

Preserving Basics

1. Weigh and measure ingredients carefully.
2. Equipment – Please bring the following to each class.
 - Preserving pan - stainless steel with a heavy bottom is great, heavy duty aluminium is commonly used. The pan must not be brass or copper. It will be easiest if you bring your own pan rather than rely on the school having a suitable one.
 - Wooden spoon for stirring; metal gets too hot to handle. The school has wooden spoons but may not appreciate them turning red or whatever colour your preserving is.
 - Jars - Calculate the approximate volume of product you will make (add volume of ingredients if the recipe does not give a yield), measure the volume of your jars and work out how many you're likely to need. Bring a couple of extras.
 - Lids - Options for lids are screw top lids, cellophane circles and rubber bands from the jam cover packets (supermarket), or a wax layer and paper/cellophane top. Jars should not be chipped around the rim.
 - Pot scrubber to clean your pan properly after use;.
3. Jars should be clean and hot before filling. Easiest method is to wash, rinse and dry, then heat them in the oven on low heat.
4. Seal jars with cellophane jam covers (these won't keep the wasps out), wax and paper cover, or screw top lids. Screw top lids must be rust-free and can be re-used several times.
5. Wipe the outside of jars when jam is cool.
6. Label with name and date. It's also useful to include the recipe source for future reference. If you give preserving as a gift you may also want to include your name on the label so friends know where it came from.
7. Labeling information in the previous point applies to home preserving only. Labeling for sale is covered by legislation. Check requirements on the fact sheet at:
<http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/consumers/food-safety-topics/food-processing-labelling/food-labelling/>

Jam

1. Use dry, barely ripe fruit for jam. Including a small amount of ripe fruit often gives better flavour however. (Think of the flavour of ripe apricots in apricot jam.)
2. Warm the sugar before adding to the fruit. This is easiest done in the oven (lowest setting, 15 minutes). Warming the sugar first helps dissolve it more quickly and prevents overcooking of the fruit before the gelling process starts.
3. Heat the fruit and sugar gently until all the sugar is dissolved, before you start rapidly boiling it.
4. Test for setting – put a little jam on a cold plate and cool it quickly. When the jam is ready it will form a skin and crinkle when you touch it. If using a sugar thermometer the setting point is 104°C.
5. Jam sets due to the combination of pectin (a gum-like substance in fruit) and acid and heat. Sugar is used to preserve the jam. There is more pectin in slightly under-ripe fruit than in ripe fruit. Unripe apples are an excellent source of pectin.
 - Fruits high in both acid and pectin (apples, gooseberries, currants, tart red plums) will set a jam easily. Fruits that set jam moderately well are blackberries, apricots, loganberries, raspberries and sweet green & yellow plums.
 - Jam from lower pectin fruits will set better if you add commercial pectin (Certo is one brand name), and an acid such as lemon juice, citric or tartaric acid, or an acidic fruit like cooking apples, rhubarb, plums, citrus, blackcurrants, red currants.
6. Skim off frothy scum towards the end of cooking.

Criteria for jams to make during the course

1. Select one of the recipes below or bring one of your own.
2. Cooking time needs to be less than 60 minutes so we can finish the class within two hours.

Recipes sources

Recipes listed come from the following books.

Jam

1. Edmonds Cookery Book. Christchurch: T.J. Edmonds.
2. Hume, R., and Downes, R.: Cordon Bleu Preserving. London: B.P.C. Publishing Ltd, 1971.
3. Lambert Ortiz, E: Bottling, Pickling & Preserving. Sydney: Dorling Kindersley, 1994.
4. Painter, Gilian: A New Zealand Country Harvest Cookbook. Auckland: Penguin, 1997.

Chutney, relish, vinegars

1. Digby Law: Digby Law's Pickle and Chutney Cookbook.
2. Edmonds Cookery Book. Christchurch: T.J. Edmonds.
3. Painter, Gilian: A New Zealand Country Harvest Cookbook. Auckland: Penguin, 1997.

Bottling

1. Edmonds Cookery Book. Christchurch: T.J. Edmonds.

Apricot Jam

2.7 kg (6 lb) apricots

2 ½ C water

2.7 kg (6 lb) sugar (warmed)

1. Wash and halve apricots, remove stones.
2. Put into preserving pan with water.
3. Cook gently until fruit is tender and/or pulped. (If you like lumps of fruit in the jam cook till tender, if you like it smooth, cook till pulped.)
4. Add warmed sugar and heat gently until dissolved, then boil rapidly for 15-25 minutes.
5. Start testing for setting at 15 minutes.
6. When it jam sets, put into hot clean jars and seal.

Blackberry Jam

Blackberries

Sugar 350 g to each 500 g blackberries.

1. Weigh and wash berries, remove any stalks.
2. Put in pan, mash slightly to start the juice flowing.
3. Bring to the boil slowly and boil gently until the fruit is soft, approx 15-20 min.
4. Stir in sugar until dissolved and boil rapidly until jam will set.
5. Put into hot clean jars and seal.

