

BASIL PEACH TOAST



Serves 6-8

Ingredients

- 1 medium ripe peach
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar (optional)
- 1/8 teaspoon [cinnamon](#)
- 2 slices sourdough, or bread of your choice
- About 10-12 fresh basil leaves
- 2 Tablespoons mascarpone cheese

Instructions:

1. Cut the peach into small chunks (no need to remove skin). Put peaches in a medium bowl and taste a small piece to gauge sweetness. If your peaches are extremely sweet (as they likely are at the height of ripeness), you won't need any sugar, but if they are less sweet you can add up to the full 1/2 teaspoon called for. Add the cinnamon and stir to combine.
2. Toast the bread. While it's toasting, cut the basil leaves into chiffonade (very thin strips).
3. When the toast is ready, spread each piece with a Tablespoon of mascarpone cheese while it's still warm, so it melts a bit.
4. Pile half the peaches on top of each slice, top with the basil chiffonade and serve.

Notes:

When I created this recipe, I was thinking breakfast (because it was morning and I was hungry!). But later, a friend told me she was serving it on baguette slices as an hors d'oeuvre at BBQs, and of course that makes perfect sense!

That tasty combination of peaches and basil is just about the yummiest thing out there (although, let's be honest, pretty much anything you do with a good peach is going to be the yummiest thing out there.)

The irony is that I actually created this recipe as a way to use up some not-great peaches. They were okay, not mealy, not terrible. But just okay. And remember, I was hungry for breakfast. And I really wanted some peaches.

So first, I tossed the chunks with a sprinkling of granulated sugar, and added a dash of cinnamon for good measure. Sugar draws out the moisture from fruit, so now I had a bowlful of decently sweet and juicy peaches, and the cinnamon balanced the flavors nicely. Hooray! But now what to do with them?

I happened to have to have some really great sourdough on hand from my favorite local bakery. So I toasted a slice and spread on some mascarpone cheese I had left over from another cooking project. As it melted into the hot toast, I piled the peaches on top and mashed them into the toast a bit with a fork. But it still needed a punch of something else. I grabbed a few basil leaves, cut them into chiffonade, and sprinkled them over the peaches.

So simple, but the whole thing is mind-blowingly good. Basil is the perfect counterpoint to the sweetness of the peaches, along with the slight tang of the sourdough. The creaminess of the mascarpone ties everything together. I can only imagine how amazingly delicious this would be with perfectly ripe peaches (which, alas, I didn't have). And if peaches aren't in season, you can absolutely make this with frozen peaches.

Eat it for breakfast, serve it for brunch, call it a healthy dessert or a fancy snack. Serve it at your summer parties like my friend, or gobble them up in the kitchen by yourself. You do you. (But do it deliciously.)