

The Good Life

Spring/Summer 2017

'All Things Preserving'

Recipes, tips, customer letters & Inspiration!



* Amazon or Ebay customer? Please see our website for a huge range and better prices *



Confit de Canard

Dear Wares of Knutsford,

I have now put the Familia Wiss Terrine jars you recommended to good use and they are superb and just the job for what I needed them for. I thought you would like to know what I have done so you can share how good these jars are with your other customers:

I absolutely love Confit du Canard (duck legs, cooked in duck fat)! This sounds so very French, which I suppose it is. To me, a 76 year old bloke, living for the most part, on his own, it is my staple fast food standby and emergency go to meal if unexpected visitors arrive. We all have the 5-00pm crisis (Oh! what shall I cook this evening) Ah! I know, Confit du Canard. Open the jar, remove one, onto a trivet, into the oven for 15 to 20 minutes and it's

ready. I always prepare 4 duck legs each time. Thank you once again for these excellent jars and for your professional and courteous customer service. Bon appetit!

Arthur Deller, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire.



Method

Salt each duck leg with rock salt in a large basin for 2 hours turn for a further 2 hours then wipe off all the salt with a kitchen towel. This process removes all the liquid from the duck, I use about 100 g of salt.

Bring a pan of duck fat to a gentle simmer, (If I can't get duck fat I use goose) and immerse the duck legs, make sure they are covered.

Cover with a lid or a cartouche and transfer to a preheated oven, gas 1, 140 C for 1-1/2 hrs. Remove and allow to cool. Sterilise the jars. When cool and before the duck fat sets, pack the duck legs into a jar and cover with the duck fat.

I think the Familia Wiss Terrine 750 or 1000ml are ideal jars I normally do 2 to each jar and I keep them in the fridge. When the fancy takes you (and it will), take out a duck leg, wipe off the duck fat (not all of it) onto the trivet, into the oven, gas mark 7, 220 C for 15 to 20 mins until heated through and the skin is crisp.

I like mine with Delia Smith's braised red cabbage and apple. If anyone else turns up they will be most welcome!

Rum Arrangé with Figs, Grapes and Vanilla

Ingredients list

1 Litre rum
12 fresh figs
1 bunch white grapes
2 vanilla pods
Sugarcane syrup

Preparation

Cut the fresh figs into quarters.
Cut the grapes in half.
Split the vanilla pods in half.
Fill the jars with figs, grapes, vanilla pods, then add the rum.
Add sugarcane syrup to taste.
Store in a dry, cool, dark place, and wait four months before serving.



Suggested Jar - 1.5 Litre Super £5.64 each

Marble Cake Preserve



Suggested Jar
500ml Terrine (£24.00 For 6)



Suggested Jar
500ml Terrine (£24.00 For 6)

Ingredients list

200 g of flour
200 g of caster sugar
200 g of butter
1 package of vanilla-flavoured sugar
4 eggs
15 g of cocoa
Number of servings
4 to 6 servings



You can make cakes (or preserves of course) in any Le Parfait or Mason jars as they are thicker glass.

Preparation

In a salad bowl, soften the butter using a spatula. Add the flour, sugar, eggs and vanilla-flavoured sugar. Mix until you have obtained a uniform batter (you may add baking powder at this stage for a fluffier cake, but remember to leave extra room for rising when filling the containers). Grease the inside of the terrines with butter, just like for a cake pan. Fill them to one-third. Keep aside some of the batter for the chocolate part of this easy-to-make cake. Add the cocoa to the remaining batter, and then pour the mixture into the terrines. Using a fork, make streaks in the batter inside the terrines, making sure not to mix. Make sure the terrines are only half-full, as the cake will rise. Pre-cook without the lid in the oven at 180°C for 20 minutes. Let cool. Tip: to add flavouring to this easy-to-make cake, you can add a teaspoon of rum to the cocoa before cooking.

LeParfait Dry Storage Jars

Duck Confit:
Suggested Jar
750ml Terrine
(£24.90 For 6)



Le Parfait

Expensive but probably the best quality jars in the worldfind more fantastic recipes at www.leparfait.com



www.larocheparthenay.weebly.com



Please send your stories, tips or recipes to:
info@waresofknutsford.co.uk

What a wonderful and surreal Christmas we had. We couldn't believe how lucky we were to have found our dream house, our little peace of French paradise.