Blackcurrant Jam

Blackcurrants

Sugar

Water

1. For every 500g of currants allow 600 ml water and 750g sugar.
2. Simmer water and currants for 45-50 minutes, stirring occasionally. Currant skins must be soft and the fruit tender. Volume should reduce by about 1/3.
3. Add warmed sugar and stir over low heat until sugar has dissolved.
4. Increase heat and boil rapidly for about 10 minutes or until reaches setting point.
5. Put into hot clean jars and seal.

Marmalade

If you make marmalade during the course you'll need to prepare and soak it overnight at home, and have it ready to cook in class.

Any combination of citrus can be used. The way you prepare the fruit depends on the type of marmalade you want – thick and chunky or jelly-like. Thick and chunky has chunks of peel, and jelly-like has grated zest with most of the other solids strained out before adding the sugar.

This recipe is a medium chunky grapefruit marmalade from the Edmonds Cookery Book.

4 large grapefruit

2 lemons

3.5 L water

3.25kg sugar

1. Slice grapefruit and lemons very finely; cover with the water and leave overnight.
2. Boil rapidly until fruit is soft and pulpy, approx 40 minutes.
3. Add sugar, heat quickly and boil until setting point is reached, approx 40 minutes.
4. Put into hot clean jars and seal.

Pear and Ginger Jam

1.3kg pears, peeled and cut into small pieces

2 lemons, juice and grated rind

600 ml water

1.3 kg sugar

125 g preserved ginger

1. Cook pears with grated lemon rind, lemon juice and water.
2. When pears are cooked add warmed sugar and preserved ginger.
3. Heat gently until sugar is dissolved then boil rapidly for approx 40 minutes or until reaches setting point.
4. Put into hot clean jars and seal.

Plum Jam

2.7 kg plums

1 ¼ C water

2 kg sugar

1. To each 2.7kg plums add 310ml (one and a quarter cups) water.
2. Cook slowly until fruit is pulped.
3. Add sugar, heat gently until dissolved, then boil rapidly until setting point. Approx 15 minutes.

4. Remove stones with a slotted spoon as they cone to the surface.
5. Put into hot clean jars and seal.

Raspberry Jam

500 g raspberries

500 g sugar

1. Put fruit into pan and bring slowly to the boil.
2. Add sugar and boil rapidly for 5 minutes.
3. Remove from heat and stir for 20 minutes.
6. Put into hot clean jars and seal.

Strawberry Jam

Equal quantities of:

Strawberries

Sugar

1. Put strawberries into pan, slowly bring to the boil.
2. Add warmed sugar, heat gently until dissolved.
3. Boil rapidly 15-20 minutes and test for setting.
4. Adding juice of 1 or 2 lemons added before taking jam off the heat enhances flavour.

Jellies

Use fruit with a high pectin content – apples, crab apples, currants, berries and citrus all make good jelly. Combinations that include apples (slightly un-ripe) are good. Peel, pips, cores all go into the preserving pan.

Basic Method

1. Wash and dry fruits.
2. Add peel, pips, cores.
3. Add water, boil then simmer until fruit is soft and pulpy.
4. Strain the pulp through a scalded jelly bag or cloth overnight or up to 24 hours. Erect the jelly bag over a stainless steel pot or bowl to collect the juice. Do not squeeze the bag whilst in use, or the juice will be cloudy and you won't get a clear jelly. To scald the bag, boil for 3 minutes to scald, cool and squeeze it well.

The "jelly bag" does not have to be a proper one, it can be any calico type fabric that you can support over a bowl or pot for the juice to drip into. The purpose is to provide a cloth sieve that will hold the weight of the pulp overnight whilst the nice clear juice drips out.

5. Measure the volume of juice and add (in general) 450g sugar for each 600 ml juice. Warm the sugar before adding to the juice.
6. Stir over low heat to dissolve the sugar then boil rapidly for 10 minutes or until setting point is reached (see individual recipes). As the jelly nears setting point lower the heat to reduce the number of bubbles.
7. Remove the pan from the heat to test for setting point.
8. Skim scum off surface before putting into clean sterilised jars.
9. Don't move the jars until the jelly is cold and set.

Mint and Apple Jelly

1.4kg cooking apples

600 ml water

300ml cider vinegar

225g fresh mint

sugar

2 drops green food colouring (optional)

1. Chop the apples without peeling or coring, put in pan with water and vinegar.
2. Strip the leaves off the mint and set aside, put the stalks in with the apples.
3. Bring to boil, simmer 40 minutes or until apples are pulpy.
4. Follow basic method for straining, adding sugar, and boiling until setting point. Tie half the mint leaves in muslin and add to the jelly mixture at the start of boiling. Setting point takes about 15 minutes.
5. Chop the remaining mint leaves and add with green food colouring (if using) to the jelly immediately before pouring into jars.

Yield: ~675g.

Variations: Any herbs can replace mint. For example, parsley, thyme, rosemary, sage.

Apple and mint jelly is great with cheese on crackers.

Apple Jelly

As apple and mint, without the mint.

Chilli and Apple Jelly

Follow the apple and mint jelly recipe. Omit mint, add 100g fresh green chillies.

Cut chillies in half lengthwise, remove seeds, add chillies to the pan with the apples.

Note: This is a great recipe.

If you plan to make a jelly in class you will need to do either stage 1 (boiling the fruit to pulp and straining it) or stage 2 (make jelly from the strained juice) in class time, and the other stage at home.

We'll show you both stages in class.