

Southern Peach Tea

Ceil Humphreys

Makes one gallon

Prep time: 5 minutes

Steep time: 15 minutes

4 small Bigelow Plantation Mint tea bags

3 family-sized tea bags (regular or decaf) (or you can use green tea)

2 cups sugar (or use a combination of Stevia and agave nectar)

1/3 cup lemon juice or the juice of a fresh lemon

1 cup Kearn's peach nectar (or you can blend fresh, frozen, or canned peaches – see below)

Put the tea bags in a 2-quart glass or crockery pitcher and fill the pitcher with very hot tap water (as hot as you can get it). Cover with a clean, folded kitchen towel and let steep for 15 minutes. You can also use boiling water, but it's not really necessary.

Optional if you don't use peach nectar - Put the peaches in a blender and add cold tap water to the four-cup line. Blend until smooth (about 15-20 seconds). Measure out one cup of the peach puree and save the rest for future batches of tea. (I freeze the remaining peach puree in one-cup containers.)

Put the sugar in the gallon jug. Pour the hot tea into the jug and discard the tea bags. Put the lid on the jug securely and shake until all the sugar is dissolved. Add the lemon juice and a cup of peach puree, then fill the jug to the top with water. (If serving immediately, fill the jug with ice, then top off with water.) Shake one more time to mix everything up.

Serve in a tall frosted glass with lots of ice. Garnish with a lemon wedge, sprig of fresh mint, or a peach slice. Then get ready to make more, because it will go FAST!

This recipe is best if made at least a day ahead. Store in the refrigerator. Be sure to shake it up before serving, as the peach will settle in the bottom.

HINTS: Gatorade jugs with a plastic handle are great for this recipe.