

# PEACHES



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This time of year there are so many delicious fresh fruits and vegetables to enjoy. Peaches are one of America's favorite fruits. Peaches are so versatile because they can be used throughout the year in salads, grilled/broiled, desserts or spiced peaches are a common dish during the holidays.

A medium-sized peach, about the size of a baseball, contains only about 60 calories with 2 grams of fiber. It is a good source of potassium (fresh) as well as vitamins A and C. It is also rich in antioxidants, which help to protect you from the damages of cigarette smoke, ultraviolet light and pollutants to name a few. A study conducted on healthy men showed that within 30 minutes of eating a fresh peach, the antioxidants were already in action. Like most fruits, many of the nutrients in the peach are found right under the skin so avoid peeling it whenever possible. Antioxidant levels are better in fresh peaches, but the vitamin and mineral content is similar in fresh and canned (unsweetened) peaches.

When selecting fresh peaches at the store, look for ones that are slightly soft to the touch, without any "soft" spots and have a "peach" smell. Choose those that have a background color of yellow or cream – cream/white peaches tend to have a sweeter flavor. Peaches may have some red "blush" depending on the variety, but this isn't a sign of how the fruit will taste after it's ripened. If you buy peaches that are not quite ripe, put them in a brown paper bag loosely rolled shut or even out on your counter at room temperature for 2-3 days. Once the peaches are ripe you can store them in the refrigerator. Sliced peaches do turn a brown color when exposed to air so to prevent this dip the cut peaches into fruit juice, lemon juice or sugar water.

### Hot Fruit

4 cups peaches, halved (or 30 oz. can drained)  
2 cups apricot halves (or 16 oz. can drained)  
2 cups pears, halved (or 16 oz. can drained)  
1 cup pineapple, sliced (or 8 oz can)

Do not peel fruit.

Arrange fruit in a 9x13 inch baking dish.

#### Sauce:

pineapple juice (1/2 cup)  
1/4 cup brown sugar  
1 T butter  
1/2 tsp cinnamon  
1/4 tsp cloves

Microwave or heat on the stove until sugar is dissolved and butter is melted. Pour over fruit and bake for 20-25 minutes at 350°F.

Makes about 15 servings.

#### Nutrition Facts:

70 calories, 1 g fat, 5 mg sodium,  
15 g carbohydrates, 1 g fiber, 1 g protein.

### Here are just a few of the many healthy ways you can add peaches to your diet:

- Sliced on cereal, yogurt, pancakes or waffles
- Fruit smoothies
- Fruit salads or salad greens
- Salsas with cinnamon or tortilla chips
- Grilled or heated (see recipe)
- Sliced on Angel food cake
- Dehydrated for a quick snack
- Eat fresh or add slices to flavor your water

