

# The Good Life

Magazine

## All Things Preserving

Autumn Winter 2016

**Packed full  
of recipes  
and tips for  
perfect  
preserving!**



Delivery only £6.95 (UK Mainland)  
Regardless of size or weight



# Welcome to

The Good Life!

WARES  
— of —  
Knutsford

Hello from the Wares of Knutsford team and a warm welcome to the fourth edition of our customer magazine.

The world of growing and preserving is fascinating and rewarding in so many ways. In this edition we have tried to pull together plenty of recipes and tips for classic and unusual jams, chutneys, liqueurs and pickles - perhaps offering some helpful hints for new preservers and fresh ideas for the more experienced amongst you.

For centuries people across the world have preserved food and for just the last 20 years or so it has been our absolute pleasure to provide our customers with the best range and value for jars and bottles we possibly can. Whether you are a jam maker, allotment gardener, restaurateur, home brewer or artisan seller, we hope you find some interesting and helpful information in 'The Good Life' and we wish you all the very best with your preserving adventures.

Please do let us know if you have any feedback on the magazine at [info@waresofknutsford.co.uk](mailto:info@waresofknutsford.co.uk). Contributions are always welcome too!

*Valerie Byles*







# The Roles of Pectin, Sugar and Acid in Preserving



Pectin is a carbohydrate found mostly in the skin and core of raw fruit. In nature, it functions as the structural "cement" that helps hold cell walls together. In solution, pectin has the ability to form a mesh that traps liquid, sets as it cools, and, in the case of jam, cradles suspended pieces of fruit.

Pectin needs partners, namely acid and sugar, to do the job of gelling properly. Acid helps extract pectin from fruit during gentle simmering and helps the gelling process, which will not take place unless the mixture is fairly acidic. If fruits (such as apricots) aren't sufficiently tart, a recipe will call for added lemon juice.

Sugar enhances the strength of the gel by attracting some of the water away from the pectin. In the absence of sufficient water, pectin molecules are more likely to unite with each other. Sugar also acts as a preservative, firms the structure of the fruit, and helps the jam or jelly hold its colour and flavour. If you need to limit your sugar intake you can buy 'no sugar needed pectin' on amazon (see link below). This product contains a setting agent to replace the action of the sugar. There are also plenty of low and sugar free recipes on the internet.

If you're using commercial pectin, remember that each jam or jelly recipe is designed to maintain the correct balance between pectin, acid, and sugar for the fruit you're using. If you mess with the proportions, don't expect jam or jelly to set properly.

Pectin content varies according to the type of fruit and its ripeness. Some fruits, such as apples, blackberries, grapes, and quince, are rich in natural pectin and therefore have an abundance of setting power.

Fruits low in pectin are often combined with those high in pectin. Orange (high pectin) and rhubarb jam (low pectin) for instance, blends two fruits with quite different pectin contents. Or commercially packaged pectin can be added to fruits low in natural pectin, like apricots, rhubarb, and strawberries. Commercial pectin is extracted from apples and is natural and quite safe. But remember you can make jam perfectly well without commercial pectin by using a recipe that combines the right fruit and/or adds lemon juice for acid, an apple for pectin and so on.



[Amazon Pectin Link](#)

Its also worth noting that just-ripe fruit contains the highest pectin levels. When fruit ripens further, its pectin content decreases as pectin turns to pectic acid. Though in very ripe fruit, flavours are fully developed, pectin is often past its prime. For best results, mix fully ripe fruit, which has the best flavour, with just-ripe fruit, which has the highest gelling power.

## Pectin & Acid Chart

An essential guide to the pectin and acid content of popular preserving fruits. Vegetables do not feature in this chart because they contain little or no pectin or acid.

Fruits	Pectin Content			Acidity		
	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low
Blackcurrants	High			High		
Crab apples	High			High		
Cranberries	High			High		
Gooseberries	High			High		
Plums (unripe)	High			High		
Quinces	High			High		
Red & white currants	High			High		
Citrus fruits	High	Medium		High		
Cooking apples	High			High		
Apricots		Medium		High		
Cranberries		Medium		High		
Grapes (unripe)		Medium		High		
Loganberries		Medium		High		
Medlars		Medium		High		
Morello cherries		Medium		High		
Plums (ripe)		Medium		High		
Raspberries		Medium		High		
Blackberries		Medium		High		
Blueberries		Medium		High		
Wild blackberries		Medium		High		
Cherries (dessert)		Medium		High		
Figs		Medium		High		
Grapes (ripe)		Medium		High		
Melons		Medium		High		
Nectarines		Medium		High		
Peaches		Medium		High		
Pears		Medium		High		
Rhubarb		Medium		High		
Strawberries		Medium		High		

Acid when preserving, aids the process of extracting pectin from fruit. The pectin is essential to your mixture because it helps you reach the required setting point along with stopping the sugar crystallizing. You can use this chart to guide you with your recipe ingredients, if you choose a fruit high in pectin you will need to add less of the commercial pectin to your overall mixture.

