



## Camarillo Certified Farmers Market

Supporting grief and bereavement services at Camarillo Hospice:  
A program of Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association



Source: [www.gracelinks.org](http://www.gracelinks.org)

Like the mango, a ripe peach invites a sensory experience that the world has celebrated since antiquity. Is it possible, as *The Oxford Companion to Food* suggests, that “no fruit is more laden with erotic metaphor?”

And like other fully charged sensory experiences, a ripe peach is an excellent example of living fully in the moment, wherever that may be. As true peach lovers have learned, the peach will reward you with sweet kisses when eaten at home but will fuss and get mealy-mouthed when asked to travel.



### Brief History of Peaches

The peach is an ancient Chinese relic, dating to 5th century BCE when it was mentioned throughout a collection of poetry by Confucius. The peach was highly revered and continues to play an important role in the folklore of the Chinese people. Known as “tao,” the peach is the most sacred plant of the Chinese Taoists, and is considered a magic fruit and a symbol of immortality, reflected in the “Peach Blossom Spring,” an essay by a Chinese poet during the 4th century BCE.

From China, the peach traveled to Persia and then Greece, and into the rest of Europe, thanks to peach lover Alexander the Great.

The fruit caught the attention of scholars and botanists throughout millennia.

In the *History of Plants*, the earliest surviving botanical publication, Theophrastus (370-288 BCE) mentions the “Persian apple.” By the 1st century, Roman scholar and naturalist Pliny the Elder describes several varieties of peaches in Naturalis Historia.

The peach came to Mexico in the early to mid-1500s via Spanish explorers. Meanwhile, Franciscan monks brought the peach to coastal Georgia and north Florida. By 1570, the newly settled monks were growing peaches in St. Augustine, Florida.

Throughout the 1600s, the peach traveled north and was cultivated in Virginia, Maryland and New Jersey. By the mid-1700s, Native Americans were planting peaches in the new colony of Georgia, as well as in South Carolina. Many historians have noted that Native Americans spread seedlings from tribe to tribe. The peach was so abundant by the 1800s, American botanist John Bartram assumed it to be a native fruit.

Thomas Jefferson had as many as 38 varieties of peaches growing in the South Orchard at Monticello. In a letter dated in 1815 to his granddaughter, he wrote that “we abound in the luxury of the peach,” and that Cate, one of the Monticello slaves, “is busy drying peaches for you.”

The peach enjoyed enormous celebrity along the Atlantic coast during the 19th century, with commercial orchards cropping up in South Carolina, Virginia and Delaware. Peach production was closely connected to the debut of commercial railroad transport; peach packing sheds were located alongside train tracks in South Carolina and Delaware for shipment to New York and beyond. By the mid-1800s, Delaware was one of the top peach producing states in the mid-1800s. Delaware’s success was short-lived; by the 1890s, a blight obliterated much of the peach acreage. Presently, there are four operating orchards in Delaware producing 2 million pounds annually.

### Fresh Southern Peach Cobbler

Source: [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com)

*Prep: 20 minutes | cook 40 minutes | ready in 1 hour*

8 fresh peaches — peeled, pitted and sliced into thin wedges

1/4 cup white sugar

1/4 cup brown sugar

1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

2 teaspoons cornstarch

1 cup all purpose flour

1/4 cup white sugar

1/4 cup brown sugar

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon salt

5 tablespoons unsalted butter — chilled and cut into small pieces

1/4 cup boiling water

Mix together: 3 tablespoons white sugar and 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C).
2. In a large bowl, combine peaches, 1/4 cup white sugar, 1/4 cup brown sugar, 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon, nutmeg, lemon juice, and cornstarch. Toss to coat evenly, and pour into a 2 quart baking dish. Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine flour, 1/4 cup white sugar, 1/4 cup brown sugar, baking powder, and salt. Blend in butter with your fingertips, or a pastry blender, until mixture resembles coarse meal. Stir in water until just combined.
4. Remove peaches from oven, and drop spoonfuls of topping over them. Sprinkle entire cobbler with the sugar and cinnamon mixture. Bake until topping is golden, about 30 minutes.