



Presented by UC Master Food Preservers  
of Sonoma County

**Gifts From  
the Kitchen  
2023:  
Making  
Cheese in  
Your Home**



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# Table of Contents

## **INTRODUCTION**

Non-Endorsement Statement p.2

## **BEFORE YOU GET STARTED**

Substituting Junket for Rennet p.3

The First Step is to Clean and Sanitize p.3

## **CHEESE AND COMPANION RECIPES**

Mozzarella Cheese p.4

No Rennet “Queso Blanco” p.6

Spiced Peach Pickles p.8

Fig Jam without Added Pectin p.9

“Marmelada de Membrillo” (Quince Paste) p.10

Tomato Powder p.12

Tomato Herb or Taco Seasoning p.13

Fragrant Herb Salt p.14

Spice Chile Seasoning p. 15

## **SERVING IDEAS WITH CHEESE**

Spiced Pickled Peach Skewers p. 16

Caprese Skewer Appetizers p.17

Spicy Watermelon with Candied Jalapeños and Lime Bites p.18

## **WHAT TO DO WITH WHEY**

Preventing Food Waste p.20

How to Use Whey p.20

## **REFERENCES & RESOURCES**

Sources for Cheese Making Supplies and Information p.21

Water Bath Canning Information p.21

Ask A Master Food Preserver p.21

Nondiscrimination Statement p.22

QR Code for UC Master Food Preservers of Sonoma County p. 22

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the second edition of *Gifts from the Kitchen* from the UC Master Food Preservers of Sonoma County! We hope you have fun exploring these gift ideas this holiday season!

The University of California Master Food Preserver Program (UC MFP) is a statewide program of the University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) and administered locally through participating UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) offices, the outreach arm of UC ANR. The UC MFP Program is a public service and educational program that has taught research-based practices of safe home food preservation to Californians since 1982.

The UC MFP Program's mission is to keep Californians safe and well as they use culturally appropriate, research-based practices to safely preserve food in the home. It aims to reduce food waste, increase food security, and provide engaging ways for Californians to explore healthy food.

Approximately 450 UC MFP volunteers and staff throughout the state support one another through informal networks and academic oversight by UCCE specialists based at UC Davis campus to extend educational services to the widest audiences possible through food preservation demonstrations, workshops, and classes for the public. UC MFP volunteers respond to requests for information and provide problem-solving information to members of their community who are interested in home food preservation or are seeking advice regarding food preservation.

We hope this cookbook will inspire you to “preserve today and relish tomorrow” this holiday season. Enjoy!

\*\*\*No endorsement of any product/company listing within this document is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products/companies not included. \*\*\*

## **Before You Get Started**

Milk picks up unwanted flavors and bacteria easily. In making cheese, the **risk** is real and has the potential for growth of Salmonella, E. Coli, Listeria and Staphylococcus. As a first line of defense against these diseases, we recommend ***using only pasteurized milk***. The risk of cross contamination is easily prevented with proper sanitation of your workspace and utensils. **Good hygiene** is equally important and should include washing hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water, wearing a clean apron, having hair pulled back, pinned up or covered. These habits contribute to food safety and should not be overlooked.

### **The First Step Is to Clean and Sanitize**

- Cleaning removes soil from surfaces
- Sanitizing reduces the microbial population on clean surfaces.
- Both work surfaces and utensils need to be cleaned and sanitized.
- Surfaces can be sanitized with a sanitizing solution made by adding 2-3 teaspoons of chlorine bleach to a gallon of water.
- Utensils can be sanitized in a dishwasher or steamed in a covered pot with one inch of boiling water for 5 minutes.

### **Substituting Junket for Rennet**

The recipes in this booklet list rennet as an ingredient. Rennet is composed of two enzymes, chymosin (rennin), that coagulates milk, and pepsin, which breaks down proteins. Rennet is 80% chymosin and 20% pepsin.

Junket is readily available in grocery stores. Junket was originally used to set custards and contains 80% pepsin, less than 20% chymosin, and contains many other ingredients not found in rennet, including salt, calcium lactate, corn starch, tricalcium phosphate, and calcium stearate. So, the same amount of Junket contains much less chymosin than liquid or cheese rennet and cannot induce as much curd formation.

