



Pavlova

YIELD: 6–10 servings

TIME: 2 hours, plus 3 hours cooling

INGREDIENTS

Pavlova:

5 large egg whites (165 g), at room temperature
1 and ¼ c (260 g) superfine sugar
2 tsp (6 g) cornstarch
¼ tsp (2 g) cream of tartar
¼ tsp (2 g) salt
1 tsp (5 g) vanilla extract

Topping:

1 and ½ c (360 g) heavy cream
3 tbsp (40 g) sugar
1 and ½ tsp (7 g) vanilla

Fruit for topping, washed and sliced (I used 10 oz blackberries and 3 kiwifruit)

Lemon curd for topping (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

Pavlova:

1. Preheat your oven to 250°F. Trace a 9-inch circle on a piece of parchment paper, then place it on a baking sheet, traced side facing down.
2. Mix together the sugar and cornstarch and set aside.
3. In a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the egg whites on low speed until broken up and bubbles begin to form on the surface.
4. Add the cream of tartar and salt and beat egg whites on medium-low speed until foamy.
5. Slowly add the sugar and cornstarch mixture to the egg whites. Do this by pouring a thin, steady stream of sugar into the egg whites while the mixer is running at medium-low speed. See the pictures for a reference.
6. When all the sugar is added and the egg whites are glossy and past the soft peak stage, increase the mixer speed to medium. Beat until they form stiff peaks.
7. Add the vanilla extract and beat again for a minute to incorporate it.
8. Spoon the mixture onto the parchment and spread it into a 9-inch round mound, using your traced circle as a guide. Make sure that there is a little dip in the top of the mound so the whipped cream and berries have somewhere to sit.
9. Bake the pavlova for 90 minutes. It is done when the edge feels firm and crisp to the touch.
10. Turn off the oven and let the pavlova cool in the oven with the door closed until ready to serve, a few hours to overnight.

Topping:

1. Place the cream, sugar, and vanilla in the bowl of a stand mixer and beat on medium speed just until the cream reaches stiff peaks.
2. Take the pavlova out of the oven and turn it upside down. Peel off the parchment and then place the pavlova right-side up on a serving plate. Top with the whipped cream, curd (if using), and fruit, then cut and serve immediately.

NOTES AND TIPS

Okay, look, I know that some of you are not going to listen to me about superfine sugar and are going to make this pavlova with regular granulated. Fine. I don't condone it, but if you're going to do it anyway, you can try to put the sugar in a food processor and pulse it until the granules get small but are not powder. (My food processor blades are dull, so this didn't work for me.) And don't expect pavlova perfection. The sugar probably won't dissolve completely, but bake the meringue anyway after it reaches stiff peaks. Expect it to start weeping at some point, so try to make your pavlova a few hours before eating it instead of a day ahead of time.

You want your eggs to be at room temperature to help the sugar dissolve. If you forgot to get them out ahead of time like I always do, place your whole eggs, cold from the fridge, in a bowl of hot water for a few minutes, or crack the whites into a bowl and set that bowl in a pan of warm water.

Soft peak stage for meringue means the egg whites will form a little "mountain" when you lift the beater out of the meringue, and the top will flop over.

Firm peak stage means that the tops of the peaks stick straight up (for whipped cream) or only fall a tiny bit (for meringue) when you lift the beater up.

Leaving the pavlova in the oven to cool keeps it from cracking as much because the gradual puts less stress on the meringue than placing it on a room temperature counter would. It also gives it a little bit longer to dry out the crunchy edges, so don't skip this step.

If the pavlova cracks, that's fine. It probably will. That's part of its imperfect charm.

The pavlova is delicate, so be careful when flipping it upside down and then right side up again. You may want to use a pan or a plate to help you do this.