

K's Kitchen: Peaches with lemon verbena

By Kathryn Reed

I'm not sure I had heard of lemon verbena until my landscaper planted it in my herb garden. This meant needing to figure out what to do with it besides taking a leaf or two along with some peppermint and popping it in my mouth.

Brian, the landscaper, said his girlfriend makes tea out it. I can see this being good, but have not tried it.

Tearing up a few pieces and tossing them in a green salad has been fabulous.

But I have a lot so I needed a way to use even more. Fortunately, the peach season seems to be extended at the Tuesday farmers' market in South Lake Tahoe. (The last day of the market is Oct. 13.)

Start off with a little sugar when whipping the cream. Add more until you get the sweetness you like. The peaches are going to be sweet, so take that into consideration.

For some reason the cream was not whipping into peaks the day I made this. Impatience could have been part of the problem. Still, it was thicker than pure liquid out of the container. The peaches were swimming in the cream, which still tasted great.

I could envision cooking the peaches on the barbecue as well.



Peaches with Lemon Verbena Cream

2 C heavy cream

$\frac{1}{2}$ C fresh lemon verbena leaves, packed – plus a few for garnish

4 large ripe peaches, halved and pitted

$\frac{1}{4}$ C butter (salted or unsalted) at room temperature

$\frac{1}{4}$ C sugar, divided

In small pan bring cream to a simmer. Remove from heat and then add lemon verbena. Cover and steep for 15 minutes. Strain cream into bowl. Chill covered for at least one hour.

Place peaches in a rimmed pan or baking dish. Brush with butter and sprinkle with half of the sugar. Roast in 450-degree oven until peaches caramelize a bit, about 20 minutes.

Beat cream with remaining sugar into soft peaks. Serve peaches and cream together, with lemon verbena leaves as garnish.