

## **POACHED PEACHES IN CHAMPAGNE**

Fresh peaches poached in champagne need to be tasted to be really appreciated.

2 large ripe peaches, preferably white  
2 cups dry champagne  
1/2 cup maple syrup  
1/2 small vanilla bean  
3 large strawberries  
2 tablespoons powdered sugar  
1/4 medium lemon, squeezed for juice  
1 cup Romance Whipped Cream, see recipe  
2 large mint leaves for garnish

Make a very light incision all around peach skins. Plunge the peaches briefly into boiling water, then into cold water, and peel. Place in a shallow pan and douse with champagne. Add the syrup and vanilla bean. Bring to a slow boil over low heat, and poach peaches at about 185°F, but do not allow to boil. If peaches are very ripe, they will be poached after 5 minutes.

Place peaches and syrup in a cool place, but do not refrigerate. Drain peaches, reserving the poaching liquid. Wash strawberries, remove any leaves, and purée in a blender or food processor. Place in a bowl and stir sugar into the purée. Stir romance whipped cream into the strawberry purée and add lemon juice.

Serve on round plates, or in glass dishes or small bowls. Line the bottom of the dishes with strawberry cream and arrange the cooled, but not chilled, peaches on top. Garnish each peach with a mint sprig. Serve the chilled poaching liquid separately in a sauce boat.