

TRAEGER TALK



ZESTY PEACH COBBLER

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Cobblers are a wonderful and easy dessert for any time of year. Serve hot from the oven on a cold Winter's night, or chilled with a scoop of vanilla ice cream on a scorching Summer's day, they are a perfect end to any meal. Apples, cherries, or blueberries are other traditional fruits for cobbler, but today we will talk about peaches with a zesty boost. You can bake this in an ordinary oven, but a touch of smoke from the Traeger Wood Fired Grill makes it extra special.

Here in the frozen North, we are at the mercy of peach growers in warmer states. Even in Summer, good peaches can be hard to get. I developed this recipe after promising a peach cobbler dessert at my friend's summertime wedding and finding that I had several flats of wooden fruit instead of the delicious juicy peaches I was expecting.



When we discovered that the skins were refusing to come off the fruit, a quick sample of the flesh told me that we had an impending dessert disaster. There was no sweetness and we were going to have to deal with skin-on fruit. As often happens, necessity gave birth to invention, and we served a dessert we were proud of and everyone loved.

The solution was lemon zest. Our recipe already called for some lemon juice to brighten the flavor, but we needed to add more flavor, and lots of it!

Step one is to melt a stick of butter in a 12" cast iron skillet. Set aside on a level surface and let it harden. I also like to rub the sides of the skillet with butter. Add a tablespoon if you do that.

Step two is to prepare the batter. Mix 1 cup flour, one cup sugar, ¼ tsp salt, and a tablespoon of baking powder. Stir in one cup milk. Pour this mixture over the butter. You do not want them to mix, so pour gently and do not stir.

Step three is to prepare the filling. We diced up the peaches, leaving the skin on. Traditionally, the skin would be removed, but this also turned into a fortuitous circumstance. The skin added a beautiful rosy hue to the dish and gave us a nice flavor bonus.

Using a Microplane zester, we removed the zest and then squeezed the juice from about 1.4 million lemons. For this recipe, only two will be necessary. You can add more lemon if that suits you, or only use one. You will need to adjust the sugar to compensate for the tartness of the lemons and the sugar content of your peaches. Plan to add another five or six tablespoons of sugar.



Place the diced peaches, lemon juice, and 1 cup sugar in a saucepan and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally. When the peaches have softened, add lemon zest and cinnamon. Cook for five more minutes and try a sample. The fruit should be soft, but still lumpy. You are going to need to add more sugar at this point until it tastes right to you. It should be left slightly tart, as the batter is very sweet, and the tartness gives the dish a wonderfully fresh contrast.

When you are satisfied with the filling, pour over the back of a spoon so as not to disturb the batter and the butter layers. Set the Traeger Wood Fired Grill to 375 and bake for 35 minutes. As the batter rises, it will float to the top and take on a beautiful caramel brown color. If it isn't brown enough, leave it until it is. All ovens and grills vary in temperature, but total baking time should be about 40 to 45 minutes.



INGREDIENTS:

- 6 peaches
- 2 lemons
- 1 stick butter (¼ pound, ½ cup)
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup milk
- Sugar, about 2 ¼ cups, divided
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- ½ tsp cinnamon