If you were to use Junket, rather than rennet, your product would turn out very differently. Adding more Junket to increase the chymosin content can result in rubbery cheese. We recommend using only rennet in the mozzarella cheese recipe included in this cookbook and any other cheese recipes that call for rennet.

Information sourced from [Junket or Rennet | Cheese Making | Cheese Supply Co.](#) Retrieved October 23, 2023, from the World Wide Web

# Mozzarella Cheese Recipe



## Ingredients:

- ½ gallon pasteurized whole milk (not ultra-pasteurized)
- ¾ teaspoon citric acid
- ⅛ teaspoon liquid rennet
- ⅝ cup cool water (distilled or filtered- must be chlorine-free), divided
- ½ to 1 teaspoon Kosher, pickling and canning or non-iodized salt

## Supplies:

- 2 small glass bowls
- Measuring cup for liquids
- Measuring spoons
- Small spoon
- 4-quart stainless steel pot
- Instant read or candy thermometer
- Timer
- Long butter or table knife
- 2-quart mixing bowl
- Colander
- Cheesecloth
- Fine slotted spoon or skimmer
- Heat insulating rubber gloves
- 1-quart bowl for ice water
- Ice
- Zip top bag or airtight container
- Permanent marker

## Preparation:

1. In a small bowl or liquid measuring cup, add rennet to ⅛ cup of cool, chlorine-free water. Stir to dissolve; set aside.
2. In a separate bowl or liquid measuring cup, dissolve ¾ teaspoon citric acid in ½ cup cool, chlorine-free water. Ensure the citric acid is fully dissolved.
3. Pour the citric acid solution into the large pot and add the milk. Stir vigorously to mix. Expect some curdling to take place.
4. Heat milk mixture slowly while stirring every few minutes to prevent the milk from scorching on the bottom of the pot until a temperature of 90°F is reached.
5. Once the milk reaches 90°F, remove the pot from the burner and slowly add the rennet solution, stirring gently in a top to bottom motion for 30 seconds.
6. Cover pot and leave it undisturbed for 5 minutes. Check for curd formation after 5 minutes. It should look like custard, with a clear separation between the curd and whey. If the curd is too soft or the whey is milky, let sit for an additional 5 minutes.

7. Cut the curds in a 1-inch checkerboard pattern with a long butter knife.
  8. Place pot back on stove and heat to 105°F while stirring slowly and gently.
  9. Take the pot off the burner and continue stirring slowly for 2-5 minutes.  
(More time will make a firmer cheese.)
  10. Place colander over a 2-quart bowl and line it with cheesecloth.
  11. Using the slotted spoon or skimmer, scoop curd from the pot into the colander.
  12. Once the curd has been transferred to the colander, join the 4 corners of the cheesecloth, lift it out of the colander and let the whey drain into the colander. Gently twist the top of the cheesecloth to help form a ball. Pour two-thirds of the whey back into the large pot. Remove the curd from the cheesecloth and place it in the remaining one-third of the whey in the bowl to keep the curd warm. Keeping the curd in a thin, rectangular shape will help facilitate even heating.
  13. Heat the whey to 135°F. Remove from heat.
  14. Place curd ball into pot containing hot whey. The whey will be very hot to touch. Work the curds quickly by pressing them together and folding over in the hot whey to facilitate even heating. As the curd begins to meld together, pull it from the hot whey and begin to stretch it.
  15. At first it may be lumpy but as the curd stretches, it will become smooth. Sprinkle with salt to taste. Stretch curds out several times and fold it back on itself. If the curd begins to cool and tear, place it back in the hot whey to re-heat.
  16. When it seems to form a consolidated mass and develop a sheen (it looks like taffy), you are ready to form into one or more balls for the final cheese.
  17. Drop cheese ball(s) into ice water to cool. The cold water will firm up the mozzarella and help it keep its shape. For best flavor, eat refrigerated cheese within 2 to 3 days.
- \*\*NOTE:** For longer storage, drop the cheese balls into a brine made by adding 1-1½ tablespoons of salt and 1-1½ tablespoons of the clear whey to a pint of very cold water. This will chill the cheese and help to hold its shape. Use the cheese within 1 week or freeze for up to one month.

