

## Peach Cobbler — by Terri Moon

Aunt Maurine was my great aunt, and known for her peach cobbler. She and her four sisters were born in a little red brick house near Luling, Texas, and brought their pies and cakes to all the family gatherings. They would take turns creating recipes to see who could top the last deliciously sweet dessert. When the Texas peaches were ripe, Aunt Maurine went to work creating this wonderful recipe, and our family still loves to make it in the summertime. It has a layer of pie crust hidden in the center, a lattice topping, and a hint of nutmeg to perfectly complement the peaches. I'm gonna share it now, and show you step by step how to make your own! Let the sweet flavor and aroma of summer deliciousness fill your home.



First, you have to start with perfectly ripe peaches, about 8 large ones or 10-12 small ones. Ripe peaches are a lot easier to peel (and taste better!) However, they don't sell them this way in the store. You're going to find hard little rocks that hardly even smell like peaches in the bin, but never fear! Just slip those golden rounds in a paper bag and let them sit in the corner of the kitchen for a few days. You can tell they're ready when they give a little to the touch and smell fragrant and sweet.

When you're ready to make the cobbler, get a few things ready: a pot with enough water to submerge a peach, a slotted spoon to lift them out of the water, a small colander to set the hot peach in, a little sharp knife for skinning and cutting the slices, a large bowl for the sliced peaches, and a small bowl for the pits. When you get everything set up, you'll be surprised at how fast it goes! You'll also need an 8" square or round dish that is at least 2" deep to bake the cobbler.

It's really best to make the pastry first so it can chill before you roll it out. Follow the directions below to make the pastry.

### Pastry Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 tsp salt  
2/3 cup cold butter (Aunt Maurine and I like butter, but you can use shortening if you prefer)  
4 to 5 Tbsp cold water

### Pastry Directions:

Combine flour and salt in a medium size bowl. Cut in butter with a pastry blender or two knives. Sprinkle cold water, a little at a time, over the surface and stir with a fork until dry ingredients are moistened. Shape into a ball and wrap with plastic wrap; chill.



### Filling Ingredients:

About 8 cups of skinned, sliced fresh peaches  
1 1/2 cups sugar  
3 Tbsp instant (minute) tapioca (you can substitute flour for this, but the cobbler will look cloudy)  
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg (I love this, but you can leave it out if you don't)  
1 tsp vanilla extract

2 Tbsp butter (to dot the filling, just under the crust)

**Topping Ingredients:**

1 Tbsp half-n-half or milk

1 tsp sugar

Cinnamon or nutmeg to sprinkle on top (optional)

To peel the peaches, get your water in the pot gently boiling. Set one peach into the water and leave it in for about 1 minute. Then lift it out with the slotted spoon and let it cool a little in the colander until you can handle it. Now with the sharp edge of the small knife, slide it under the skin near the stem, grab it between your thumb and the knife and pull. It should slide right off the peach. This is why you need perfectly ripe ones! If the skin isn't sliding off, try putting it back in the water for another minute and try again. After you've skinned the peach nicely, placing the skins in the small bowl, slice it off the pit in lengthwise cuts from top to bottom into the bigger bowl. As you get the hang of it, you can place another peach in the boiling water about the time you begin peeling one, then move it over to the colander to cool when you begin slicing. It goes really quick (as long as you don't get interrupted and have to wash all the stickiness off your hands in the middle of the process!)



When you have a pretty bowl of sliced peaches, take another small bowl and mix together the sugar, tapioca, and nutmeg. Pour this mixture over the peaches and add the vanilla. Stir this all together and let it sit for about 15 minutes. This gives you time to roll out the crust.

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees and take the pastry out of the refrigerator, unwrap it and lay it on a well floured surface. Sprinkle a little more flour on top. Roll the dough out to about 1/8" thickness, adding flour underneath or on top as needed to make sure it doesn't stick. When it is evenly rolled out, cut strips about 1" wide. The easiest way to do this is with a pizza wheel, but you can use a knife or even a fancy little tool that makes a zig-zaggy edge. (It looks like a mini pizza wheel, but with a cute ruffled edge.) Another tip — if you're like me and can't draw a straight line, get a ruler to lay up against the cutter :-). You'll need about 10 strips, depending on the size of your baking dish.



Now, you have a lot of dough left over, right? Well, this is the part that makes the recipe special! In my opinion, there is never enough yummy crust in a bite of peach cobbler. So, we're going to take that extra dough, bake it, and put it right in the middle, that way you get an extra tasty bite of crust in every spoonful, at least that's what Aunt Maurine said! Lay those extra pieces of rolled out dough on a cookie sheet, it doesn't really matter what shape they are! If you want to, you can roll the scraps again and cut a piece the same shape as your pan. Lay this on a cookie sheet and poke the piece(s) good with a fork. Bake this for about 5-8 minutes or until lightly browned.

Rub the inside of your baking dish with a little butter and ladle in half of the peaches. Now put your baked pie crust into the dish. It will look something like this:



Ladle in the rest of the peaches, making sure there is some room for the hot juices to expand. Dot with the 2 tablespoons of extra butter you saved, cut into bits. Now comes my favorite part, the lattice crust! You can either simply lay the strips on top of the cobbler or you can make a basket weave like this:





Trim the edges of your crust to make it look neat. The next little touch just makes it even prettier — the topping. Brush the crust with the half-n-half and sprinkle with the sugar and just a little cinnamon or nutmeg, if desired. Now you are ready to bake!

Place your cobbler in the 400 oven and place a cookie sheet on the rack just below. This is a really good idea to catch any drips! Bake the cobbler for about 35-45 min, until the crust is lightly golden brown on the edges.



I hope you love this recipe as much as I do! I think of my Aunt Maurine every time I make it, her wonderful sense of humor and the love that she put into making things delicious and beautiful

for her family. Oh, and since she was from Texas, she would definitely serve this warm with a scoop of yummy vanilla ice cream on top! Enjoy!