

# GRILLED PEACHES WITH ALEPPO-TEQUILA HONEY SAUCE



Serves 6

## Ingredients

- 1/3 cup + 1 tablespoon tequila, divided
- 1 lime
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 teaspoon Aleppo pepper, plus a few pinches more for garnish
- Coarse salt
- 3 medium peaches, scrubbed
- Flavorless high-heat oil such as canola

**Instructions:**

1. Set up the grill with a high-heat area and a lower-heat area. Preheat it and scrub the grates clean.

**Make the Aleppo-tequila honey sauce:**

2. Measure 1/3 cup tequila into a measuring cup, then add cold water up to the 1/2 cup mark. Pour the mixture into a small saucepan, heat until simmering, then cook with the lid off until the liquid is reduced by half (about 5 minutes), stirring occasionally. While the mixture reduces, use a microplane or rasp to zest the lime, then cut it in half and squeeze the juice from one of the halves. (You can reserve the other half for another use.)

3. Reduce the heat to very low, then stir in the honey, **Aleppo pepper**, **half** the lime zest (reserve the other half to garnish the dish at the end), and a pinch of salt. Partially cover the pan and let the flavors infuse into the mixture for about 5 minutes over lowest heat, stirring occasionally.

4. Remove the pan from heat and stir in another 1 tablespoon of tequila and 1 tablespoon of lime juice.

**Grill the peaches:**

5. Cut the peaches in half and remove the pits. Brush the cut sides with oil, then lay them, cut side down, onto the grill and close the lid. After about 5 minutes, brush the upturned bottoms with oil, turn the peaches over and set them over the lower-heat area of the grill for about 5 more minutes, until they are nicely caramelized and softened. Remove the peaches to a cutting board and cut each peach half in half again, so that you have quarter wedges.

**Serve it up:**

6. Arrange the peach wedges on a serving platter or individual plates. Drizzle a few generous spoonfuls of the sauce over the peaches, and serve the remaining sauce on the side for your guests to add more if they wish (they will wish!). Sprinkle the remaining lime zest and a couple pinches of Aleppo pepper over the peaches and serve.

**Notes:**

**This sauce.** What can I tell you? It's sweet, zingy and sophisticated. It's mariachi-music-meets-jazz-band, something you can't stop listening to, from a place where they definitely know how to party. And just when you are all wrapped up in how light and bright and tasty the whole thing is, you'll notice those peaches. Peachy, sure, but with a deeper, darker note thanks to all that charring, to grow the whole thing up just a teensy bit more.

I'm figuring a **half-peach (2 wedges) per person** if you're serving this at a dinner party (or a party party). But honestly, if it's just you and me, we might eat twice that much. And we might even put a small dollop of vanilla ice cream over the whole thing, to melt into that warm sauce and mingle with those peaches. (But not too much, because nothing should overshadow that sauce.) And then we might have another shot of tequila.

Speaking of **tequila**, I used some pretty good stuff here. You can use whatever you like, of course, but what you're getting in this dish is the essence of its flavor. So although it's tempting to go for the cheap stuff (*it's just for cooking!*)

insists my husband), you'll want to use something you actually enjoy drinking. And then, of course, you'll be drinking the rest of the bottle. So it all works out.

**Aleppo pepper** is a mildly spicy chile that also brings lots of flavor and a slight smokiness to the dish. If you haven't tried Aleppo pepper yet, you'll want to run right out and get some! (Or just order some [here](#).) It's got a sophisticated, nuanced flavor profile, and once it's in your pantry, you'll find you're using it on everything. (Here we are using it in a dessert. See how that works? Addictive little bugger.)

If you're feeling lazy (or it's not grilling weather, or you're pressed for time, or whatever), you **can totally skip the grilling!** This sauce is amazing just drizzled over fresh (un-grilled) peach slices.

I **leave the skins on** the peaches here. Easier, and I like how the char brings a deep counterpoint to the zippy-limey sweetness of the sauce. If this bothers you, feel free to remove the skins.

**To make this in advance** before your guests arrive:

You have two options for the sauce. You can finish the sauce completely earlier in the day and hold it at room temperature until you're ready to serve, or if you want to make it a couple days in advance, just stop before you get to Step 4. When you're ready to serve, warm the sauce in a small saucepan, then remove it from heat and stir in the last tablespoons of tequila and lime juice. Either approach will work great.

You can also grill the peaches ahead of time, and hold them at room temperature until you're ready to serve. To keep them from losing their shape, keep the halves intact after grilling, and cut them into wedges just before serving.

**To bring this to a party**, you can grill the peaches ahead of time and leave the halves intact. Pack the peaches and sauce in separate containers, and bring the extra Aleppo pepper and lime zest in a little baggie. When you get to your friend's house, just cut the peach halves into wedges, pour on the sauce, sprinkle on the garnish and you're ready to go. Or, you can simplify things a bit more by skipping the grilling - just bring fresh, cut-up peaches, then drizzle the sauce over them when you get there and sprinkle on the toppings. (You can also experiment with stirring the sauce into the cut-up peaches ahead of time - although I haven't done this myself so can't personally vouch for this approach!)