

End of Summer Mix

Birthday Pavlova

Gloria Mok



Birthday Pavlova

Recipe adapted by Gloria Mok

The Story Behind the Birthday Pavlova

It is May 2020.
Mom is about to turn the big 6-0.
Usually we'd celebrate with our favourite Mango Meringue cake.
But not this year. . .
For obvious reasons. . .

But I did my research.

I watched,
Nay,
I STUDIED,
3 seasons of The Great Canadian Baking Show
For this very moment.

Fact: Pavlova is a dessert named after the Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova.
It is a meringue dessert with a crisp crust and soft light marshmallow-ee
inside, usually topped with whipped cream and fruit.

A.K.A.
Heaven.

I convinced myself that I could bake a Pavlova
On my very first try.
I convinced myself that I could slice decorative mango roses
On my very first try.
And I did.
And it was glorious.

And ever since then,
I have made a Pavlova for every birthday I have attended:
Pavlova #1 For my mom's birthday
Pavlova #2 For my own birthday
Pavlova #3 For my sister-in-law Lucy's birthday
Pavlova #4 For my cousin Athena's birthday
Pavlova #5 For my dad's birthday
Pavlova #6 For my cousin Michelle's birthday

Yeah. . .

That's a lot of Pavlovas.

And a lot of memorable birthdays.

I'm so happy I gave it try!

Now the question is . . .
Will you?

Happy baking.
Happy tummy.
Happy family.
Happy heart.
Happy birthday.
Happy end of summer :)



Mom and I with Pavlova #1,
topped with mangos and blueberries.

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Makes: 6 big slices

Prep Time: 1 hour

Bake Time: 70 minutes

Cooling Time: 3-4 hours

Assembly Time: 10 minutes

Yeah, I know, it takes time. But it is SO WORTH IT! Trust me.

Ingredients

For Pavlova:

- 5 egg whites
- 266 g (or 1 1/3 cup) sugar
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 tsp corn starch

For whipped cream:

- 400 mL 35% heavy whipping cream
- 30 g (or 1/4 cup) sugar

For decoration:

- 1 handful of roasted almonds, chopped or crushed
- 1 ripe mango, peeled and sliced
- Strawberries or blueberries



Steps

For Pavlova:

1. Preheat oven to 170°C (or 338°F).
2. Beat egg whites until soft peaks form.
3. Add lemon juice. Beat for 30 seconds.
4. Add sugar about one third at a time. Beat for 30 seconds each time.
5. Beat mixture until sugar has fully dissolved (until it no longer feels grainy when you rub a little bit between your fingers).
6. Add vanilla and corn starch. Beat until fully incorporated. By now, your meringue mixture should look glossy and have stiff peaks.
7. Use a large dinner plate to trace a circle on the WRONG side of the parchment paper. Flip the parchment paper so that the WRONG side is facing down on the baking tray.
8. Use a spatula to transfer the mixture onto the parchment paper, shaping it into the circle you drew.
9. Make a shallow depression in the centre, for when you add whipped cream and fruit later. Sprinkle almonds around the edges if desired.
10. Place in oven. Turn down oven to 110°C (230°F). Bake for 70 min.
11. Turn oven off. Leave in the oven for a few hours to cool gradually. Prop the oven door open using wooden chopstick or spoon.
12. Take the Pavlova out of oven. Leave it to cool completely.

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For whipped cream:

1. Beat heavy whipping cream and icing sugar until stiff.
2. Store and refrigerate until ready to serve.
3. When ready to serve, spread onto Pavlova using a spatula.

For decoration & flavour:

Almonds

1. Roast almonds in toaster or frying pan, and roughly chop or crush.
2. Sprinkle on Pavlova before baking.

Mango Roses

1. Wash and peel the mango skin.
2. Slice mango into two equal halves, on either side of the seed.
3. Slice each half of the mango into into flower petals (about 1/16" thick).
4. On a flat surface, arrange the slices in the shape of rose. Start at the centre with the smallest slice and spiral out into the largest slice, overlapping petals as you go.
5. When ready to serve, use a spatula to transfer mango roses on top of whipped cream.

Blueberries or Strawberries

1. When ready to serve, arrange in a pattern on top of whipped cream.

Notes & Tips

- Pavlovas are best enjoyed the same day they are made.
- Pavlovas can be stored in a refrigerator 1-2 days after serving, but the meringue will soften over time.
- Before baking, use a fork or spatula to create indents on the meringue for a nice textured design.
- Pavlovas are very delicate and can easily crack. Sometimes the bottom of the pavlova can stick to the parchment paper. I recommend transferring the Pavlova directly onto the serving dish with the parchment paper still on. Then cut around the paper to fit the serving dish.
- Whipped cream is your best friend for fixing cracks or collapsed edges.
- Here's the link to a YouTube tutorial I found helpful when first learning how to make mango roses: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsGMp6MlG5A>



Gloria with Pavlova #2, topped with mangoes and strawberries.