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The Perfect Peach: Recipes And Stories From The Masumoto Family Farm



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Synopsis

A cookbook showcasing the luscious flavor of peaches in 50 sweet and savory dishes, drawing on the life stories and experiences of America's foremost peach farming family, the Masumotos of California's central valley.Enjoy the luscious versatility of summerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s finest fruit with fifty sweet and savory dishes.Ã Â The Masumoto familyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s amazing heirloom peachesÃ¢â ¬â •which are available for a few weeks each year at the best produce markets and top restaurants in the countryÃ¢â ¬â •are widely considered the best peaches in the world. Their debut cookbook gathers the familyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s favorite recipes, from classics like Hearty Peach Cobbler, Peach Chutney, and Slow-Cooked Pork Tacos to inspired combinations such as Prosciutto-Wrapped Peaches, Caprese with Peaches, Spice-Rubbed Pork Chops and Grilled Peaches, and Stuffed French Toast. And the pristine flavor of a just-picked summer peach can be enjoyed year-round with the easy-to-follow instructions for drying, canning, freezing, or jamming the best of the harvest.Ã Â Ã Â With rich recipe and location photographs fresh from the orchard, this beautiful cookbook paints an intricate portrait of an organic farm that has been in the family for four generations. Accompanied by eloquent essays that evoke the soul of family farming and the nuances of a life filled with peaches,Ã Â The Perfect PeachÃ Â is for anyone who longs to savor the flavor of a pristinely ripe peach.

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Featured Recipe from The Perfect Peach: Hearty Peach Cobbler Makes one 9-inch square

cobbler; serves 6-9 Filling 6 to 7 cups peeled and diced soft or gushy peaches 2 tablespoons instant tapioca 1/4 to 1/3 cup granulated sugar 2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt Topping 2/3 cup rolled oats, preferably old- fashioned 2 1/2 tablespoons granulated sugar 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt Grated zest of 1/2 lemon 2/3 cup unbleached all-purpose flour 2 teaspoons baking powder 3 1/2 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into 1/4-inch cubes 1/3 cup heavy cream 2 1/2 tablespoons buttermilk 1 to 2 teaspoons turbinado sugar (optional) Directions Preheat the oven to 400Ã Â F. Have ready a 9-inch square baking dish. To make the filling, in a large bowl, combine the peaches, tapioca, granulated sugar, lemon juice, and salt, using the larger amount of sugar if your peaches arenÃ¢â ¬â„¢t very sweet. Mix gently with a large spoon to combine the ingredients evenly. Pour the filling into the baking dish and set aside. To make the topping, in a bowl, combine the oats, granulated sugar, salt, and lemon zest. Sift together the flour and baking powder, add to the oat mixture, and whisk to combine. Scatter the butter over the dry ingredients. Using a pastry blender or your fingers, work in the butter until it is the size of small peas. Add the cream and buttermilk and mix with a fork just until evenly moistened. Drop 1/4 cup clumps of the topping on top of the peach filling, distributing them evenly. Sprinkle the clumps with the turbinado sugar. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, until the topping is golden and is baked all the way through (it should sound hollow when tapped with a spoon) and the peaches are bubbling. Remove from the oven and let cool completely. The filling will set as the cobbler cools. Serve at room temperature. Featured Recipe from The Perfect Peach: Slow-Cooked Pork Tacos Serves 4-6 Ingredients 1 tablespoon canola oil 1 (2 1/2-pound) boneless pork shoulder roast 1 tablespoon ground cumin 1 yellow onion, sliced 3 cloves garlic, minced 1/4 cup water 1 to 2 chipotle chiles in adobo sauce, or 1 tablespoon red pepper flakes 1 tablespoon dried oregano 1 teaspoon salt 1 (12-ounce) bottle beer (I like to use Pacifico or Negra Modelo) 4 firm to soft peaches, peeled, halved, and pitted 8 to 12 small corn tortillas, warmed, for serving 1 1/2 to 2 cups thinly sliced cabbage 2 limes, cut into wedges Directions Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, add the pork and cook for 2 to 3 minutes on each side, until browned. Transfer the pork to a slow cooker. Add the cumin, onion, and garlic to the same skillet off the heat and warm, stirring occasionally, for 2 to 3 minutes, until fragrant. Pour the water into the skillet to loosen any spices or browned bits stuck to the pan bottom. Pour the contents of the skillet over the meat. Add the chile(s), oregano, salt, beer, and peaches to the slow cooker, cover, and cook on high for 4 hours or on low for 6 to 8 hours. The meat is done when it easily falls apart with the gentle tug of a fork. Carefully shred the meat with two forks. Discard the juices, onions, and peaches or cool and store in the refrigerator for pork soup stock or other use. To assemble each

