

When Summer's Ripe in South Carolina, So Are the Peaches!

By Beverly Shelley

The sweet, wholesome smell of peaches is a simple pleasure of summer in South Carolina. Add a flaky crust or a crumbly topping and a gooey roux of butter, sugar, flour and cinnamon, and that simple pleasure escalates to culinary ecstasy.

If you have tasted a perfect South Carolina peach pie or peach cobbler, you know the sensation – a barely audible, yet impossible-to-suppress “hmm” and a hint of a smile after each scrumptious bite.

If you haven't tasted the pleasure of a Carolina peach turned peach pie, peach cobbler, Peach Melba, peach ice cream, peach daiquiri, or peach

anything – not to worry. South Carolina is dotted with plenty of places both plain and fancy to satisfy your culinary curiosity. Or you can pick up a basket of peaches from many a roadside stand to whip up your own delectable dessert. And we'll tell you how!

Admittedly, the research that went into preparing this round up of where to find some of the best peach desserts and products in the state was in no way scientific. With that detail on the table (along with a wad of napkins), following are a handful of places where the locals go when they are ready for a delicious bite of summer.

peach butter, peach bread, peach ice cream and peach soap. www.jecooley-peachfarms.com

Walking into the **Carolina Cider Co.**, located in Gardens Corner along US 17 west of Beaufort, is like walking into a country general store – gourmet style! Carolina Cider offers peach cider and other edible peach products.

www.carolinaciderco.com

Jerrold A. Watson & Sons offers an assortment of peach products – the fresh fruit in season, of course, and apple and peach cider, peach salsa, peach barbecue

sauce, peach jams and jellies and old-fashioned peach and strawberry ice cream. The market is on Hwy. 23, four miles west of Batesburg-Leesville in Monetta, SC.

Along US 25 south from the town of Edgefield, SC, you'll find stand after stand with fresh peaches and other local produce – **Cook's, Doug's, Sarah's, Hardluck Hill** and **Jackie's** – among them. Some of the stands have been in operation for as many as 60 years, says Ike Carpenter, who operates a seasonal peach stand in Edgefield.

Find out more...

A brochure about South Carolina peach and strawberry farms is available at South Carolina Welcome Centers or by calling 1-800-849-9633. An extensive listing of roadside markets that sell peaches and other peach products is available at www.scdastate.sc.us

Peachy Dining and Specialty Markets

Innkeeper and Chef Johannes Tromp serves Southern Pecan Peaches as part of his signature gourmet breakfast at **Kilburnie, the Inn at Craig Farm** in Lancaster. The recipe for a single serving: half of a juicy peach topped with a medley of pecans, oats, sugar, butter and a flaky cereal; then broiled and finished with a dab of vanilla yogurt.

A featured dessert at **82 Queen** in Charleston is the Peach Praline Cobbler. Topped with ice cream, the dessert features a nutty topping. Hmmm!

www.82Queen.com

Mac's On Main, a jazz, blues and barbecue joint at 1710 Main St., Columbia, SC, offers Chef Fatback's World Famous Peach Cobbler. Served daily – with or without a scoop of vanilla ice cream – the cobbler is most noted for its distinct taste and crum-

bly crust.

www.macsjazznblues.com

Rock Hill resident Bennish Brown says he dreams about the peach ice cream made at the **The Peach Tree**, located on US Hwy. 321 between York and Clover. “It's smooth. It's rich. It's just a wonderful taste of peach. I just love it,” says Brown. The Peach Tree, circa 1962, offers 32 varieties of peaches and other agricultural products.

Find peach enchiladas, peach cobbler and peach bread at **McCleod Farms Roadside Market**, on Hwy. 151, three miles south of the town of McBee, SC.

www.macspride.com

Established in 1917, The Farm Store at **James Cooley Peach Farms** on Hwy. 11 near Chesnee, SC, offers peach cider, glazed peaches, peach vinaigrette, cobbler mix,

Peach Praline Cobbler

Courtesy 82 Queen in historic Charleston

TOPPING & PEACH PREPARATION:

3/4 cup self-rising flour	1/3 cup light brown sugar
1 1/2 cup coarsely chopped pecans	1/2 stick margarine (room temperature)
1 quart (32 ounces) sliced peaches	1/4 cup sugar
Cinnamon	

In a small bowl cut margarine into small pieces and allow it to soften to room temperature. Using a serving size spoon, like a pastry blender, mix in other ingredients until crumbly. Blend for a few minutes and set aside; repeat this process a couple of times. Place sliced peaches and 1/4 cup sugar in a bowl; sprinkle with cinnamon. Set aside for a few minutes. Strain off the excess juice.

BATTER:

1 3/4 cup self-rising flour	1 1/2 cup sugar
1 cup of milk	1 extra large egg, well beaten

Mix all ingredients well and pour onto bottom of well greased 9" x 13" metal pan. Arrange the peaches evenly on top of the batter. Sprinkle topping evenly over the top of the peaches. Bake 350 degrees for 70 minutes. Serve warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.