



# Peach Preserves

1

**Prep Time**  
30 min

**Marinade**  
24 hrs (optional)

**Cooking Time**  
10 min

**Yields**  
4 - 6 jars



**D**elicious peach preserves are syrupy and soft-set with juicy peach chunks throughout. This homemade peach jam tastes scrumptious slathered on scones and hot toast, stirred into yoghurt, or as filling for cakes and pastries. The jars also make sweet additions for gift hampers or a hostess gift for a brunch or luncheon. The recipe comes with printable labels for gift giving, which you can download here: <http://chcotta.ge/bl0288>

## Instructions

I kept the recipe simple. For some flavour, variations add one of the following: 1 tbsp vanilla extract, 3 tbsp peach liquor, or 1/2 cup slivered almonds.

## Ingredients

1 kg (2.2 lb) ripe peaches (8 – 10 fruits)  
1 kg (5 cups) jam sugar (see tip above)  
the juice of 1 large lemon  
20g (1 tbsp) butter  
5 to 6 jam/preserve jars with lids  
printable labels

### **What peaches should I use?**

I recommend using peaches that are ripe and soft but not overripe and mushy and have no brown spots. You can prepare the preserves with white and yellow peaches interchangeably. I prefer the yellow peaches since they are tarter and more aromatic than the sweeter white peaches. Yellow peaches will give the cooked preserve a stronger peachy flavour while nicely balancing out the sweetness of the sugar.

### 1) Blanch the peaches

Fill a large bowl with ice cold water and set aside. Using a sharp paring knife, cut an x-shape into the bottom of each peach. Then fill a large saucepan with water and bring to a rolling boil. Submerge the fruits for 2 – 3 minutes, until the skin around the cut bottoms starts to loosen. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the peaches to the bowl of cold water and let sit until cool enough to handle.

### 2) Peel and cut the peaches

Starting at the scored ends, peel away the skin with a knife. Next, divide the peaches in half, remove the pits and cut into thin slice.

### 3) Marinade the peaches

Alternate layers of peach slices and jam sugar in a large non-metallic bowl and add the lemon juice. Cover with a lid or cling film and put in the fridge for several hours or overnight. This helps to dissolve the sugar and boost the flavour of the fruits.

**Shortcut:** If you prefer to cook right away, add the peaches and lemon juice to a saucepan and cook over medium-high heat for 2 to 3 minutes until the fruit slices start to soften. Then add the sugar and continue as described in the next steps.

### 4) Prep spoon & saucers

Put a few teaspoons and saucers into the freezer. We need these later to check the setting point of the jam.

### 5) Sterilise the jars

Wash the jars and lids in soapy water and rinse well. To dry, lay the jars and lids on a baking tray and sterilise them in the oven at 100°C (225° F / gas mark 4) for 15 minutes.



## What is jam sugar and why should I use it?

Jam sugar is regular sugar with added pectin. Pectin is a natural gelling agent, mainly extracted from citrus fruits, which is used to thicken jams and jellies. Peaches are naturally low in pectin, meaning these fruits don't gel strongly and may make the preserve runny. Using jam sugar helps the liquid to gel evenly and also significantly reduce the cooking time, which means less standing over a steaming saucepan and less hot splatters. A shorter cooking time also helps to retain the flavour and colour of the peaches. If jam sugar isn't available to you, use 1 kg (5 cups) granulated sugar and 1 (2 oz) package dry pectin.

## 6) Cook the peach preserve

Pour the peach-sugar-mixture into a tall saucepan and bring to a rolling boil. Once the jam starts bubbling, cook for 4 to 5 minutes and stir constantly. If any sugar remains on the side of the pot, brush it back with a wet pastry brush.

**Tip:** Wear oven mitts to protect your hands from hot steam and splashes.

## 7) Test the preserves

To test if the preserve is done cooking, drop a small amount on a cold saucer and allow to cool for a couple of minutes. If a skin forms, which wrinkles when you run your finger through, it's perfect. If the mixture still appears to be very runny, cook for another 2 minutes and repeat the test.

**Tip:** A shorter cooking time will result in a softer preserve (4 min), cooking the fruits longer will make the preserve firmer (6 min +).

## 8) Add butter

Stir a knob of butter into the peach preserve. This helps to dissolve the foam and to enhance the flavour. Skim and discard any excess foam with a spoon.

## 9) Jar the preserves

After taking the pot off the heat, let it sit for 15 minutes so the fruits will be evenly distributed in the jars. Using a jam funnel, ladle into the sterilised jars, filling 1 cm (0.5 in) below the rim. Clean the rim with a wet paper towel and screw on the lid.

## 10) Process the jam

To minimise the risk of bacteria, sterilise the canned peach preserves by processing the jars in boiling water for 20 minutes.

## 11) Label the peach preserves

After the jars have cooled for several hours, label them and make a note on the label indicating when the jam was prepared.

## Storage and shelf life

Store the unopened jars in a dark and cool place for up to a year. Once opened, keep the preserve in the fridge and consume within two weeks. Discard the jam if you find any signs of spoilage such as mould or fermentation.