Recipe adapted from “Cheese Making Recipes” by UC Master Food Preservers of Sonoma County. Retrieved October 8, 2023 from the World Wide Web: [30 Minute Mozzarella \(no microwave\) Recipe Instructions \(cheesemaking.com\)](https://www.cheesemaking.com/30-minute-mozzarella-no-microwave-recipe-instructions/) Changes made to the original recipe have been approved by Erin DiCaprio, Food Safety Extension Specialist, UC Davis Department of Food Science and Technology.

# No Rennet “*Queso Blanco*”

## (No Rennet White Cheese)

### Ingredients:

- ½ gallon pasteurized whole milk (not ultra-pasteurized)
- ¼ cup distilled white vinegar (5% acidity)
- ½ cup non-chlorinated water
- ¾ to 1 teaspoon pickling (canning) salt to taste
- Herbs and spices to taste (optional) \*\*See recipes that follow \*\*

### Supplies:

- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups for liquids
- Small glass bowl
- 4-quart stainless steel pot
- Potholders
- Timer
- Instant read or candy thermometer
- Large, slotted spoon or ladle
- Colander
- Cheesecloth
- Medium glass bowl
- Cheese basket
- Zip-top bag or airtight container
- **Freezer** zip-top bags or vacuum seal plastic for boiling (optional)
- Permanent marker

### Preparation:

1. Mix vinegar and non-chlorinated water together in a small glass bowl and set aside.
2. Pour milk into stainless steel pot.
3. Heat milk to 175°F.
4. Slowly add the vinegar and water mixture to the hot milk. Stir lightly to disperse the vinegar solution throughout the milk until the whey is semi-clear and curd particles begin to mat together.
5. Separate the curd by filtering through cheesecloth until whey is removed.
6. Open cheesecloth and add salt and any herbs and spices to taste by gently kneading curds.
7. Transfer the curds to the cheese basket and gently press out any remaining whey.

8. Place cheese basket with Queso Blanco in a zip top bag or other airtight container and store in the refrigerator.
9. The Queso Blanco will firm up in the refrigerator without additional pressing.
10. For best quality and flavor, eat cheese within a week.

\*\*\*NOTE: For longer term storage substitute the following beginning at procedural step 8.

8. Remove cheese curds from the cheese basket and place into a freezer zip-top bag. Vacuum seal or remove as much air as possible.
9. Place in boiling water bath for 5 minutes to sterilize the surface and prevent mold growth.
10. Cool cheese. Once cool, store in the zip-top bag in the refrigerator.
11. Queso Blanco may keep for several weeks if properly packed and stored in the refrigerator but should be eaten as fresh as possible.

**And don't forget to wash your hands!**



Recipe adapted by UC Master Food Preservers of Sonoma County from <https://pubs.nmsu.edu/e/E216.pdf>. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on October 8, 2023 Changes made to the original recipe have been approved by Erin DiCaprio, Food Safety Extension Specialist, UC Davis Department of Food Science and Technology.



# Spiced Peach Pickles

YIELDS: about 6-pint jars

## Ingredients:

- 8 pounds peeled peaches (small to medium size, 1 to 1 ½ inches in diameter)
- ½ teaspoon ascorbic acid
- 2 quarts cold water
- 6 ¾ cups sugar
- 4 sticks cinnamon (2 inches long)
- 2 tablespoons whole cloves, crushed
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 1 quart 5% vinegar

## Supplies:

- Sharp knife
- Measuring cups
- Water bath canner
- Measuring spoons
- Large saucepot
- 6 pint canning jars, lids and rings
- Kitchen scale
- Cheesecloth
- Fork
- Large bowl
- Large spoon

