



# Pavlova

*By Rita Heikenfeld*

**P**avlova. Does the name intrigue you? Well, you're not alone. I first encountered a recipe for Pavlova years ago in cooking school. I was intrigued and impressed not only with the name but how easy it was to make this ethereal egg white dessert.

First, a little history. Pavlova is a meringue-based cake named after the Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova. The debate about the nationality of its creator still has not been solved. The dessert is believed to have been created either during or after one of Anna Pavlova's dance tours to Australia and New Zealand in the 1920s. Later research suggested the dessert originated in the United States with German immigrants, who were known for their meringue pastries.

Regardless of its origin, Pavlova is one of the easiest and eye-catching meringue desserts to make. You need to bake Pavlova at a low temperature for a relatively long time. This technique allows the meringue to dry properly, becoming crisp on the outside, with a slightly marshmallow-like texture on the inside.

You can make one large Pavlova or mini Pavlovas. You choose!

## ONLY FIVE INGREDIENTS

The best thing is there are only five ingredients, and you probably have all of them on hand:

Egg whites  
Cream of tartar  
Salt  
Granulated sugar  
Vanilla extract

Here's how to make it.

## EASY AND ELEGANT VANILLA PAVLOVA

It's important for the whites to be at room temperature for maximum volume.

### Ingredients

1 and ¼ cups egg whites room temperature  
1 teaspoon cream of tartar  
¼ teaspoon salt  
2 cups granulated sugar  
1 tablespoon vanilla

### Instructions

Preheat oven to 175-200 degrees F.  
Line baking sheets with parchment paper.  
You can make large or small Pavlovas.

Beat egg whites, using low speed, until whites are loose and foamy. Add cream of tartar and salt and increase speed to medium.

Beat until whites stand in soft but frothy peaks.

Turn to high and add sugar, about two tablespoons at a time, beating for five seconds after each addition. This ensures sugars dissolve and meringues come out crispy, not too chewy. The meringue will be shiny and will fall into firm peaks when the beater is lifted.

Place meringue into a pastry bag with star or plain tip and draw a circle, starting from middle out. This will be your base. You can make the circle as big as you like. Then build up sides, about three layers.

Or just plop a large dollop of meringue onto parchment and then take a spoon to hollow out center, making sure you still have a nice coating of meringue on the bottom in center.

Bake two hours, or until meringues are dry and crisp throughout.

They will be creamy white in color with golden bottoms. A small amount of cracking is okay.

Gently pull meringues from parchment paper and store up to two weeks in airtight containers.

Makes two large Pavlovas or two to three dozen small ones.



## TIPS

### Easiest way to quickly warm eggs to room temperature:

Put them in a bowl, cover with warm water, and let sit five minutes or so. They will warm up to room temperature, ready to use.

### “Oh no, my meringue won't whip!”

Easily avoided by making sure no egg yolk gets into your whites. Yolks contain fat, and even a tiny bit of fat prevents whites from whipping up properly. The bowl and beaters have to be clean and free from any grease. I like to rinse out my mixing bowl with a little vinegar to remove any residual traces of fat from previous use.

## FILLINGS FOR PAVLOVA

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### Mixed Fruit Filling

I love a simple mixed berry filling. Really, any seasonal fruits work. Cut up if necessary and mix gently in a bowl. Let sit for a bit, and some juices will exude. If you like, sprinkle on a bit of sugar and toss it gently with the fruit.

### Chantilly Cream

Don't be fooled by the name. This is simply sweetened whipped cream and makes a nice bed for fresh fruit.

### Ingredients

1 cup whipping cream  
½ teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 tablespoon sugar

### Instructions

Place all ingredients in a bowl. Whip until soft peaks form. Cover and refrigerate until serving.



## QUICK CHOCOLATE MOCHA MOUSSE

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### Ingredients

1 and ½ teaspoons vanilla  
1 teaspoon instant coffee powder or ½  
teaspoon instant espresso powder (optional)  
¾ cup powdered sugar  
⅓ cup cocoa powder  
1 and ½ to 1 and ¾ cup whipping cream

### Instructions

Whip until stiff. Cover and refrigerate until serving.

## EGG FACTS

Which are the best chickens for eggs? Ask my husband who grew up on a farm where they raised thousands of chickens. He still prefers Leghorns and Rhode Island Reds. Both are good egg layers. I love Buff Orpingtons for their gentle nature. Easter Eggers win simply for the pastel colors of their eggs. Oh, and I can't leave out my beautiful bBlack Australorp.

What are your favorite chickens for laying eggs?

### Substituting duck eggs vs. chicken eggs

Yes, you can. As long as the measurement, volume-wise, is correct, duck eggs can be substituted in most recipes. Duck eggs usually have a bit higher protein content than chicken eggs.

### Freeze extra egg whites

I freeze mine uncovered in ice cube containers until frozen solid. Then I pop them out and place in freezer-safe containers for up to six months. ●