With Christmas over it was time to start discovering our new life. We knew virtually nothing about the area, didn't know anyone, none of us spoke the language and we knew nothing about the French way of doing things.

Customer letters

An Inspiring New Life In France For.....The Hay Family.

La Roche Parthenay is our gorgeous old farmhouse set in 'The Gâtine Hills' of Western France surrounded by beautiful apple orchards and countryside.

We came to France after a reality check when in February 2014 our youngest, then 11 year old 'all singing all dancing' James, fell into a coma. I'm sure you can imagine our world was turned upside down. So after James came out of hospital we all came to terms as a family, that we needed to change our whole ethos on the way we worked and lived, so we did.

There was a lot to do, we had to close down three large business premises, plus a children's dance and theatre school. Gosh we had accumulated a lot of stuff "we can't take that lot with us" said the voice inside my head, so after endless eBaying, car booting and house clearance sales, giving stuff away to friends, family and charity shops, we had made a dent in it, but it still took two massive articulated Lorry loads to move us.

But never mind we did it and on the 23rd December 2014 we excitedly arrived with Lorry loads of stuff in tow to our new home in France.

The farm house had not been lived in for over three years so unfortunately arriving two days before Christmas was not the best idea we had had!!! The house was very cold and damp, there was no electricity at that point, no heating and we couldn't even light the log burner in the kitchen as the chimney was blocked by a couple of birds nests. Still on the brighter side we found a half bottle of calor gas so we could light the stove to boil a kettle, rub our hands together around the flames to keep warm and drink lots of tea.

After a lot of 'pardons' and 'desolay's' we managed to sort out the electrics, the chimneys got swept and we started unpacking. All we knew was we were surrounded by new challenges but our challenges were nothing compared to what James had to face, he was definitely the bravest of us all as he had to also start a new school in the local village.

It wasn't long before the nights started to shorten and as we moved into spring we noticed funny things started to grow? We had acquired many unknown shrubs, trees and plants not to mention the three sheep and a ram that came with the house as well. We didn't have a clue. We asked some new local English friends that we had met but they didn't know either. We asked some people we didn't know, but they just spoke to us in French!!!!

Amongst other things we had found these two fabulous bushy trees that flowered stunning pink and white blossom. (don't ask, we hadn't got a clue) As the day's grew longer all the trees started to bare fruit and so did our two fabulous bushy trees. We took pictures and sent them to a friend that we knew who had a gardening guru but he didn't know either. So we Googled and Yahoo'd, we Bing'ed and Wikipedia'ed and then there it was, an ancient fruit - we had quince trees!

These two trees were loaded with yellow furry fruit and we must of had over two hundred kilos of them. OMG now what are we going to do with them?



La Roche Parthenay Farm, 79240 Vernoux en Gâtine - Email: juliafaestvedt@gmx.com

Well we made some quince apple pie, that was ok, jarred some quince pulp, and we gave lots of quinces away too, to anyone that wanted them, but we still had oodles left. So back to Yahoo and it would seemed that everyone makes jelly out of them. We had never even made jam before let alone jelly..... you can't eat them raw so we had to find away to cook them fast before they all became rotten - hummm..... jelly here we come.

The house was filled with the most amazing sweet aroma and as the quinces were cooking their colour transformed from a mucky brownie yellow colour into the most magical golden red. We filled every jar we could find, old jam jars, pickle jars even old coffee jars, anything that was glass and had a lid. We were so proud of ourselves patting each other on the back and promptly gave them away to our new friends and visiting family. Then we started getting this amazing feed back from everyone, "you should sell this, it's delicious I'd buy some."

We heard about a small local village Christmas Fayre coming up so we thought why not, let's have a go - so we booked ourselves in. First things first, we needed to find some jars that looked a little more professional and appealing. A lot of time was spent looking and at first we couldn't find anything we thought was right, then 'Wares of Knutsford' had just the jar we were looking for, so we placed our first order for the 212ml 'Globe' Jar.