## Preparation:

1. Tie spices loosely in cheesecloth. Mix solution of ½ teaspoon ascorbic acid and 2 quarts cold water in large bowl.
2. Wash and peel peaches with a sharp knife and drop in the cold water solution.
3. Dissolve sugar in vinegar in saucepot and place on cooktop to heat. Boil 5 minutes and skim. Add spice packet.
4. Drain peaches and place drained peaches into boiling syrup and cook until they can be pierced with a fork but are not soft.
5. Remove from heat and allow peaches to set in syrup overnight in the refrigerator to plump.
6. Bring peach mixture to a boil and pack peaches into hot jars, leaving ½-inch headspace.
7. Cover peaches with syrup, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and rings to finger tight.
8. Process 20 minutes in a Boiling Water Bath. \*\*Adjust for Altitude if necessary.

Recipe from Cooperative Extension University of Georgia, So Easy to Preserve, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., Cooperative Extension/The University of Georgia/Athens, College of Family and Consumer Sciences, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, 2014

# Fig Jam without Added Pectin



YIELDS: About 10 half-pint jars

## Ingredients:

- 2 quarts fresh figs (about 5 pounds)
- 3/4 cup water
- 6 cups sugar
- 1/4 cup lemon juice

## Supplies:

- Large pot
- Large bowl (optional)
- Colander
- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Measuring cups for dry and liquid goods
- Canning jars, lids and rings
- Large spoon
- Paper towels
- Water bath or atmospheric steam canner
- Jar lifter
- Clean dish cloth
- Permanent marker

## Preparation:

1. Place figs in large bowl or pot. Pour boiling water over figs; let stand 10 minutes. Drain, stem and chop figs.
2. Sterilize canning jars by boiling for 10 minutes at altitudes of less than 1,000 feet. At higher elevations, boil jars 1 additional minute for each additional 1,000 feet elevation.
3. Pour chopped figs into a large pot.
4. Measure and add 3/4 cup water and sugar to figs.
5. Slowly bring to boiling, stirring occasionally until sugar dissolves.
6. Cook rapidly until thick. Stir frequently to prevent sticking.
7. Add lemon juice and cook 1 minute longer.
8. Pour hot jam into hot jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace.
9. Remove air bubbles. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel; adjust two-piece metal canning lids to finger tight.
10. Process jars in a boiling water or atmospheric steam canner for 5 minutes at 0-1,000 feet, 10 minutes at 1,001-6,000 feet, and 15 minutes above 6,000 feet.

Recipe adapted by UC Master Food Preservers of Sonoma County from [National Center for Home Food Preservation | How Do I? Jam and Jelly \(uga.edu\)](#) Retrieved October 24, 2023, from the World Wide Web.

**“Marmelada de Membrillo”**  
**(Quince Paste)**



**Ingredients:**

- 4 pounds quince
- 1 lemon
- 1 vanilla pod (optional)
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- About 4 cups granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon butter at room temperature

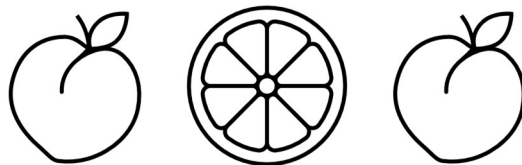
**Supplies:**

- Sharp knife
- Vegetable peeler
- Fork
- Cutting board
- Large saucepan with lid
- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups for dry goods
- Colander
- Food processor or blender
- Wooden spoon
- Spatula
- 12” x 17” x 1” baking sheet
- Parchment paper
- Potholders
- Plastic wrap
- Airtight container

**Preparation:**

1. Wash, peel, core and roughly chop quince. Split vanilla pod if using. Use a vegetable peeler to obtain 2 strips of lemon zest (½ inch by 2 inches each).
2. Place quince pieces in large saucepan (6-8 quarts) and cover with water. Add lemon peel and optional vanilla pod.
3. Bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer, cover, and let cook until the quince pieces are fork tender (30-40 minutes).
4. Strain the water from the quince pieces. Discard the vanilla pod but keep the lemon peel with the quince. Purée the quince pieces in a food processor, blender, or by using a food mill.
5. Measure the quince purée and return to pot. Begin to heat on medium low. Add an equal amount of sugar to the measured quince puree. For example, if you have 4 cups of purée, you'll need 4 cups of sugar.