Chart reproduced from the Kilner Website.



Setting point (time to fill the jars) can be assessed by removing the pan from the heat and putting a small amount onto a chilled saucer for a couple of minutes to cool. Push the liquid with your little finger and look for small wrinkles in the skin. This is setting point (103-105 degrees celsius) if using a jam thermometer). If setting point is not reached, pop back onto a rapid boil for another 5 mins and try again.

Finally, make sure all your jars and bottles are sterilised well before filling - see back cover.



# Customer Letters



## 'Grandma's Piccalilli'

from Angela Hirst, Yorkshire

I read with interest the article in the last edition of 'The Good Life' on Jam making on the Isle of Barra. Over the moors from Cheshire, we lived in a little village in Yorkshire when I was a child. After the war our dads continued to keep a vegetable garden whilst mothers tended the flower beds. Back then we ate food that was in season, unlike today and throughout the year had a steady supply of fruit and vegetables, the highlight of our days being the making of jams, pickles, chutneys, but best of all was grandma's recipe for Piccalilli.

Piccalilli is best made at the end of the growing season or early autumn when vegetables have ripened and are in abundance and shallots are dried. I thought your readers might like this recipe which is at least 100 years old and makes delicious piccalilli.



## American Piccalilli

In the North-eastern United States, commercial piccalillis are based on diced sweet peppers, either red or green. This style is somewhat similar to sweet pepper relish, with the piccalilli being distinguished by having a darker red or green colour and like British piccalilli, the chunks are larger and it is slightly sweeter. It is a popular topping on such foods as hamburgers and hot dogs.

In the Midwestern United States, commercial piccalillis are based on finely chopped gherkins; bright green and on the sweet side, they are often used as a condiment for Chicago-style hot dogs.

This style is sometimes called "neon relish". In the Southern United States, piccalilli is not commonly served. In its place, chow-chow, a relish with a base of chopped green (unripe) tomatoes is offered. This relish may also include onions, bell peppers, cabbage, green beans and other vegetables. While not exactly similar to other piccalillis, chow-chow is often called as such and the terms may be used interchangeably.

## Grandma's Piccalilli Recipe

### Ingredients

Cut up 2lb of mixed vegetables (runner beans, cauliflower florets, green tomatoes, shallots and marrow) into chunks. Keep the shallots whole

Brine (salt water)

1 Pint of Vinegar

1 tablespoon of pickling spices in a muslin bag

1 table spoon of mustard powder

1 tablespoon of Turmeric

2oz of sugar

1 table spoon of plain flour or half a table spoon of cornflour

1 dessert spoon of ginger

### Method

Cover veg and bag of spices in a pan with salt water and simmer until softened (do not over cook the veg as piccalilli is better when crunchy) Drain veg and set aside

In another pan make sauce, blending the flour and spices and sugar with vinegar until thickened on a low heat stirring all the time.

Cool slightly and add veg to sauce and stir over the heat gently so as not to break up the veg. Spoon into warm jars and seal. Leave for a few weeks before eating.







## Old Fashioned American Chow Chow

From the 'Loveless Cafe' website

### Ingredients



- 2 Cups diced green peppers
- 2 cups diced sweet red peppers
- 1.5 cups diced firm green tomatoes
- 2 cups diced shallots
- 1.5 cups diced green cabbage
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 0.75 cup of sugar
- 0.5 cup apple cider vinegar
- 0.25 cup of water
- 0.75 teaspoon dry mustard powder
- 1.5 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- 0.75 teaspoons celery seed
- 0.25 teaspoon turmeric
- 0.25 teaspoon ground ginger

### Method

In a large non-reactive skillet, bring water, salt, sugar and spices to a simmer. Add vinegar and bring to a boil before adding all vegetables. Stir to coat all the vegetables, reduce heat to medium and continue to cook and stir for approximately 5-10 minutes until the vegetables to become tender. Transfer to glass jars and refrigerate. Will keep for 2-3 weeks in a refrigerator.