taco, layer 2 tortillas on top of each other and place about 1/4 cup of the meat in a mound on the tortillas, extending it across the middle. Add a little cabbage, a scoop of salsa, and a squeeze of lime juice. Serve warm.

Ã¢â ¬Å“This is a very special book, not just because itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s about peaches and the surprising things you can do with them, but because itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s also about growing peaches, the farming life, and, most uniquely, because itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s composed by a family. While reading The Perfect Peach,Ã Â I couldnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t help but wish that every fruit and vegetable had champions like the Masumoto family, for surely each one deserves it. I look forward to that day.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Deborah Madison, author of Vegetable LiteracyÃ Â and Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone Ã¢â ¬Å“I have one word for the writing, photography, essays, and topic of this book: luscious.Ã Â The Masumoto family has produced a glorious paean to the fruit they raise along with delightful ideas about what to do with an abundance of this heavenly fruit: sangria, salsa, pizza, and, of course, shortcake.Ã Â I canÃ¢â ¬â„¢t wait for summer.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Marion Nestle, Professor of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health at New York UniversityÃ Â and author of What to Eat Ã¢â ¬Å“Congratulations to Mas and family for putting togetherÃ Â a long overdue tribute to the delicious peach! I canÃ¢â ¬â„¢t wait to test out the tantalizing recipes in their wonderful new book.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Ag Kawamura, farmer and former California Secretary of Agriculture Ã¢â ¬Å“From Shaking Beef with Peaches toÃ Â Peach Lemongrass Granita, The Perfect Peach collects an abundanceÃ Â of compelling recipes. But as a native son of Georgia who worked his first summer job at a peach packing plant, what really appealed to me were the Masumuto family tributes to all things sweet and fuzzy, and the interstitial essays that supply the real locomotion for this book of cookery advice and agricultural rumination.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •John T. Edge, coeditor, The Southern Foodways Alliance Community Cookbook

Peaches are among my favorite fruits. I usually have frozen peaches on hand for a quick cobbler or crisp during the winter, and I purchase fresh peaches as often as I can during the summer. This year, I've been getting a lot of peaches from my CSA, Dandelion Organics -- a consumer-supported agriculture service that features mostly local produce. And the peaches this year have been wonderful!So when I found this book, I figured it was a natural fit. I was right. This is a delightful book with excellent recipes as well as essays giving an inside look at a California family farm, its management, and the authors' love for the whole process.Let's start with the recipes. My usual practice with any cookbook I review is to prepare 3 recipes to see how things go, how well the