The little jars arrived within the week all safe and sound, beautifully wrapped in tissue paper, plus a bag full of shiny gold lids and tucked inside my box was this sweet little magazine - which I loved.

The Christmas fayre was fast approaching so we needed to get a wiggle on. We made a good size batch of quince jellies but felt that we needed something else, something different to offer as well, "just in case somebody didn't like quince!!!!" but we were running out of time and the main fruit harvest was now over for that year.. Whilst walking our dog we stumbled across these 'pollenating crabapples' in the orchards, yes, brilliant, crabapple jelly, so we got making and then started to have some fun ideas.

We had a very healthy chilli plant growing so we made a small batch of crabapple and chilli jelly, then thought what else could we do, fresh ginger sounds rather nice, so we made a small batch of that too.



The jellies tasted fantastic so we had another go with the remaining quinces and it was to die for, it was like we had just found the Holy Grail, we were like excited

kids in a sweet shop. We used the old inkjet printer to print some little labels to go on the top of the jars obviously saying what was in them and an ingredient list that started with 'made with love, and at the bottom of the label it said "best before the end of the jar" We tied some pretty ribbons round their tops and we were good to go.

The day of the Fayre arrived, we loaded the car with our jellies, delicious home made bread for people to try the jellies on and some large cake stands to put some jars on to help make the display interesting. We were shown to our table, we set them up then dressed up in our chefs white aprons and silly Christmas hats as the key was to have fun, enjoy the day and not to be upset if we didn't sell any. People started arriving and to our amazement started buying our jellies, in fact we sold out of everything that had chilli or ginger in it, and then most of the quince went as well. We couldn't believe it what a great day we had and made a little bit of money too (always a bonus).



One year on and lots has changed around here, first we converted our two downstairs bedrooms into B&B bedrooms and have made our poor guests eat lots of jelly for breakfast. Also we took the long bureaucratic road to officially registered ourselves as farmers which then enabled us to launched our jellies and so 'Gelée de Gâtine' was born. Hummm.....well we are still not really sure what we are doing, truth be told but we are having such fun learning about everything as we go.

This year we have been really busy harvesting the hedgerow elderberries and blackberries that grow by the lakes, as well as the damsons, cherries, peaches and plums, and of course our quinces and crabapples. We are doing lots more Christmas marketstoo and of course taking our wonderful quince and crabapple jellies. We will also be taking our new creations such as Mulled elderberry jelly, Christmas cake jelly and one of my favourites, Ginger beer jelly. We have just placed our 6th order with Knutsford and have doubled the amount. We have no doubt that these lovely jars are seriously helping us to sell our product. Good luck to you all in your preserving adventures!

All the best!
Kirkland and Julia Hay

facebook



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.

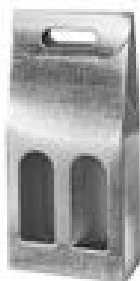
Over high heat, bring the mixture to a boil; add sugar. When the jelly solution returns to a hard rolling boil, let it boil for 2 to 4 minutes (see below), stirring occasionally.

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.



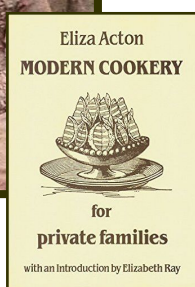
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Wares has a lovely collection of packaging, ribbons, labels and tags to fit many bottles and jars.



Collected Preserving Tips From Down The Years



Eliza Acton
Born 1788

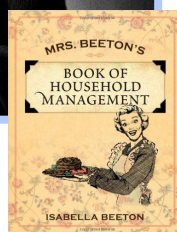
Widely recognised as the inventor of the modern cookery book and by some as 'The Real Mrs Beeton'.

Let everything used for the purpose be delicately clean and dry; bottles especially so.

Never place a preserving pan directly into the fire as this will render the preserve liable to burn...it should be on a trivet or the lower bar of the range.

To preserve the true flavour and colour of fruit in jams and jellies, boil them rapidly until they are well reduced but still have sufficient juice to disolve the sugar.

Never use tin, iron or pewter spoons or skimmers for preserves, they will convert the colour of red fruit into a dingy purple and impart, besides, a very unpleasant flavour.