## Mary Berry's Christmas Chutney

BBC Good Food



### Ingredients

- 900g of tomatoes
- 3 red peppers, 1 large aubergine and 1 green pepper (total weight of about 900g/2lb)
- 700g onion - peeled and finely chopped by hand or in a food processor
- 4 fat cloves of garlic crushed
- 350g granulated sugar
- 300mls white wine vinegar or distilled malt vinegar
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds, crushed
- 1 tbsp paprika
- 2 tsp cayenne pepper

### Method

Peel the tomatoes - prick them with a sharp knife, place in a bowl and cover with boiling water. Leave for a few seconds then drain and cover with cold water. The skins will now come away easily.

Chop the tomatoes and aubergine and seed and chop the peppers. Put in a large heavy-based pan with the onions and garlic and bring to the boil. Cover with a lid, lower the heat and gently simmer for about one hour, stirring occasionally, until tender

Tip the sugar, vinegar, salt, coriander, paprika and cayenne into the pan and bring to the boil over a medium heat, stirring, until the sugar has dissolved. Continue to boil for 30 minutes or so, until the mixture achieves a chunky chutney consistency and the surplus watery liquid has evaporated. Take care towards the end of the cooking time to continue stirring so that the chutney doesn't catch on the bottom of the pan.

Ladle the chutney into sterilised or dishwasher-clean jars (Kilner jars are ideal) and top with paper jam covers. Seal the jars while still hot. Leave to mature for at least a month in a cool dark place.







## Spiced Damson Cheese

by BBC Good Food

### Ingredients

2kg damsons  
300ml water  
1 star anise  
1 cinnamon stick  
granulated sugar (see step 3 for quantities)



### Method

1. Halve and stone the damsons, and put in a large pan with the water and spices. Bring to the boil, then cover and simmer gently for 20-25 mins until the fruit is pulpy.
2. Wash your jars (preferably small wide-necked ones) and lids in hot soapy water, rinse well, then put the jars upright in a roasting tin. Heat in the oven at 180C/160C fan/gas 4 for 10 mins.
3. Press the fruit through a plastic sieve into a bowl or wide jug. Measure the pulp and tip into a preserving pan or large wide pan. For every 600ml of pulp, add 450g of sugar. Add the butter and bring slowly to the boil, stirring, until the sugar has dissolved. Boil steadily until the mixture is thick and pulpy, and a spoon drawn across the base leaves a clean line (or test for set) – this will take 10-20 mins. Pack the cheese into the warm jars, seal and label. Will keep for 1 year.



## Slow Cooker Apple Butter

### Ingredients

6 1/2 pounds apples - peeled, cored and sliced  
1 cup granulated sugar  
1 cup light brown sugar, lightly packed  
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg  
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract



### Method

1. Place the apples in a slow cooker. In a medium bowl, combine sugars, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves and salt. Pour the mixture over the apples and mix well.
2. Cook in slow cooker on low for about 10 hours, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is thickened and dark brown.
3. Uncover, stir in vanilla and continue cooking uncovered on low for about 2 hours.
4. Use an immersion blender to puree the apple butter until smooth.
5. Spoon the mixture into sterile containers, cover and refrigerate for up to two weeks or freeze.
6. Serve on breads, muffins, pork chops or just eat it with a spoon.

Link to other  
Slow cooker  
Recipes

There are plenty of slow cooker recipes for butters on the internet





# WHY NOT TRY FRUIT BUTTERS, LEATHERS OR CHEESES FOR A CHANGE?



## Fruit Butters

A fruit butter is a delicious sweetened fruit purée, cooked to a creamy consistency. When cold, it has a spreadable consistency. The texture of a fruit butter is very much softer than a cheese and more like a butter.

Suitable fruits for butters are - cooking or crab apples, plums, gooseberries, black currants and damsons. Butters are often spiced to enhance their flavours. Ground cloves, and cinnamon are popular spices in apple butters. The fruit is simmered in water and sieved as for fruit cheese, but less sugar is added to the pulp; 225g-345g per 450g of pulp. The pulp is heated with the sugar ( and any spices) then boiled until a smooth, creamy, thick consistency is obtained, with no free liquid. The butter is poured into sterilised, warm jars and covered with an airtight seal.

The roots of apple butter lie in Limburg (Belgium and the Netherlands) and Rhineland (Germany), conceived during the Middle Ages, when the first monasteries (with large fruit yards) appeared. The production of the butter was a perfect way to conserve part of the fruit production of the monasteries in that region, at a time when almost every village had its own apple-butter producers. The production of apple butter was also a popular way of using apples in colonial America, well into the 19th century having been brought over by German settlers. Today in Europe, apple butter is commonly used in the Netherlands (known as appelstroop, meaning apple syrup) and in Germany (known as apfelkraut) and frequently eaten on bread with (or without) thinly sliced cheese and with Sauerbraten (pot roast).