6. Stir quince mixture with a wooden spoon until the sugar has completely dissolved. Add lemon juice.
7. Continue to cook over a low heat, stirring occasionally, for 1-1½ hours, until the quince paste is very thick and has a deep orange pink color.
8. Preheat oven to 200°F.
9. Line a 12” x 17” x 1” baking sheet with parchment paper. Grease the parchment paper with a thin coating of butter.
10. Pour the cooked quince paste onto the parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Smooth out the top of the paste with a spatula so it is even.
11. Place the quince paste in the 200°F oven for an hour or longer to help it dry out. For thicker paste, extend cooking time until desired consistency is reached. (If you have a convection or fan setting for your oven, use it.) Remove from oven and let cool. Once cooled, refrigerate at least 1 hour before handling.
12. To serve, cut into squares or wedges and present with cheese. To eat, take a small slice of the quince paste and place it on top of a slice of cheese. To store, wrap with plastic wrap or place in an airtight container, and refrigerate.



Recipe adapted by UC Master food Preservers of Sonoma County from [Membrillo \(Quince Paste\) Recipe \(simplyrecipes.com\)](#) Retrieved on October 21, 2023 from the World Wide Web.

## Tomato Powder Recipe.

As UC Master Food Preservers, we look for ways to use all parts of fruits and vegetables as we focus on ways to reduce food waste. While this recipe lists tomatoes as the only ingredient, please note that tomato powder can be made by substituting tomato skins for whole tomatoes. Tomato skins can be saved when tomatoes are canned or used for making sauces and salsas. The saved tomato skins can be stored in the freezer until there are enough to dehydrate. Once dry, the tomato skins can be ground to make tomato powder.

### Ingredients:

- Up to five pounds of tomatoes per batch

### Supplies:

- Cutting board
- Sharp knife
- Dehydrator with screened trays or trays lined with parchment paper
- Blender or spice grinder
- Airtight container
- Label (optional)
- Permanent Marker

### Preparation:

1. Wash and core the tomatoes.
2. Slice tomatoes very thin, 1/8.”
3. Place on screened trays for your dehydrator.
4. Dehydrate at 150°F. After about 3-4 hours open your dehydrator and loosen the slices and flip them over. This will keep them from solidly sticking to the screens or parchment. Dehydrate for approximately 5 hours total.
5. Remove and place in blender or spice grinder. Blend to a fine powder and store in an airtight container.

Recipe adapted by UC Master Food Preservers of Sonoma from [www.excaliburdehydrator-recipes.com/recipe/tomato-powder-recipe/](http://www.excaliburdehydrator-recipes.com/recipe/tomato-powder-recipe/) Retrieved on 10/24/2023 from the World Wide Web.

## Tomato Herb or Taco Seasoning



### Ingredients for Tomato Herb Seasoning:

- ½ cup tomato powder
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon dried parsley
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ¼ teaspoon powdered garlic (optional)
- ½ teaspoon salt (optional)

### Ingredients for Taco Seasoning:

- ½ cup chili powder
- ½ cup tomato powder (optional)
- ¼ cup onion powder
- 2 tablespoons ground cumin
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 2 tablespoons kosher or sea salt (optional)
- 1 tablespoon black pepper
- Cayenne pepper (optional)
- Red pepper flakes (optional)
- Powdered oregano (optional)

### Supplies:

- Measuring spoons
- Small bowl
- Small spoon
- Airtight container
- Label(optional)
- Permanent marker

### Preparation:

1. Measure chosen ingredients and place in a small bowl.
2. Stir well to mix all ingredients together.
3. Store tomato herb seasoning in an airtight container.
4. For best quality, use within 1 month.

*NOTE for Taco Seasoning: 2 Tbsp. = 1 store-bought packet*

Recipes created by UC Master Food Preservers of Sonoma County: Tonia Seidita and [How to Make Your Own Taco Seasoning | Mississippi State University Extension Service \(msstate.edu\)](#) Retrieved on October 30, 2023, from the World Wide Web.

