

# Peach

## History

Peaches have been growing since prehistoric times and were first cultivated in China. The Chinese believe the peach is a symbol of long life and immortality, and they can be found on paintings and porcelain. The peach spread from China to Persia and then Europe. The Romans believed the peach originated from Persia and named it the “Persian apple.” It is thought that Spanish missionaries carried peach seeds with them when they traveled to



the Americas. The first peach tree was planted in Florida in the early 1500s. Peach growing spread throughout the 13 original colonies. Near the same time, Spanish missionaries introduced the peach to Central America. From here, peach growing spread throughout Central America and into California. Peaches now are grown in Georgia, South Carolina, Colorado, Pennsylvania, Washington, Michigan, and New Jersey.

## Varieties

Peaches are a stone fruit because they have a pit, or stone, in the middle of the fruit. Peaches can be classified as either freestone or clingstone. A freestone peach has a pit that separates easily from the fruit. Most peaches that are available to eat fresh are of the freestone variety because they are easy to eat. The two most popular varieties of freestone are the Elegant Lady and the O-Henry. A clingstone peach has a pit that is attached to the fruit. Since this fruit is harder to eat fresh, most clingstone peaches are used to make canned peaches.

## Fun Facts

- Peaches, like nectarines, plums, and cherries are a stone fruit.
- Peaches are a member of the rose family.
- The US provides one quarter of the world’s peach supply.
- Peaches are a symbol of immortality and friendship.
- Peaches are related to almonds.
- There are hundreds of varieties of peaches, but they are mainly sold based on their flesh color of yellow or white.
- Georgia is known as the peach state, but California grows the most peaches in the US.



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