Colonial apple butter making using outdoor fires and kettles.

## Fruit Cheeses

These gorgeous preserves are so named because they are often eaten with or instead of a cheese course. Much more firm than a butter or jam - fruit cheeses are turned or scooped out of moulds and cut into slices. Fruit cheeses can also be eaten with cold meats or curries instead of chutneys or pickles. They are usually made from strong flavoured fruit; damsons, black currants, medlars, figs, quinces, apples and pears and can be spiced and enriched with flavours that deepen over time.

The fruit is cooked in a small amount of water until soft, then thoroughly sieved. The pulp is weighed and 450g of sugar is added to every 450g of pulp (so more than for a butter). The sugar is dissolved in the pulp and the mixture is cooked until the cheese is thick, and when a spoon drawn across the bottom of the pan leaves a clean line. We recommend ramekins or better still wide necked clip top jars for presentation and easy re-sealing.

[Link to Other Fruit Leather Recipes](#)



## Strawberry Leather

(perfect to make with children)

Makes about 18 finger-width strips/rolls

300g apples (roughly two), peeled and cored  
500g strawberries, stalks removed  
1 tsp cooking oil

Preheat the oven to 50C.



Put the fruit in a pan with a lid and cook over a medium heat for about 10 minutes, until completely soft. When cooled, push the pulp through a sieve.

Line a baking tray, around 35cmx30cm, with very lightly oiled greaseproof paper. Pour the pulp on to the baking sheet so that it reaches a thickness of about ½cm.

Put in the oven for about 12 hours. It should feel leathery and dry to touch.

Peel off the paper and cut into whatever shapes you like. Store in an airtight container.





# Preserving Equipment

Customers telephone us often to ask what they really need and which jars or bottles are the best value for various produce and preserving methods. The choice is huge so here we try to point you to popular products and explain a little here.



## Kitchen Kit

Use a good large heavy bottom, wide pan or a specially made maslin pan. Only half fill your pan per batch to avoid splattering the walls. These pans are useful for all preserving not just jam. Use a wooden spoon that you have scalded in boiling water. Be careful not to lose it into your jam! (you can buy special long handled spoons). A funnel with a nice wide neck is also essential and a ladle is useful for decanting into the funnel (stainless steel or non-stick are available). Its useful to have a damp cloth handy for holding warm jars and screwing on lids. A jam thermometer is also useful for judging setting point, but is not essential. Pop a couple of saucers in your freezer for jam making before your start, these will be handy for spooning jam onto later in the process. Labels are important too - with the date as well as the contents shown. If you are making jelly you will also need a muslin cloth or better still a straining kit (see our website ).



41p

## The Right Jar For The Job

### Jams, Jellies and Marmalades

The most economical jars to buy are our classic 1lb, 12oz, 8oz and 41ml mini jam jars with twist off heat sealable lids. These are your typical supermarket sizes and are very popular. Of course the more you buy the cheaper they get. A bargain pack of 192 1Lb Jam Jars works out 41p per jar (£78.75 for 192) that includes VAT and Lids. For those making preserves to sell or give as gifts or those who simply enjoy presentation, the deluxe range offers high quality as do the many shaped and faceted jam jars in many sizes up to 1lb and larger.

The size of jar should relate to the speed at which its contents is likely to be eaten before its quality fades. The key with jam jars is to use a heat sealable and vinegar proof lid, ensuring freshness and food safety.



Tel: 01477  
537 224



Give us a call if you have any questions or visit our showroom in Cheshire if you are nearby: Unit D, Cranage Trade Park, Goostrey Lane, Cranage, Cheshire, CW4 8HE.

## Chutneys, Sweet Pickles and Relishes

You can of course put chutney in jam jars, but chutney has been presented in tall jars traditionally perhaps because of the ease of extracting the produce with a knife. The Victorians brought chutneys back from India in the days of the Raj. Mango chutney has gradually become the various vegetable chutneys we know today. So - tall and thin, with vinegar proof heat sealable twist off lids are economical at £15.05 for a pack of 24 x 212ml jars. Increasingly we find customers using clip top jars with their orange rubber sealing rings - whilst dearer, they can be used over and over for years. They look great too and make lovely reusable gifts.



## Pickling (hot or cold)

Pickled onions, gherkins, garlic, olives, peppers, lemons, mango, eggs, beetroot and more are all available for pickling in vinegar cold or cooking into piccalilli or lime pickles to enjoy with a curry. Again, traditional pickling jars are larger in order to fit whole vegetables or fruits in and get them out with ease. Your classic half gallon or gallon pickle jar is ideal for eggs, gherkins and beetroot - like those we used to see on the bar at our local pub!



