

Food

PEACHES IN THE SPOTLIGHT!

Let's Create Homemade Jams

Go The Easy Freezer Way!



By Malcolm R. Hébert

Elegance at the table! That's what the chafing dish has been called by many great chefs and gourmets.

It adds the final touch to a special dinner and helps the guest appreciate your culinary artistry. Just at the right moment with the lights turned off, you add a dash of mystery and intrigue.

No one knows when chafing dish cookery came into existence. It probably burst forth when a chef discovered that flaming dishes attracted attention as well as added a special taste to the dish.

The chafing dish as we know it today is an extension of a saute pan with a separate flame underneath it. Because of its portability, it lends itself to more intimate table cooking and elicits those "oh's" and "ah's" from your guests.

While the kind of chafing dish you use, copper, stainless, etc., is of no great importance, the kind of flame you cook with does make a difference. The best flame is a gas flame for it allows you maximum control of the heat. Electric heat is all right, but you do not have the instant heat change sometimes needed for chafing dish cookery.

If possible avoid the so-called canned heat types of warmth, because that is about all it does, warm up a dish, never get it hot enough to cook.

To flame a dish at the table, you should know what you are doing and more importantly, practice the procedure before you attempt it in front of your guests. Nothing is more dismal than to try to flame a dish before your guests and have the flame never appear.

To avoid any chagrin at the table when flaming a dish, here are a few rules and suggestions that will make you a hero instead of a hick.

First, any kind of dish that is to be flamed should have the right balance of juices or sauces. Too much liquid will dilute the alcohol and too little will shoot the flames to the ceiling.

Second, when a recipe calls for several different kinds of spirits, California brandy is always added last.

Third, there are two ways to flame a dish. The first is with a match and the second is by moving the pan to the side and tipping the corner of the chafing dish toward the flame. Both are acceptable and insure proper ignition.

Lastly, if you are just starting to flame dishes, it is best to start with dessert. If you should make a mistake, nothing is lost. But if you flop with the main course, well, the dinner will be ruined.

Here is a dessert recipe that never fails.

Peaches Flambe

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| 2 cups fresh, peeled, seeded and sliced peaches, or 1 No. 2 1/2 canned peaches | 3 tablespoons butter |
| | 1 teaspoon sugar |
| | 1/4 cup California brandy |
| | 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon |

Put the peaches, butter and sugar in the chafing dish and cook for one minute. If using the canned peaches add a little of the juice. Heat the California brandy to the sizzle, pour over the mixture and ignite. Shake the pan back and forth until the flame dies out. Dust with cinnamon. Serves 6.

Linger a little longer the next time you see fresh peaches at the market. Wouldn't they be delicious in Spiced Peach Butter to make morning toast more exciting? Continue walking up the aisle to the display of powdered fruit pectin and put a handy package in your shopping cart. Count on commercial fruit pectin to help capture fresh peach flavor and also assure a good "set" in this easy freezer recipe.

Follow the recipe accurately, keeping in mind you're using commercial pectin for jelling purposes. Natural pectin in fruit, which acts as a binder, often decreases as fruit ripens. So, it's necessary to supplement natural pectin with a commercial type, which happens to be in powdered form for this particular recipe. The other type of commercial pectin — liquid fruit pectin — should not be used as a substitute in this recipe. While both pectins attain successful results, they are not interchangeable because recipes are developed for a specific type of pectin — powdered or liquid.

Here's a contemporary recipe that puts your blender to work chopping peaches. Then simply add spices and sugar and stir in the powdered fruit pectin mixture. Ladle the fruit mixture into prepared containers, cover securely with lids and let stand about 24 hours before storing in the freezer.

The "plus" of this freezer recipe is that you can reuse small containers, not over a pint in capacity, with tight-fitting lids. Glass jars or dishwasher-safe plastic containers should be prepared as directed in the pectin package insert.

