

peach pie

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Peach Pie

The wettest of the common fruit pies and the one most often served as soup. A ripe peach is around 89% water, and unlike an apple it has no pectin structure to hold together once heated — the flesh collapses entirely.

Everything below is about getting water out before the pie goes in the oven.

What makes it work

- **Macerate and drain, then reduce.** Toss the sliced peaches with the sugar and leave them an hour. They will release 200–300 ml. Boil that down to 80 ml of syrup and stir it back in. Skipping this is why peach pies flood.
- **Peel them, and peel them properly.** Score a cross in the base, 40 seconds in boiling water, into ice water, and the skin slips off. Skins in a baked pie curl into tough threads.
- **Freestone peaches**, in season, ripe enough to smell across the kitchen. Cling peaches fight the knife and underripe ones taste of nothing after baking.
- **More starch than apple needs**, even after draining: 35 g of cornstarch or 40 g of tapioca per kilo.
- **A lattice, and a long bake.** The filling must bubble in the middle.
- **A pinch of almond extract**, or a spoonful of bourbon, is the classic Southern addition.

Ingredients

One 23 cm pie. Serves 8.

- 1 batch [all-butter pie crust](#)
- 1.2 kg ripe peaches, peeled and sliced 1 cm
- 180 g granulated sugar
- 35 g [cornstarch](#)
- 4 g fine salt
- 2 tbsp [lemon juice](#)
- 2 g [nutmeg](#) or [cinnamon](#)
- ¼ tsp [almond extract](#), or 1 tbsp bourbon
- 20 g unsalted butter
- 1 [egg](#) beaten with 1 tbsp [milk](#)
- coarse sugar

Method

Blanch and peel the peaches, slice them, and toss with the sugar, salt, lemon juice and spice. Leave one hour.

Drain thoroughly. Boil the drained juice down to about 80 ml, cool two minutes, and toss it back through the fruit with the cornstarch and the almond extract.

Line the tin and chill; cut lattice strips and chill them.

Heat the oven to **220 °C / 425 °F** with a heavy tray on the bottom rack.

Fill, dot with butter, lattice, seal, chill 20 minutes, glaze and sugar.

Bake **20 minutes** at 220 °C, then **190 °C / 375 °F for 45–50 minutes**, until the juices bubble thickly at the centre.

Cool four hours — longer than any other pie in this folder. A warm peach pie will not hold a slice.

Notes

- **Frozen peaches** work well and are often better than out-of-season fresh: use them frozen, add 15 minutes, and expect more liquid.
- Peach and raspberry, peach and blackberry, or peach and ginger are all good; see [ginger](#).
- **Keeps two days** at room temperature. It does not freeze well baked — the fruit goes grainy.

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