Mason jars are perfect for smaller fruit and vegetables and are available in a wide range of sizes and are lovely to look at on the larder shelves. Famillia Wiss are the Rolls Royce of jars and will last donkeys years. Both come with the two part disc and band lids for excellent sealing. Clip tops work very well for piccalilli with their nice wide necks.



See Pickle Jar page of the Wares Website

1 Gallon Pickle and 0.5 Gallon Pickle

WARES  
— of —  
Knutsford





## Dry Storage

Of course any airtight jar is appropriate for home storage of flour, oats, cereals, nuts, pulses, tea or coffee. But you can transform the look of your kitchen for relatively little cost with characterful or **vintage style glass jars**. Glass is also far safer than plastic for long term food storage - it is a stable compound and will not leech chemicals even in direct sunlight. **Le Parfait, makers of high quality glass jars with their distinctive orange sealing ring** was established in 1930 in Reims, France. The company operates one of the most modern glass manufacturing plants in the world, using 50% recycled glass and complying with all EU CO2 emission targets. Their jars cost a little more, but are fantastic quality. We also love the vintage ribbed collection.



£21.65 a set (also sold individually)



£17.60a set (also sold individually)

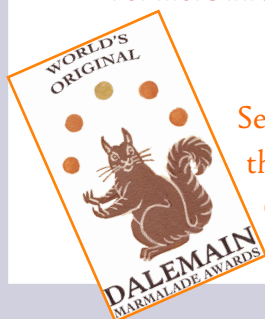
## Canning - also known as bottling

Canning is the storage of all manner of cooked and raw produce in glass jars or tins. This is the process that the food manufacturing industry uses and it can be replicated on a small scale at home. Indeed canning in jars - which has long been a very popular activity in the U.S.A - is fast becoming popular in this country too. Canning is rewarding and economical. The process saves freezer space and cost, preserving food for up to 5 years it uses far less sugar and makes sharing produce easy. **We recommend Mason Jars (the same as the U.S 'Ball' Jar), Familia Wiss Terrines and Kilner Jars for canning. All good quality tempered glass and complete with their two part lids. Spare discs can also be bought for repeated jar use over the years.**



Jars suitable for canning all use a special two part self-sealing lid. This is key. The disc section has a special compound around its inside circumference. Before bathing or steaming your jars the disc is placed on top of the clean jar opening and held in place by the screw band section.

**For more information on canning - see edition 2 of The Good Life.**



See back cover for details of the Dalemain Marmalade Competition & Festival



## Flavoured Vinegars, Oils & Cordials

There is a wide selection of bottles available in every size and shape you can imagine. For oil a corked or twist off cap will do, vinegar needs a lined metal cap (to prevent rusting), plastic cap or cork if you don't plan to transport. The 16oz Vintage Oil is our most popular and comes with twist off and bakerlite screw cap options, or a cork.



## Sauces and Ketchup

As people become more and more health conscious we are selling more and more sauce bottles. Many of the traditional styles are available for homemade salad cream, worcester sauce, chilli sauces, ketchups and dressings.

**The 250ml Tiptree Sauce is a best seller at £7.30 for a pack of six.**

**Take a look on the website for our full selection under bottles/sauce bottles.**



## Fruit Cheeses, Butters & Curds

Mouth-watering and not as popular as as they should be. Fruit butters and fruit cheese are old-fashioned names for preserves made with fruit puree and sugar. Generally the fruits used for jellies are also the best ones for butter and cheeses and they can even be made from the pulp left in the jelly bag after the juice has dripped. Two products from one fruit! **Cheeses are best in a ramekin from which they can be turned out and sliced. Butters and curds are best in a small clip top jar - of which there are some lovely designs.**



## Recycling Used Jars?

Remember you must use new lids. Lids lose their self-seal adhesive once they have been used once. Simply measure the neck of your jar and buy low cost new **38mm, 43mm, 48mm, 53mm, 58mm, 63mm, 66mm, 70mm, 82mm or 100mm** lids in various colours.





## Collected Wisdom on Sloe Gin

**You will need:** 500g ripe sloes - 250g golden caster sugar  
1 litre bottle of good quality gin - a large 2 litre jar or two /three smaller jars and half a dozen screw top or swing stopper bottles.

Sloe Gin Liqueur is simple to make and delicious, here we have collected some tips from reputable sources to help you make the most of the your foraging.

