

# Mega Pavlova (with alternative toppings)

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# Gather & Feast

I'm super excited to share this Mega Pavlova recipe with you all! It has to be one of the most highly requested recipes I've posted on social media. It's also a family favourite in our household and requested every year for our Aussie Summer Christmas.

**SERVES** 10-12 | **PREP** 45 minutes | **COOK** 2 hours 30 minutes | **TOTAL** 3 hours 15 minutes (+ cooling)

## INGREDIENTS

### Meringue

- 300ml egg whites (about 8 large eggs)
- 340g (1 1/2 cups) caster sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice, apple cider vinegar, or white vinegar

### Lemon or Passionfruit Curd

- 8 egg yolks
- 225g (1 cup) caster sugar
- 4 lemons, zest and juice (250ml) OR 250ml of passionfruit pulp
- 170g unsalted butter, roughly chopped (or coconut oil for a dairy-free option)

### Vanilla Mascarpone Cream

- 600ml thickened/heavy whipping cream
- 250g mascarpone
- 1 tablespoon vanilla bean paste or extract

### Toppings (choose one)

*For Mega Berry Pavlova:*

- 250g fresh strawberries, sliced
- 250g fresh blueberries
- 250g fresh raspberries
- 250g fresh blackberries
- Small bunch of fresh mint



- Freeze-dried strawberries or raspberries (optional)

*For Mango Passionfruit Pavlova:*

- 1 large fresh mango, sliced
- Pulp of 2 passionfruits
- Zest of 1 lime
- Toasted coconut, flaked or shredded

*For Mango, Raspberry & Passionfruit Pavlova:*

- 1 large fresh mango, sliced
- 250g fresh raspberries
- Pulp of 4 fresh passionfruits

## METHOD

### **Make the Meringue**

1. Preheat oven to 150°C/300°F.
2. In a large, clean bowl, whip the egg whites on medium speed with a stand mixer or hand beaters until soft peaks form (2–3 minutes).
3. Gradually add the sugar to the egg whites (whipping the whole time), 1 tablespoon at a time, waiting 20–30 seconds between additions.
4. After all the sugar is incorporated, whip the mixture on medium speed for another 6 minutes. Add the lemon juice or vinegar and continue beating for another 3–4 minutes, until the meringue is thick and glossy. If you rub the mixture between your fingers, it should feel completely smooth, with no sugar grains. If you still feel grains, continue whipping for a few more minutes to ensure all the sugar has dissolved.
5. Line a large baking tray with baking paper. Scoop the meringue onto the tray and shape it into a large round mound. Use a spatula to create tall, swooping edges around the outside.
6. Place the tray in the oven, then reduce the temperature to 110°C/230°F. Bake for 2 hours and 30 minutes.
7. Turn the oven off and leave the meringue inside with the door closed until it cools completely—ideally overnight, or at least for 6–8 hours. This step is crucial! Avoid the temptation to remove the meringue earlier, as it may crack, collapse, or become soft.

### **Make the Lemon or Passionfruit Curd**

1. While the meringue is baking, prepare the curd. This is a great way to use the egg yolks that may otherwise go to waste.
2. In a medium saucepan, whisk together the egg yolks, sugar, lemon zest, and lemon juice (or passionfruit pulp).
3. Cook over medium heat, stirring continuously, until the mixture thickens.
4. Add the chopped butter (or coconut oil), stirring until melted and fully incorporated. Set aside to cool.

### Assemble the Pavlova

1. In a mixing bowl, whip the cream with vanilla until stiff peaks form, by hand or using a low to medium speed to keep it smooth.
2. Gently fold in the mascarpone.
3. Spoon the vanilla mascarpone cream over the meringue base.

*Top with your choice of toppings:*

- Mega Berry Pavlova: fresh berries, curd, mint leaves, and crushed freeze-dried berries (optional).
- Mango Passionfruit Pavlova: mango slices, passionfruit pulp, lime zest, and toasted coconut flakes.
- Mango, Raspberry & Passionfruit Pavlova: mango slices, raspberries, and passionfruit pulp.

## NOTES

**Perfect Meringue Tips:** Make sure your mixing bowl and beaters are completely clean and free from any grease, as even a small amount of fat can prevent the egg whites from whipping up properly. Add the sugar gradually to ensure it fully dissolves, which will give you a glossy, stable meringue. Rub a bit of the meringue between your fingers to check for any remaining sugar grains. Cooling the meringue slowly in the oven is essential for preventing cracks and maintaining a light, crisp texture. Overnight cooling is ideal for best results.

**Curd Consistency:** Stir the curd continuously over medium heat to prevent it from scrambling. The curd is ready when it thickly coats the back of a spoon. If you'd like an extra smooth curd, strain it through a fine-mesh sieve after cooking to remove any zest or small lumps. I personally don't strain it.

**Dairy-Free Variations:** For a dairy-free version, use coconut oil in the curd and replace cream and mascarpone with dairy-free alternatives (like whipped coconut cream or a vegan mascarpone).

**Whipping and Folding the Cream:** Whip the cream at a low to medium speed to avoid over-whipping, which can lead to a grainy or curdled texture. You want the cream to be smooth and able to hold its shape. Carefully fold in the mascarpone at the end; overmixing can make the mascarpone grainy, so be gentle for the best texture.

**Serving Suggestions:** This pavlova is best served immediately after assembly, as the cream and fruit toppings can soften the meringue over time. For a beautiful presentation, garnish with fresh mint leaves and a sprinkle of freeze-dried fruit for added colour and texture.

**Storage:** Store any unassembled components separately: keep the meringue in an airtight container at room temperature, the curd and whipped cream in the refrigerator. Once assembled, pavlova is best enjoyed the same day.



**Find the recipe and watch the video online:**

*<https://www.gatherandfeast.com/mega-berry-pavlova-lemon-curd-fresh-mint>*

Let me know if you make the recipe! x **@gatherandfeast**