

Honey-Spiced Peaches

INGREDIENTS

5 lbs peaches
citric acid or lemon juice (optional)
3 cups filtered water
1 and 1/2 cups honey
cinnamon sticks (2-inch segments)
*whole cloves
*whole allspice
*whole star anise



* Tenille's notes:

I didn't use whole spice-save the cinnamon sticks. I used ground spices and just adding a couple tablespoons of each to whole batch.

I also doubled this recipe as I had more peaches to use. Though I didn't double the amount of filtered water, I think I added only 4.5 cups. I just found that peaches had a lot of water in them so I didn't want too much juice.

METHODS

Prepare canners, lids and jars.

Fill a large stockpot halfway full of water and bring to a boil over high heat. Wash peaches and slice a small X in the blossom end of each peach. Boil peaches, one or two at a time, for about 1 minute to loosen skins, then remove with a slotted spoon and immediately plunge into an ice bath. Once cool enough to handle, the skins should slip off easily. Peel, trim off any brown spots, halve, pit and slice each half into 4 segments. Store peaches in a citric acid (1 tsp/2 quarts water) or lemon juice (1/4 cup/1 quart water) bath to prevent browning. Repeat until all peaches are peeled & sliced.

In a medium stockpot, add water and honey and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to low and add peaches (remove from citric acid bath with a slotted spoon), one layer at a time, to hot syrup. Allow peaches to warm through for about 3 minutes.

Fill hot, sterilized, 8-oz canning jars with: 1 cinnamon stick, 3/4 tsp whole allspice, and 1/4 heaping tsp of whole cloves OR 1 star anise. Using a funnel and slotted spoon, add warmed peach slices, tapping the jar and rearranging the peach slices so that there are not large air pockets, to a generous 1/2-inch headspace. Ladle hot syrup over peaches to 1/2-inch headspace. Wipe rim, affix lid & screwband, and place jar in the water bath. Repeat until peaches are gone (do not process partially filled jars; store in the refrigerator and eat within 2 weeks). For pint jars, double the amount of spices per jar.

Process in a hot water bath for 20 minutes for both half-pint and pint jars. Cool, label and store.

Yields about 5 pints or 11 half-pint jars.