Pick your sloes just after the first frost of Autumn and when they make a 'popping' sound if you squeeze them - rather than feeling hard. Soak your sloes for 10 minutes to ensure maggots are released from the inside of the fruit (this is also important for blackberries).

Freeze you sloes overnight in a bag or box - this will ensure they skins split evenly and the flavour is released well.  
Put the still frozen sloes into a large clip top jar such as the 2 litre Kilner jar - half fill the jar - then add the sugar and gin (good quality) almost to the top. Make sure your jars are sterile (see back page).

Place the jars in a cool dark place and give them a really good shake twice a week for at least three months and much longer if you can. When the time is up line a plastic sieve with a muslin set over a bowl, and strain the sloe gin through it. Decant into sterile bottles and enjoy at your leisure!

See the Wares website for a lovely collection of swing top bottles, great for Christmas gifts.

**WARES**  
— of —  
*Knutsford*



Sloes are the astringent fruit of the Blackthorn tree.



Blackthorn tree flowering in spring



# Beautiful Recipes from 'Nutmeg Seven'



## Spiced Apple and Date Jam 'Apple Pie In a Jar'

### Ingredients

3kg cooking apples (weighed after peeling and coring), half finely diced, half finely sliced  
2 cinnamon sticks  
12 cloves  
2kg granulated sugar  
750g light muscovado sugar  
Juice of 2 lemons  
550g stoned dates, roughly chopped



### Method

Put the apples in a large pan (you might have to split this between two large pans) with the cinnamon sticks, cloves and sugar. Squeeze over the lemon juice. Slowly heat until the apples start to release liquid and the sugar starts to melt. Increase the heat until everything is watery, stirring regularly to prevent the sugar catching on the bottom of the pan and burning. Put a small plate in the freezer.

Bring to the boil and boil until the apples have softened and the liquid has started to turn golden and reduce (you will still have some chunks of apple left through) – about 15-20 minutes. Add the dates, then continue to simmer for about 30 minutes to an hour.

To test for a set, spoon a small amount of jam onto the cold plate from the freezer and run your finger down the middle – if it wrinkles and parts cleanly, then it's ready. If not, continue to boil for a little while longer. Decant into sterile jars.



## Homemade Lemon Curd

### Ingredients

Zest and juice of 4 large lemons  
170g golden caster sugar  
100g cold butter, cubed  
3 large eggs and 1 egg yolk



### Method

Put the lemon juice, zest, sugar and butter in a large heatproof mixing bowl. Put on top of a pan of simmering water (don't let the bottom of the bowl touch the water). Whisk the mixture gently as it heats up, until the butter has melted.

Whisk the eggs and egg yolk briefly, then add to the mixture in the bowl. Cook for around 15-20 minutes over a medium heat, whisking frequently, until the curd thickens and leaves ribbons when you remove the whisk from it.

Remove the bowl from the pan and leave to cool, whisking occasionally, until lukewarm. Pot in sterilized jars. It will keep in the fridge for a week or so, but also freezes very well.



Elly McClosland runs her 'Nutmeg seven' website inspired by fruit and spices. Worth a look!





## Crunchy Dill Pickled Cucumber

by BBC Good Food

### Ingredients

1kg small pickling or ridged cucumber  
85g coarse crystal sea salt  
For the pickling vinegar  
1 tbsp black peppercorns  
1 tbsp coriander seeds  
1 tbsp yellow mustard seeds  
10 cloves  
few pieces of mace blades  
pinch of dried chilli flakes (optional)  
2 bay leaves  
700ml white wine vinegar, plus 3½ tbsp  
100g white sugar  
handful of dill sprigs



### Method

Cut the pickling or ridged cucumbers into sticks or slices. Layer with the coarse crystal sea salt in a large bowl, cover and leave overnight. Drain away the brine, then rinse.

To make the pickling vinegar, put the whole spices in a medium saucepan. Toast over a low heat until they begin to smell aromatic. Add the dried chilli flakes last, as these can easily catch. Add the bay, pour in all of the vinegar and sugar, let it dissolve, and bring to a simmer. Add the dill sprigs.

Pack the cucumber into jars, pour over the hot vinegar and seal. Ready to eat in 2 weeks, or longer, if you like.



## Pickled Beetroot

by Good to Know

### Ingredients

About 1.5kg (total weight) fresh beetroot  
For the spiced vinegar:  
2.5cm piece cinnamon stick  
1tsp each black peppercorns, cloves and yellow mustard seeds  
2tsps whole allspice  
3 bay leaves  
2tbsps caster sugar  
1 litre distilled malt vinegar  
4 wide-necked jars, sterilised



### Method

To make the spiced vinegar: Put the spices, sugar and 300ml of the vinegar in a pan. Bring to the boil slowly, take it off the heat and set aside; overnight, covered, if you have time, to let the flavours develop.

