

CHARLIE'S DUTCH OVEN RECIPE FOR OLD FASHIONED PEACH COBBLER

Few men today work under greater difficulties or with fewer conveniences than a chuckwagon cook – but that's not the reason the cook just might be the most respected man in the **cowboy crew**. It's because of what he provides.

A **chuckwagon** is usually an old horse-drawn ranch or farm wagon with wooden wheels, in which has been placed a chuck box, and is used to feed cowboys when they are away from home. The cook may be in charge of the meals, but his influence within the outpost reaches far beyond the **chuckwagon**.

Here are four reasons to respect the chuckwagon cook:



1. **The wagon becomes the cowboys' home away from home**, as they often spend the nights in tepees near the wagon instead of going back to their real homes to save travel time and enable an early start.
2. **He feeds the cowboys well, and on time.** No matter the weather, hot or cold, wet or dry, up to 20 hungry cowboys need to be fed three hearty, nutritious and on-time meals a day.
3. **He makes sacrifices.** Often, the chuckwagon cook will set up his own bed away from camp or the bunkhouse so he can go to bed earlier and get up earlier. This usually means missing some of the camaraderie or a late-night game of cards.
4. **He boosts morale.** Long days, unforgiving weather and hard work are just a few of the factors working against cowboy crew morale. Many chuckwagon cooks plan out their meals to include variety, desserts and crowd favorites. If there's one thing everyone can look forward to, it's a good meal.

This story originally appeared in the [March 2017 Ranch Horse Journal](#) as a feature on Charlie Ferguson, veteran cowboy and chuckwagon cook (by Jim Jennings). Read more about Charlie's go-to recipes and his colorful description life on the ranch.

Photo credit: Jim Jennings

Ingredients:

- ½ cup of brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 4 cups sliced peaches
- ¾ cup whole wheat flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ¼ cup butter or margarine
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 1 beaten egg
- ½ cup milk
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- 3 tablespoons melted butter

Steps:

1. Melt 3 tablespoons of butter in a 12-inch Dutch oven.
2. In a large bowl, combine brown sugar, cinnamon, grated lemon, and lemon juice. Mix well, and then add peaches and stir them into the mixture. Pour all those ingredients into the Dutch oven.
3. In a mixing bowl, cream ½ cup of butter and sugar together and then add the beaten egg. Mix in the flour and baking powder and then add the milk and vanilla. Mix well.
4. Drop the batter by spoonful over the peach mixture and bake at 375 degrees for 30 minutes or until top is brown.