instructions are written, how the ingredients "play" together, etc. So here are the three I chose from The Perfect Peach:Mustard-Peach Glazed ChickenChicken thighs, browned, then baked in a glaze made from shallots, two kinds of mustard, peach jam (I used peach preserves), oil, soy sauce, and cider vinegar. The only change I made to this was with the glaze. The instructions say to strain the glaze through a fine-mesh sieve and discard the solids; I chose instead to puree the mixture, mainly because I just couldnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t toss out all the tasty bits of peach -- such a waste! I ended up with a silky smooth glaze, so it worked for me.This is baked covered in a skillet for a total of 40 minutes, basting halfway through. This was terrific! The glaze is one that you could also ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“playÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• with a bit if you choose. For example, IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢m probably going to add some booze next time ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â • either bourbon or cognac ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â • just to add another flavor ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“spark.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• But itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s seriously good as is, and very very easy to put together. A winner!I served it with ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦Spinach Salad with Peaches and Peach VinaigretteThis is a basic spinach salad (fresh spinach, sliced red onion, nuts [in this case, sunflower seeds] and fruit) with a lovely peach vinaigrette made from peach jam (I used my favorite peach preserves), orange juice, lime juice, white balsamic vinegar, and oil. My last CSA (community-supported agriculture) delivery included some donut peaches ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â • ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“flatÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• peaches, sometimes called ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Saturn" peaches ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â • as well as a bunch of baby spinach and a red onion. Very simple, very ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“cleanÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• flavors ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â • and the vinaigrette is something IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll use with other salads.Blackberry-Peach Bread PuddingThe author gives a number of options for this one ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â • substituting nectarines for peaches, for example, or raspberries, boysenberries, or blueberries for the blackberries. This is a good ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“basicÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• bread pudding: stale bread cubes, eggs, milk/half-and-half, sugar ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â • with peaches, blackberries, Grand Marnier, and cinnamon. I chose this one because it makes a 9ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•x9ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• pan (not *too* much), and itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s a different take on the usual peach desserts - peach cobbler, peach crisp, peach pie, etc. Like most bread puddings, you start with bread & fruit in the baking dish, and make a custard of milk/eggs/sugar/etc., pour the custard mixture over the bread, cover, and refrigerate for awhile to let the bread soak up the custard. I left mine overnight; then baked the next morning. Super yum!The essays are a nice touch. Easy reading, they talk about growing peaches and farm life, written in the voices of the Masumoto family.Overall, solid 5 stars. Highly recommended both for the recipes as well as the farm life essays. Good stuff.

Just like the pleasure to be had from biting into a perfectly sweet and juicy sun-ripened peach, this treasure of a book warms your heart and fills your senses. Two generations of the Masumoto family share their knowledge and passion for peaches in lovely essays, delicious recipes, and beautiful photos. You learn about peach varieties, and how to jam them, dry them, and store them. In addition to the expected (and always tempting) pie and cobbler, the Masumoto's teach you how to use peaches to make everything from sangria to soup to salsa, as well as great ways to feature them on pizza and in tacos. Everything looks delicious, and the recipes are easy. The honest glimpses into farm life on a California Central Valley orchard makes this book unique and precious. Now I'm eagerly counting the days until my next farmer's market so I can stock up on peaches and indulge with newfound appreciation!

I love this book, especially the personal stories and the insights about growing peaches. I have made the cover recipe several times with peaches from my own tree that I froze last summer. Came out great. Directions are easy to follow and accurate!

What a beautifully written book about farming, a farmer's life and family. I was so impressed with the descriptions of the raising of produce (i.e., peaches) for our consumption. It helps our connection with food and how much effort goes into producing it. I wish i were in California to visit this family and their orchards - I now have a great respect for connecting with the earth and the care these great people put into growing.

love it

He and I share an Asian heritage and are both sansei (3rd generation). We both share the agricultural, land and cultural values of our parents and grandparents. Much of what he describes strikes a kindred feeling that I experienced growing up. Like having a "graveyard" of worn out parts/machines/items. Don't throw it away because you might need a part from it tomorrow. It doesn't take up much space and could save you a lot of money.I'm trying to tell myself that I'm not poor anymore. If you haven't used or worn it in over a year donate it. You have the money to buy another. But, it's hard to break old habits and thinking.

Very nice looking book I can't wait to try the recipes!

I love all of his books. Love the stories and the feel for the land. But the recipes did not work out for me. Would still want to own the book though.

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