Wash the beetroots carefully without rubbing the skin off. Put them into a large pan of boiling water and simmer for about 1/2 hours until just tender. Drain them and leave to cool.

Rub off the beetroot skin, then slice the roots (about 1cm thick) and pack into jars. Pour in the vinegar and spices. Cover, seal and label. Leave a week before eating. It keeps for 3 months.







## Rose Petal Jelly

by Martha Sweet

Rose jelly is sweet and floral, and is lovely on buttered bread. Make it with roses you grow yourself to be sure they're chemical free. You will need liquid pectin (to thicken the jelly) and rose water for flavour. These are available in most supermarkets.

### Ingredients

2 cups water  
3 cups unsprayed pink rose petals, thicker tissue at base of petals removed  
2 1/2 cups sugar  
1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice  
3 ounces liquid pectin  
1 tablespoon rose water



### Method

Bring the water to a boil in a medium saucepan; remove from heat. Add petals; cover, and steep for 30 minutes. Strain liquid into clean saucepan. Discard petals.

Add sugar and lemon juice to pan. Bring mixture to a boil, stirring, over medium-high heat. Boil 2 minutes; add pectin, and boil 2 minutes (for firmer jelly, boil up to 2 minutes more). Remove from heat, add rose water. Pour into sterilized jars, and let cool completely. Store in refrigerator up to 6 months.



## Lavender Jelly

by Howling Duck Ranch

### Ingredients

3 1/2 cups water  
1/2 cup dried lavender flowers  
Juice of 1 lemon (1/4 cup)  
1 (1 3/4-ounces) box powdered pectin or 1 pouch (3-ounces) liquid pectin  
4 cups sugar



### Method

In a large saucepan over high heat bring water just to a boil. Remove from heat, stir in dried lavender flowers, and let steep for 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, strain mixture into a deep kettle or pot, discarding the lavender flowers. Stir in lemon juice and pectin; continue stirring until the pectin is dissolved.

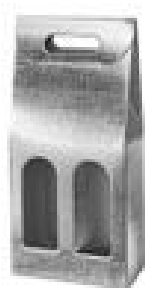
Over high heat, bring the mixture to a boil; add sugar. When the jelly solution returns to a hard rolling boil, let it boil for 2 to 4 minutes (see below), stirring occasionally.

After boiling, transfer the jelly into hot sterilized jars. Fill them to within 1/4 inch of the top, wipe any spilled jam off the top, seat the lids and tighten the ring around them.

Makes 2.5 Pints.



**WARES**  
— of —  
*Knutsford*



Wares has a lovely collection of packaging, ribbons, labels and tags to fit many bottles and jars.





goodfood



# Spiced Raspberry Cake

## Ingredients

250g pack butter softened  
450g plain flour  
140g golden caster sugar  
140g light soft brown sugar  
5 large egg  
4 tbsp honey  
2 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1 tsp mixed spice  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp ground cloves  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp ground ginger  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp salt  
4 tbsp buttermilk

## For the Filling & Icing

200g raspberry jam  
200g raspberry  
plus extra to decorate (optional)  
200g pack butter softened  
200g pack soft cheese  
200g icing sugar, sifted,  
plus extra for dusting (optional)

## Method

Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas 3. Grease and line 3 x 20cm cake tins with baking parchment. Tip all the cake ingredients into a large bowl and beat with an electric whisk until smooth. Divide between tins and bake for 25 mins until a skewer poked in comes out clean. Turn out onto wire racks to cool.

Split each cake in half. Mash the jam and raspberries together, then spread over 5 cake halves, leaving 1 top half free. Sandwich together, with the plain cake on top. Put on a plate and cling film thoroughly. Invert a cake tin on top like a hat and top with 3 x 400g food cans. Leave overnight.

To finish, beat the butter, cheese and icing sugar together, then spread over the cake. Decorate with extra raspberries and a dusting of icing sugar, if you like.

WARES  
— of —  
Knutsford







## Blackcurrant Chilli Jam

By Vivien Lloyd

### Ingredients

1kg (2lb) black currants  
852ml (1½ pints) water  
1.4kg (3lb) sugar  
1 Habanero Chilli



### Method

Using a fork, remove the currants from their strings. Pick the fruit over and take out any stray leaves. Place the currants in a large preserving pan with the water. Bruise the chilli with a rolling pin and tie it up in a small piece of muslin and add this to the pan.

