Using & Storing Peaches

South Carolina-grown peaches are available May through August.

Peaches are Good for You
Peaches are:
- a source of vitamins A and C.
- a good source of fiber.
- low in calories—35 calories per 2½” peach.

How to Buy Peaches
Choose peaches with a strong, sweet smell and a yellowish golden background color. A red blush does not necessarily mean the fruit is ripe.

Peaches should be firm, or "give" slightly at time of purchase. Do not buy green, brownish, or wrinkled peaches. Also, avoid very soft, overripe fruit and those with large flattened bruises or other signs of decay.

There are over 40 varieties of peaches grown in South Carolina. They fall into three general types:
- Clingstone—Flesh clings tightly to the pit. The early season fruit is generally clingstone and is best used for cooking and canning.
- Freestone—Flesh readily separates from the pit. These are good for eating fresh, as desserts, for cooking and freezing.
- Semi-freestone—Flesh is a little harder to separate from the pit. These are also good for eating fresh, as desserts, for cooking and freezing.

How to Store Peaches
- Treat peaches gently to avoid bruising.
- A ripe peach is firm but yields to gentle pressure, and it has a strong, sweet smell. If peaches need to ripen, place them in a loosely closed paper bag at room temperature or at a temperature above 51°F. Check daily. Putting ripening fruit in the refrigerator can cause loss of flavor, texture and moisture, as well as interior discoloration.
- When ripe, wash peaches in running water, and if desired, gently rub off "fuzz." Store in the refrigerator in a plastic bag. Ripe peaches will keep 3 to 5 days in the refrigerator. Serve at room temperature for best flavor.

How to Use Peaches
- If a recipe calls for peeled peaches, dip peaches in boiling water for 30 seconds or until skins loosen. Remove with slotted spoon and dip in cold water. The skins will come off easily.
- If peeling or cutting up peaches for a recipe, keep them from turning brown by sprinkling with lemon or orange juice.
- Sliced or chopped peaches make a great topping on:
  - cereal (hot or cold).
  - grits.
  - pancakes or waffles.
  - salads.
  - plain or vanilla yogurt.
  - cottage cheese.
  - pudding.
  - ice cream or frozen yogurt.
Add a dash of nutmeg or cinnamon for a fancy touch!
**Peach Recipes**

**Fresh Fruit Mixer:**
This watermelon "boat" will delight children and adults alike!

- 1 medium watermelon, well-chilled
- 3 cups seedless green grapes, halved
- 3 medium peaches, pitted and sliced
- 4 medium plums, pitted and sliced
- 2 cups blueberries
- 3 bananas, sliced

(or create your own combination of fruits)

**Directions:** Wash all fruits well before preparing. Cut thin slice off bottom of melon to make it sit flat. Slice off top ¼ of melon. Carefully scoop out melon and remove seeds. Cut melon into cubes. Cut top edge of melon shell in zigzag fashion; cover shell and refrigerate. Combine cubed melon, bananas, plums, grapes, peaches, blueberries and put into chilled watermelon shell. Serves 20 or more.

Calories: 40 per ½ cup serving
Fat: 0 grams per ½ cup serving

**Fresh Peach Cobbler:**
3 fresh peaches, sliced, peeled if desired (2 cups)
¼ cup sugar
1 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 7-ounce box muffin mix (equals 1½ cups)
¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
3 Tbsps. margarine or butter

**Directions:** Preheat oven to 375 °F. Wash peaches well before preparing. Combine peaches, sugar and lemon juice and pour into 8”x8”x2” baking dish. In a mixing bowl, combine muffin mix and nutmeg, and cut in margarine until it looks like coarse crumbs about the size of peas. Spoon over peaches. Bake 40 to 45 minutes. Serve warm or cold. Makes 9 servings.

Calories: 158 per ½ cup serving
Fat: 0 grams per ½ cup serving

**Peach Bread:**
If you suddenly find yourself with too many ripe peaches, this is a good solution!

2 to 3 fresh peaches (to make 1 cup finely chopped peaches)

¾ cup sugar
¼ cup margarine
1¼ cups flour (can use whole wheat)
½ tsp. cinnamon
½ tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. baking soda
½ tsp. salt
1 egg
½ tsp. vanilla
¼ cup chopped walnuts (optional)

**Directions:**
Preheat oven to 325 °F. Wash, pit and cut up peaches. Chop peaches finely, until consistency of oatmeal.


Calories: 191 per slice
Fat: 4 grams per slice

**Primary Source:**

**Supplementary Information From:**

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This information has been reviewed and adapted for use in South Carolina by J. G. Hunter, HGIC Nutrition Specialist, and K. L. Cason, Professor, State EFNEP Coordinator, Clemson University. (New 09/05.)

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