Additional jam and jelly recipes are included in the package insert. When fresh peach season is a memory, you'll have opportunity to create more eating pleasure as another favorite seasonal fruit arrives.

Quick Peach Melba

Use vanilla or coconut cream flavor. Place drained peach half, cut side up, in each dessert dish. Put 1 tbs. raspberry jam or jelly in centers. Spoon chilled pudding over peaches. Add jam garnish. (Makes 5 or 6 servings.)



- Spiced Peach Butter**
- 2-1/4 cups prepared peaches (about 2 lb. fully ripe peaches)
 - 1/4 cup lemon juice
 - 1 teaspoon ascorbic acid crystals (optional)
 - 5 cups (2-1/4 lb.) sugar
 - 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
 - 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
 - 3/4 cup water
 - 1 box Sure-Jell fruit pectin

First prepare the fruit. Peel and pit about 2 pounds peaches; cut into quarters. Place a few pieces at a time in electric blender container so that blades are just covered. Cover and turn control from off to low several times until peaches are finely chopped or pureed. Measure 2-1/4 cups into large bowl

or pan. Add lemon juice and ascorbic acid.

Then make the jam. Thoroughly mix sugar and spices into fruit; let stand 10 minutes. Mix water and fruit pectin in small saucepan. Bring to a full boil and boil 1 minute, stirring constantly. Stir into fruit. Continue stirring 3 minutes. (A few sugar crystals will remain.) Ladle quickly into scalded containers. Cover at once with tight lids. Let stand at room temperature 24 hours; then store in freezer. Small amounts may be covered and stored in refrigerator up to 3 weeks. Makes about 6 cups or about 7 (8 fl. oz.) containers.

Note: Addition of ascorbic acid helps maintain color and flavor of fruit; purchase at local drugstore.

Candied Fruit Parfait

Use vanilla or French vanilla flavor. Layer chilled pudding into glasses with chopped candied fruit.

(Makes 4 servings.)

Chocolate Mint Pudding

Use chocolate or milk chocolate flavor. Add 1/4 tsp. peppermint extract to pudding after removing from heat. Serve chilled, garnished with whipped topping. (Makes 4 servings.)

Banana Sundae

Use banana cream flavor. Beat chilled pudding until smooth and layer into glasses with diced bananas and fudge sundae sauce. (Makes 4 servings.)

Cool and Casual Menus For Lazy Summer Days

Now that those "lazy, hazy, crazy" days are upon us, it's time to summer-ize your life. Casual is in. Fussy is out. Spending the minimum time preparing meals is in. Complex recipes are definitely out.

The beauty of *In-A-Wink Three Bean Salad* is that you combine the ingredients in the morning and that's that. It's ready whenever you are to delight your wandering clan.

In-A-Wink Three Bean Salad

- 1 can (16 oz.) pork & beans in tomato sauce
- 1/2 cup cooked cut green beans
- 1/2 cup cooked cut wax beans
- 1/4 cup chopped green pepper
- 1/4 cup chopped red onion
- 2 Tablespoons bottled creamy French dressing

In bowl, combine beans, green pepper, onion and dressing. Chill 4 hours or more; stir occasionally. Serve on salad greens; garnish with red onion rings. (Makes about 3 1/2 cups, 4 servings.)

What makes *Chicken Luau* so appealing is the fact that it starts with a package of frozen take-out style fried chicken. Preparation involves no more than heating it in the oven, then spreading it with a mixture of crushed pineapple and honey toward the end.

Accessorize the menu with relishes, corn bread squares and eye-catching fruit parfaits.

Chicken Luau

- 1 pkg. (28 oz.) frozen take-out style fried chicken
- 1/2 cup drained crushed pineapple
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 Tablespoons toasted sesame seeds

Prepare chicken according to package directions. Meanwhile, combine pineapple and honey. Spread on chicken last 10 minutes of heating time. Sprinkle with sesame seeds. (Makes 4 servings.)

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