Simmer the fruit very gently until tender (25–30 minutes). Warm the sugar in an ovenproof bowl in a low oven, 140°C (275°F/Gas 1).

Remove the sugar from the oven. Squeeze the liquid from the muslin bag back into the pan by pressing it against the side of the pan with a spoon. Stir the liquid into the pan. Discard the muslin bag.

Add the sugar to the preserving pan and stir until it has dissolved. Bring the jam quickly to a rolling boil and boil hard until setting point is reached.

Test for a set after 5 minutes using the flake, cold plate or thermometer test. As soon as setting point is reached, remove the pan from the heat and leave it to stand for a few minutes. Push any scum from the surface of the pan to the side and remove it with a metal spoon.

Gently stir the jam and pour it into clean warm jars, up to the brim. Seal immediately either with new twist-top lids or waxed discs and cellophane covers secured with rubber bands. If using cellophane covers, apply them when the jam is cold in the jars.

Makes about 2.25kg (5lb)



## Damson Plum & Gin Jam

By love and olive oil

### Ingredients

3 pounds damson plums, pitted  
3 cups granulated sugar  
1/2 cup lemon juice  
1/4 cup gin



### Method

Place pitted plums in the bowl of a food processor; pulse briefly until coarsely chopped (do not purée). You can also chop the plums by hand if you prefer a coarser texture.

In a large nonreactive bowl, gently toss the plums with the sugar. Cover and let stand at room temperature for at least 4 hours or in the refrigerator overnight.

Prepare canner and wash/sterilize 6 half-pint (or equivalent) canning jars. Keep jars in hot (not boiling) water until ready to use. Place 2 or 3 small plates in the freezer.

Transfer the plums to a large nonreactive saucepan and add lemon juice and gin. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, then reduce heat to medium and cook, uncovered, for 10 minutes, stirring frequently.

Spoon 1 teaspoon of jam onto a chilled plate to test if the jam is ready (the jam is ready if it wrinkles when nudged gently with a finger). If it isn't yet ready, continue to cook for 1 to 2 minutes, then test again on a clean plate.

Ladle hot jam into jars, leaving 1/4-inch of headspace. Remove any air bubbles and adjust headspace, if necessary. Wipe the rims clean and top with lid; screw on ring until finger tight. Process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes.

Remove from water and let cool completely, 12 to 24 hours. Check seals. Any unsealed jars should be refrigerated and used within 1 month.





# How to Sterilise Jars & Bottles

When preserving food good hygiene is essential to avoid contaminating produce. Sterilising jars and lids and all preserving equipment is essential and should be undertaken alongside food preparation, meaning jars are washed and sterilised just as the food is ready.

Before starting to make your preserves, ensure you have washed all your equipment really well. Simmer funnels, spoons and tongs in boiling water for 10 minutes and leave on a clean tea towel or kitchen roll to dry and cool before use.



There are a number of methods for sterilising the jars. Some customers prefer sterilising in a microwave or dishwasher but our recommended method is as follows:

1. Pre-heat the oven to 120C
2. Thoroughly wash the jars and lids/seals in hot soapy water and rinse.
3. Leave the jars upside down on a clean tea towel to drain. Put the lids on a separate clean tea towel, spreading them out upside down.
4. After a few minutes, place on a clean oven tray with the jars in the upright position.
5. Place the jars in the oven and pop the lids and seals into a pan of boiling water, around 10 -15 minutes before you think your jam/preserves will be ready.
6. Remember it doesn't matter if the jars are in the oven longer - as setting point can be unpredictable.
7. So, once setting point is reached, remove the pan from the stove and carefully remove the lids from the pan with tongs and the jars from the oven with gloves and allow to cool just a little.
8. Transfer still warm produce to the still warm jars and seal with waxed discs (wax side down) and pop on the seals/lids. Of course modern lids have a heat sealable band and lining and so wax discs are in fact optional. A damp cloth is handy for handling the jars .

**WARES**  
— of —  
*Knutsford*



The process for bottles is just the same, being sure to remove any non-glass feature of the bottle such as rubber seals or stoppers.

Competition for Homemade Marmalade - Deadline for Entries 10th February 2017.

The full entrance fee goes towards Hospice care in the UK and around the world. To enter visit: [www.dalemainmarmaladeawards.com](http://www.dalemainmarmaladeawards.com)



**The Dalemain World's Original Marmalade Awards & Festival 2017**

'Penrith Goes Orange' Marmalade Festival in Penrith, Cumbria on the 18th & 19th March 2017



**Are you a marmalade maker?  
Why not enter the world famous  
Dalemain amateur marmalade  
competition?**