Mrs Beeton
Born 1865

The famous Mrs Beeton, her name has become associated with knowledge and authority on Victorian cooking and home management.

Fruit intended for preserving should be gathered in the morning and in dry weather with the morning sun upon them. Fruit gathered wet or foggy weather will soon mildew and will be of no service in preserving. There is no mistake so common than to suppose half ripe or over-ripe fruit is good for jam.

Many fruits, when preserved by boiling, lose much of their peculiar and delicate flavour, as, for instance, pine-apples; and this inconvenience may, in some instances, be remedied by preserving them without heat. Cut the fruit in slices about one fifth of an inch thick, strew powdered loaf sugar an eighth of an inch thick on the bottom of a jar, and put the slices on it. Put more sugar on this, and then another layer of the slices, and so on till the jar is full. Place the jar with the fruit up to the neck in boiling water, and keep it there till the sugar is completely dissolved, which may take half an hour, removing the scum as it rises. Lastly, tie a wet bladder over the mouth of the jar, or cork and wax it.

Margueritte Patten 1940's onwards. The famous home economist, credited with teaching the nation to grow, cook and preserve through the food scarce years of the war,



Always select firm ripe, but not over ripe fruit. Ripe fruit loses it's pectin content, making it hard to set. Pulp very ripe fruit instead.

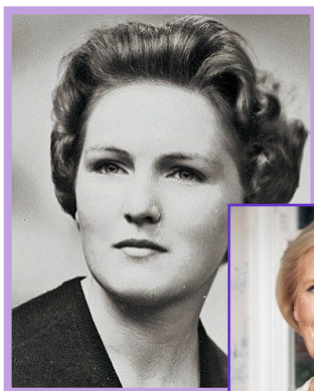
Many people think all fruits need 1lb of sugar to 1lb of fruit in jam making. This is not so, it varies depending on the natural pectin content of the fruit (see table over leaf).

Do stew the fruit very slowly before adding the sugar so that a) all the pectin (natural setting agent) is released b) the skins soften c) the jam or marmalade will have a better colour.

When the sugar has dissolved, boil the jam RADIDLY WITHOUT STIRING to reach setting point quickly. The quicker the jam sets, the better the yeald will be..(nb: proceed with caution and stir if you think the jam might catch).

Test early for setting.....some jams are ready in 3-5 minutes, others in 10-15 or longer.

When making chutney, always use pure clear malt vinegar and add it gradually to the mixture to preserve the flavour of the vegetables.



Mary Berry
1950's onwards

When making jam using chunks of a fruit - such as strawberry's. Leave the pan to stand for 10 minutes once setting point is reached then stir gently to distribute the fruit. That way the jam will have thickened sufficiently for the fruit to remain evenly suspended through the jar - rather than floating to the top and leaving you with only jelly at the bottom.

When stirring your jam, always stir in the same direction, rather than a figure of eight or switching direction. That was the bubbles will disappear.

Don't worry too much about sugar scum at the end. Remove the worst of it with a sieve and add a small knob of butter right at the end - and it will disappear.

If using ripe fruit, or fruit low in pectin, such as strawberry's, the addition of an apple, a few gooseberry's or some redcurrants will help the set without the need for artificial pectin.

Be exact when measuring ingredients, it will make for a much better preserve.



Delia Smith
1970's onwards

When making Marmalade simmer the oranges and shred, but then return them to the simmering juice and leave over night before continuing your recipe. This deepens the flavour of your marmalade.

Soft-skinned fruits, such as strawberries, which tend to disintegrate when cooked, should be soaked in sugar first, to harden them and help keep the fruit whole in the finished jam



Don't try to make too large a quantity of jam in one go. It will take far too long to come to the boil, and then will not boil rapidly enough to produce a good set.

Don't worry about any scum that rises to the surface while the jam is boiling - if you keep skimming it off, you'll finish with no jam at all! Instead, wait until you have a set, then remove the jam from the heat and stir in a small lump of butter, which will disperse the scum.

Once the jam has reached setting point, leave it to settle for 15 minutes or so - particularly with jam containing whole fruit, such as strawberry or damson, or chunky marmalade - to prevent the fruit from rising to the top when it's poured into the jar.