## Fragrant Herb Salt



YIELDS:  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup

### Ingredients:

- 4 to 5 garlic cloves
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup kosher salt
- 2 cups loosely packed, fresh herbs such as: sage, rosemary, thyme, savory, basil or cilantro.
- 2 teaspoons dried lavender buds (if desired)
- 1 lime, lemon, or other citrus fruit (if desired)

### Supplies:

- Cutting board
- Chef knife
- Paring knife
- Measuring cups for dry goods
- Measuring spoons
- Baking sheet
- Silicone sheets (optional)
- Spatula
- Zester
- Bowl
- Large spoon
- Funnel
- Eight-ounce airtight jar (smaller jars can be used)
- Permanent marking pen
- Labels (optional)

### Preparation:

1. Peel and cut each garlic clove lengthwise through the center, remove the sprout (if any) in the center. The sprout and peel can be saved for later use to make broth.
2. Zest the citrus fruit if being used.
3. Mound the salt and garlic on a cutting board.
4. Mince the garlic and blend it with the salt as you work.
5. Rinse herbs in cool water and shake dry. Place herbs in a mound and coarsely chop them.
6. Add the herbs and citrus zest and/or dried lavender buds, if used, to the garlic salt and chop together to the texture of coarse sand. Chopping the herbs and salt with the zest helps bind the oils or citrus "essence" together.
7. Spread the salt mixture on a baking sheet or silicone dehydrating sheet.

8. There are three different ways to dry the herb salt mixture:
  - a. Heat the oven to 200°F and then turn the oven off. Place baking sheet in oven, close door, and let it sit overnight to dry.
  - b. Place baking sheet in oven with the oven light on, overnight
  - c. Dry the herb-salt mixes in a dehydrator between 95-115° F for 3 to 4 hours. If you are using citrus zest and garlic, increase the temperature to 125° F for 6 to 8 hours. Check dryness and stir periodically.
9. Store in clean, dry, airtight jars in a cool, dark place.

Recipe from Master Food Preservers of Sonoma County 2022 Gifts from the Kitchen ([Microsoft Word - 11-08-22 Gifts in the Kitchen with cover\\_rev1.docx \(ucanr.edu\)](#)) Retrieved October 25, 2023 from the World Wide Web

## Spicy Chile Seasoning

### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon ground chili powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

### Supplies:

- Small bowl
- Measuring spoons
- Spoon
- Funnel (optional)
- Airtight jar(s)
- Permanent marking pen (optional)
- Labels (optional)

### Preparation:

1. Measure spices and place in a small bowl.
2. Stir well to mix all ingredients together.
3. Store seasoning in an airtight container.
4. For best quality, use within 1 month.

Recipe adapted by UC Master Food Preservers of Sonoma County from [Cornell Cooperative Extension | Cheesy Taco Popcorn Seasoning](#) Retrieved October 31, 2023 from the World Wide Web



# Spiced Pickled Peach Skewers



## Ingredients:

- Small mozzarella balls, or  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch cubes of mozzarella
- Spiced pickled peach slices
- Prosciutto, cut or folded in 1-inch strips
- Options:
- Grilled chicken cubes
- Balsamic glaze

## Serves

The beauty of this recipe is that you can scale up or down simply by increasing the ingredients. Plan on 2 – 3 skewers per person.

## Supplies:

- Bamboo skewers - 5 or 6 inches long
- Tray or serving platter

## Assembly

1. To assemble your skewers, carefully wrap peach slices with prosciutto.
2. Then thread a prosciutto-wrapped peach slice and piece of mozzarella onto a skewer.
3. If using grilled chicken cubes, thread them on the skewer between the peach slice and the mozzarella.
4. If using balsamic glaze, drizzle with the glaze.

## Caprese Skewer Appetizers



### Serves:

This recipe can also be scaled up or down simply by increasing the ingredients. Plan on 2 – 3 skewers per person.

