

SUMMER THYME PEACH LEMONADE



Serves 6-8

Ingredients

- 1 medium ripe peach
- 4-6 lemons
- 3/4 cup sugar
- About 4 branches of fresh thyme
- A pinch of coarse salt
- Water

Instructions:

1. Find a pitcher that will hold 2 1/2 quarts of liquid. (If you don't have a large enough pitcher, you can either scale the ingredients down accordingly, or mix the ingredients in a large bowl and store the extra lemonade in the fridge until you have more room in your pitcher.)
2. Make thyme simple syrup: Put the sugar in a medium saucepan. Add thyme and 3/4 cups cold water, stirring to combine. Heat the mixture over medium-low, stirring occasionally, until the sugar has melted, then remove from heat.
3. Remove and discard the thyme and allow the sugar syrup to cool to room temperature. (If you're in a hurry, you can speed this process by cooling it in an ice water bath like this: Choose a medium bowl that will fit inside a larger bowl. Put ice water in the bottom of the larger bowl. Pour the syrup into the medium bowl and set the bowl inside the larger bowl so that the ice water comes partially up the sides. Adjust the amount of ice water to be sure no water will get into the sugar syrup. In about 10-15 minutes, the syrup should be cool enough to work with.)
4. Squeeze the juice from the lemons to make 1 cup. Depending on the size of your lemons, you may not need all of them.
5. Remove the skin from the peach (if it's ripe, it may slip right off), and cut the peach into chunks. Add the chunks to the pitcher and use a potato masher or fork to mash them into a liquidy pulp. Add the lemon juice, 3/4 cup of the simple syrup, 2 quarts of cold water and a very small pinch of salt. Stir to combine.
6. Taste by pouring a small amount over a single ice cube and swirling to cool it (because temperature affects flavor.) Add more sugar syrup to the pitcher if needed until it is as sweet as you like it. (Amount may vary depending on how ripe and sweet your peaches are.)
7. When serving, add the ice to the glasses rather than the pitcher so the ice doesn't dilute the lemonade as it sits.

Notes:

You can **make the thyme simple syrup ahead of time** and store it covered in the refrigerator for several days. You can also freeze it in a covered container for months.

To **prep several pitchers ahead of time for a party**, combine several batches of lemon juice, thyme syrup and mashed peaches in covered containers - each container holding enough for one pitcher. Then at party time, simply pour the contents of each container into a pitcher and fill with water. Give it a quick taste and add more syrup if needed, and you're ready to go.