Pam 'The Jam'
Corbin River Cottage - 2015

Don't forget you can freeze Seville oranges whole when they arrive in the shops - and make your marmalade later in the year when the mood takes you.

Remember you can use unrefined, demerara or muscavado sugar when preserving - adding flavour and depth of colour to your jams and chutney's.



Roasting your vegetables before making chutney from them cuts down the cooking time, makes chopping easier work and adds gorgeous flavour to your chutney.

Bottling fruit in mason or clip top jars is not so popular these days which is a real shame.

Remember you can bottle all kinds of fruit in a light sugar syrup, very easily and they will last for 12 months.

Lovely to make pies and tarts: with through the year.



Rhubarb Jam - remember the white bit at the bottom of the stick is full of flavour and natural sweetness - so include

Mason Ball Jars and bottling Fruits

Correct Proportions for Jam Making.....



Many people believe that 1lb of sugar to 1lb of fruit is 'about right' for jams and marmalades - not so says Marguerite Patten. In this table she provides the correct ratio's for various fruits and guidance on preparation and acid content - allowing us to fling aside the recipe books and venture forth.....



1lb Fruit When Pealed and Stoned	To Prepare	Water	Sugar	Extra Acid	Final Quantity Of Jam
Apple 1lb (and/or) Blackberry 1lb	Peel, core, wash, slice, drain	4 tablespoons	2lb		3 ½ lb
Apple Ginger	Cut apples into cubes, add 1 teaspoon ground ginger	Simmer & Stand for 12 hours	1lb		1 ² / ₃ lb
Apricot	Halve, stone if wished	2 tablespoons	1lb	Juice ½ lemon	1 ² / ₃ lb
Blackcurrant	Remove stalks, wash and drain	¾ Litre	1 ¼ lb		Just over 2lb
Cherry (Red Morello) Black	Wash Wash	4 tablespoons 2-3 tablespoons	1lb 12oz	Juice 1 Lemon	1 ² / ₃ lb Just over 1 ½ lb
Damson	Wash, stone during cooking of fruit or sieve, return to pan	4 tablespoons if fruit is ripe; ½ pint of fruit under ripe	1lb 1 ¼ lb		1 ² / ₃ lb Just over 2lb
Gooseberry	'Top and tail'	4 tablespoons if fruit is ripe; ½ pint of fruit under ripe	1lb 1 ¼ lb		1 ² / ₃ lb Just over 2lb
Loganberry	Wash and drain		1lb		1 ² / ₃ lb
Plum	Halve, stone if wished	2 tablespoons	1lb	Juice ½ lemon	1 ² / ₃ lb
Quince 1lb Apple 1lb	Peel, core and chop	12 tablespoons	2lb		3 ⅓ 1lb
Raspberry (and/or) Redcurrant	Wash, drain		1lb		1 ² / ₃ lb
Strawberry	Wash, drain		1lb	Juice 1 lemon or 4 tbsp. red current juice	1 ² / ₃ lb
Lemon Marmalade	Prepare and simmer according to your preferred method (with or without pith)	2 pints	2lb		3 ⅓ 1lb
Grapefruit Marmalade	Prepare and simmer according to your preferred method (with or without pith)	2 ½ pints	2 ½ lb	Juice 1 Lemon	Just over 4lb
Seville Marmalade	Prepare and simmer according to your preferred method (with or without pith)	3 pints	3 lb	Juice 1 ½-2 Lemons or 1 level tspn. citric acid	5lb
Rhubarb and Ginger	Cut apples and rhubarb into cubes, add 1 teaspoon ground ginger	Simmer & stand for 12 hours	1lb		1 ² / ₃ lb
Marrow and Ginger	Cut Marrow and rhubarb into cubes, add 1 teaspoon ground ginger	Simmer & stand for 12 hours	1lb	Juice 1 lemon or 4 tbsp. red current juice	1 ² / ₃ lb



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.

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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!

Beautiful Hand Painted Jar and Bottle Labels and Tags

We have commissioned water colour and acrylic artists to create lovely ranges of labels and tags especially for preserving enthusiasts and artisan makers.

Available in packs of 18 all the way up to wholesale orders.

