

Truly Southern Peach Cobbler

As featured in "To Mend a Dream" (a Belle Meade Plantation novella, included in Among the Fair Magnolias)

Ingredients:

12-15 fresh peaches, peeled and sliced (about 15-16 cups)

(You can use frozen peaches if fresh aren't

in season, but you'll likely need to drain off some of the extra syrup. You can gauge that as you're spooning it into the dish.)

1/3 cup all-purpose flour

3 cups sugar (Yes, diabetics beware! But if you're counting calories and carbs, Stevia works wonderfully with this recipe.)

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

2/3 cup real butter (Please, no margarine, the Southern cook in me begs of you)

1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

2 old-fashioned pie crusts (recipe below) OR 2 refrigerated pie crusts may be substituted if you really don't love your family and friends (Just kidding. You love them. Just not enough to make homemade, bless your heart)

1/2 cup finely chopped pecans, toasted (Toasting pecans is easy. Chop finely, spread on a cookie sheet sprayed with oil, then bake for 4-5 minutes at 350°. Watch so they don't burn.)

5 Tablespoons sugar, divided

Sweetened whipped cream

Now comes the fun part:

If you're making your dough from scratch (which is best and so easy!), make your pie crust dough first and stick them (flattened according to instructions) in the fridge to chill for 15-20 minutes.

Stir together peaches, flour, 3 cups sugar, nutmeg, and cinnamon in a Dutch oven. Bring to a boil over medium heat; reduce to low heat, and simmer for 8-10 minutes. Remove from heat; gently fold in butter and vanilla (and somehow resist eating the entire pot). Spoon half of the mixture into a lightly greased 13- x 9-inch baking dish. Preheat oven to 475°.

Take your two homemade pie crusts—or for those of you who don't love your friends and families as much, unroll the two store-bought pie crusts (she says with sweet Southern sass)—and roll to a 14- x 10-inch rectangle. Sprinkle 1/4 cup toasted pecans and 2 Tbsp. sugar over the first pie crust. Place pastry over peach mixture in dish, trimming sides to fit the baking dish. Bake at 475° for 20 to 25 minutes or until lightly browned.



Meanwhile, roll your second crust to a 14 x 10-inch rectangle (or unroll the second pie crust). Sprinkle 2 Tbsp. sugar and remaining 1/4 cup toasted pecans over the piecrust as you did the first one. Next, cut into 1-inch strips with a knife. If you want to get fancy, use a fluted pastry wheel but you don't get extra jewels in your crown.

Remove the peach cobbler from the oven. Spoon remaining peach mixture over baked pastry. Arrange pastry strips over peach mixture, latticing if you want to, then sprinkle with remaining 1 Tbsp. sugar. Bake 15-18 minutes or until lightly browned. Serve warm or cold with vanilla ice cream or whipped cream.

Let me know if you make this! Better yet, post a picture of you and your cobbler on www.Facebook.com/tameraalexander . I'd love to see it, and you!

Savannah's Old Fashioned Pie Crusts (makes 2)

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups Crisco
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 egg, beaten
5 Tablespoons cold water
1 Tablespoon white vinegar
1 teaspoon salt

Let the fun begin:

In a large bowl, with a pastry cutter (or two knives), cut the Crisco into the flour until it resembles coarse meal. In a small bowl, beat an egg with a fork then add to flour/shortening mixture. Add 5 tablespoons of cold water, 1 tablespoon of white vinegar, and 1 teaspoon of salt. Stir together gently until all ingredients are blended. Separate dough into two parts.

Form two evenly sized balls of dough and place each into a large Ziploc bag. Using a rolling pin, slightly hand-flatten each ball of dough (about 1/2 inch thick) to make rolling easier later. Seal the bags and place them in the freezer until you need the dough. (If you'll be using it immediately, it's still a great idea to put in the freezer for about 15-20 minutes to chill. Chilled dough is easier to work with.)

When you're ready, remove the dough from the freezer and allow to thaw for 15 minutes (if frozen). On a floured surface roll the dough, starting at the center and working your way out. (Sprinkle some flour over top of the dough if it's a bit too moist.) If the dough sticks to the countertop use a metal spatula and carefully scrape it up, flour it well, then flip it over and continue rolling until it's about 1/2 inch larger in diameter than your pie pan. Or for a cobbler, make sure it's about the size of your dish for latticing.

Using a spatula, carefully lift the dough from the surface of the counter into the pie pan. I fold my pie dough into quarters to move it, but it has to be well floured to do this. Gently press the dough against the corner of the pan (or use as directed for the peach cobbler). Go around the pie pan pinching and tucking the dough to make a clean edge. I love making pie crusts. It just makes you feel good!

Enjoy!