

Peach Butter

Kathy's take: This is like a cross between a jam and a fruit butter. Find a local peach farm and ask for seconds (the bruised, slightly imperfect fruit) to make this sweet peach butter. Nutmeg, cinnamon, ginger, and allspice provide the spice and a touch of sugar adds some extra sweetness. The only other ingredient is patience— you want the butter to simmer slowly for about 2 to 3 1/2 hours until the butter is thick and full of the fragrant sweetness of a perfectly ripe peach.

You can place the butter into clean glass jars and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks or process it and keep up to a year. It's excellent on morning toast, muffins, pancakes, waffles, or served with a cheese platter or roasted meats. It also makes an excellent glaze on roast pork.

Recipe

About 10 pound ripe peaches and/or nectarines
About 1 1/2 cups sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon ground allspice

Take the ripe peaches and, working over a large bowl, use your fingers to peel the skin from the fruit. Discard the skin, pit and chop the peach flesh making sure to catch all of the juices in the bowl. Place all the chopped peaches and juices in a large pot.

Add the sugar, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and allspice and bring to a boil over high heat.

Reduce the heat to low and let simmer, uncovered, for about 2 to 3 1/2 hours, stirring occasionally, depending on how much juice the fruit contains. Be careful to stir the bottom of the pot and make sure it doesn't burn. Taste for seasoning and add more sugar if you like, or more spices if you want a spicier fruit butter. When the fruit has broken down and the juices have thickened enough to coat a spoon, remove from heat and let cool a bit. (It will continue to thicken when it cools.)

The butter will keep in a covered jar in the refrigerator for several weeks. If canning, process the butter for 30 minutes.

Makes about 10 pints.