

Title:

We Keep Fighting Over a Pavlova - Find Out Why And Try The Recipe!

Word Count:

588

Summary:

What on earth is a Pavlova you might ask? It's an Australian dessert much like a meringue. Read about the controversy and then make yourself one.

Keywords:

pavlova,meringue,desserts,cook pavlova,pavlovas,meringues

Article Body:

Australians and New Zealanders maintain an ongoing "controversy" over who concocted the famous Pavlova. The Aussies lay claim to it but the Kiwis think very differently. Each claim it as one of their national dishes. Firstly, how do you pronounce the word Pavlova. Here we go: pav-LOH-vuh with the emphasis on the LOH part of the word.

The word Pavlova is taken directly from the name of the famous ballerina, Anna Pavlova. There is no argument about that fact. Anna Pavlova visited Australia in 1926 and then came back again in 1929 visiting New Zealand as well on this second visit. She was billed as the greatest dancer of all time. As can be imagined, she was very light on her toes.

Back at that time there was a very creative chef working in the kitchens of the Esplanade Hotel in Perth, Western Australia. To celebrate the visit of Anna Pavlova he created a meringue-style dessert which was very light and airy. His delightful dessert was considered to be lighter than air, just like Anna's performances were. Consequently his invention was called a Pavlova - that is the Australian version of how the Pavlova got it's name.

Now the Kiwis debate the fact that an Australian invented the dessert. They say it was being made in New Zealand as far back as 1919, although it was not called a Pavlova. The chef in Perth included a small amount of vinegar in his recipe and it is the vinegar which gives the meringue its soft marshmallow centre. It seems the New Zealand version lacked vinegar in the recipe. The dispute continues but that is enough debate for me....

Let me tell you more about the Pavlova and then you can make one yourself. It

certainly has the appearance of a very large meringue, measuring as much as 9" to 12" in diameter. Pavlovas can stand anything up to 3" in height. They consist mainly of egg whites and sugar and they are cooked very slowly in the oven. When they have cooled they are topped with whipped cream and then very colourful fruits are arranged on the top of the cream. The whole creation is quite spectacular and most usually quite rich and sweet. There are several variations of the Pavlova recipe. I use this one:

Ingredients

4 egg whites,
1 teaspoon vanilla,
1 teaspoon white vinegar (or lemon juice),
1 cup of caster sugar,
1 cup whipped cream,
Fruit to decorate

Method

Line a baking tray with foil or baking paper. On the foil or paper draw a circle with a 22 cm (9") diameter. In a glass or china bowl beat egg whites, vanilla and vinegar (or lemon juice) until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in the sugar, one tablespoonful at a time. When sugar is fully dissolved into egg mixture pile it onto the baking tray, keeping the mixture within the circle. Smooth the top but leave a slight hollow in the central area.

Bake at 120 degrees centigrade (250 degrees fahrenheit) for approximately 1 and 1/4 hours. When cooked, the Pavlova should be a very light beige colour. Turn off the oven. Leave Pavlova to cool in the oven.

When cold, top with whipped cream and decorate with fruit. Colourful fruits are good to decorate Pavlovas, ideas being sliced banana, strawberries, kiwi fruit and passion fruit. Passion fruit is particularly nice, in my opinion, as its tartness complements the sweet Pavlova so well.

If you are making the Pavlova in advance then store it in a cool dry place, not in the fridge and then decorate just before serving.