varieties of peaches, its flesh is mainly categorized as yellow or white. The skin of the peach can be dark red, blush/pink, and yellow.

Most peaches produced are consumed fresh while some are sold canned, frozen, dried, or processed to make peach drinks, jelly, candy and other products.

WHAT MAKES PEACHES GREAT?

Nutrition

One raw medium peach (2-2/3" diameter) has 59 calories, 0.4 gm fat, 2.3 gm fiber and 1.4 gm protein, no sodium, and no cholesterol.

Vitamins

Peaches are a good source of vitamin C, which promotes healing and protects cells from free radicals associated with aging and disease. Peaches provide approximately 13% of vitamin C, 3% of vitamin A and 2% or more Daily Value of vitamins E, K and B3 (niacin).

Minerals

Peaches contain potassium which can lower your risk of heart disease and stroke by reducing blood pressure. It is also a good source of manganese and copper, and contains small amounts of magnesium, phosphorus, and iron.

Fiber

One medium peach can provide up to 9% of daily fiber requirements. Eating the skin maximizes the fiber and phytonutrient intake. Peaches provide both soluble and insoluble fiber that can help control blood sugar levels, aid in weight management and reduce constipation.

Phytonutrients (plant compounds)

An antioxidant called beta-carotene, which is converted to vitamin A in the body, gives peaches their yellow-orange color. Beta-carotene is necessary for eye, skin, brain, and lung health. It fights against free radicals which can prevent certain cancers, cognitive disorders and heart disease.

The fresher and riper the fruit, the more antioxidants. The skin of the peach also contains antioxidant compounds, including polyphenols like caffeic acid and chlorogenic acid. They have anti-carcinogenic and anti-inflammatory properties. They may also aid in digestion and weight management, as some studies have suggested.

BUYING & USING PEACHES

Peaches can be bought at farmers' markets, grocery stores and other locations. While these fruits can be found in fine quality from April through October, they are usually best during the summer season. It is recommended to purchase peaches with the USDA organic label when possible.

When shopping for peaches, use your sense of smell as a guide for selecting ripe peaches. The peach should smell sweet like how you want it to taste.

Peaches can be stored on the counter at room temperature until they are at your preferred ripeness, if they were bought unripe. When ripe enough, peaches can be stored in the refrigerator where they will last up to five days.

Peaches can also be kept frozen for later use, where they will last at least 6 months.



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Wash peaches well under running water and rub with a paper towel before consuming.

Sliced or chopped peaches can be tossed with lemon juice to prevent browning that occurs after peeling due to oxidation.

For canned peaches, choose the variety in water instead of syrup due to the high amounts of added sugars.

Peaches can be used in a variety of ways in all kinds of dishes.

- Chopped and added to fresh salads or fruit salads
- Added to smoothies, juices, ice cream, cocktails, yogurt, sorbets, popsicles and other cold drinks or frozen treats
- Fresh or canned in baked goods such as pies, cobblers, tarts, etc.
- Used to make peach jam or jelly
- Added to soups
- Added to fruit salsa, relish or different sauces
- Added to skewers for fruit kebabs
- Added as a topping or main ingredient for deserts or breakfast dishes

Peaches add a delightful flavor and many health benefits to your menu items.

Fresh Peach Vinaigrette Salad Dressing

www.thespruceeats.com

Ingredients:

- 1 large peach
- 3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper, optional

Directions:

1. Gather the ingredients.
2. Peel, pit and chop the peach.
3. Combine the peach with the remaining ingredients in a blender or food processor.
4. Blend until thoroughly combined.
5. Taste and season to your liking.

Peach Salsa (with Canned Peaches)

www.feastgloriousfeast.com

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| Ingredients: | 1/4 cup red onion | 1/4 cup red bell pepper | 1 tsp garlic paste |
| | 7 oz canned peach slices in
Juice - including some juice | 1 cup cherry tomatoes | Salt, to taste |
| | | 1/4 cup fresh cilantro | 1 tsp lemon juice |

Directions:

1. Use a sharp knife to cut 1/4 cup red onion into very fine dice. Add to a small mixing bowl.
2. Cut bell pepper and cherry tomatoes into similar size chunks to the peaches. Add these to the mixing bowl.
3. Cut canned peaches into small chunks – roughly the size of a pea. Add to the onion
4. Finely chop fresh cilantro including the stalks.
5. Add to the bowl along with garlic paste, salt and lemon juice.
6. Mix everything together and allow it to sit for at least 5 minutes before serving to allow the flavors to develop.
7. And serve!

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