### Ingredients:

- Small mozzarella balls, or  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch cubes of mozzarella, marinated or plain
- Cherry tomatoes (different colors tomatoes add interest to the presentation)
- Fresh basil leaves about 1 inch long
- Balsamic glaze (or balsamic vinegar reduced to glaze consistency)

### Supplies:

- Bamboo skewers - 5 or 6 inches long
- Tray or serving platter
- Plastic condiment squeeze bottle (If you make your own glaze or your glaze bottle doesn't have a small opening for drizzling; a spoon or a sandwich bag with a hole cut in the corner also work.)

### Assembly:

1. Rinse basil leaves and tomatoes.
2. Twist off any stem remnants on tomatoes.
3. Thread 1 tomato, a piece of basil, 1 mozzarella ball/cube, another piece of basil, and one more cherry tomato on each skewer.
4. Place on serving tray.
5. Drizzle balsamic glaze over assembled skewers.

### Tips:

- Assemble this dish shortly before serving, since basil does not refrigerate well.
- Choose cherry tomatoes about the same size as the mozzarella balls/cubes.
- You can always change the proportion of tomatoes to cheese balls/cubes.
- You can also substitute melon balls for the tomatoes and add some prosciutto.

Caprese Skewer Appetizers created by UC Master Food Preserver of Sonoma County: Nancy Creveling

# Spicy Watermelon w/ Candied Jalapeños & Lime Bites



## Ingredients:

- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup water
- 3-4 tablespoons lime zest,
- ½ cup lime juice (3-4 limes depending on the juiciness)
- 3 jalapeño peppers
- Small seedless watermelon (chilled)
- 8 oz Queso Blanco (Queso Fresco, Cotija, Feta or Ricotta Salata can be substituted)

## Supplies:

- Measuring cups for liquid and dry goods
- Measuring spoons
- Zester
- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Juicer
- Small bowl
- Small saucepan
- Spoon
- Cookie cutters (optional)
- Cookie sheet
- Plastic wrap
- Airtight container

## Preparation:

1. Zest and then juice limes. Slice jalapeño peppers into thin rounds.
2. In a small saucepan combine the sugar, water and lime juice and bring to boil.
3. Add jalapeño rounds and simmer over low heat for 10 minutes. Then cool.
4. Once cool, place the jalapeño-lime syrup into an airtight container and refrigerate.
5. Cut the chilled watermelon slice into 1½” rounds, squares or wedges using a knife or cookie cutters.
6. Place a single layer of watermelon onto a cookie sheet and drizzle the chilled jalapeño-lime syrup over the watermelon, saving the jalapeño rings with the remaining syrup in the refrigerator.
7. Cover watermelon with plastic wrap and chill for at least 2 hours and up to 6 hours before assembling.

## Assembly:

1. When you are ready to serve, place a single layer of jalapeño-lime syrup infused watermelon onto a serving platter.
2. Place a thin slice or a sprinkle of the Queso Blanco cheese on the watermelon.
3. Place one candied jalapeño slice on top of each watermelon.
4. Garnish the appetizer with a sprinkle of lime zest and serve.
5. Remaining jalapeño rings can be refrigerated in an airtight container for future use.



Recipe created by UC Master Food Preserver of Sonoma County: Angy Nowicki

## Preventing Food Waste



Up to 40% of the food supply in the U.S. is wasted. It is important for the environment to keep food waste out of landfills where it is producing methane, a powerful greenhouse gas.

Per the USDA, there are four easy steps to preventing food waste:

1. Plan Ahead – Before you go to the grocery store or order online, make a list so you don't buy more than you need.
2. Serve Smart – Portion control is good for your waistline and good for reducing plate waste.
3. Love Your Leftovers – Pack leftovers in small portions in shallow containers, mark the contents and date, refrigerate and use within 3-4 days or freeze immediately.
4. Compost Don't Trash – Food scraps can be recycled into compost, an organic material that can be added to soil to help plants grow. Set up a home compost bin or drop your food waste in your green waste bin.

## How to Use Whey



It is best not to pour whey down the drain because the many nutrients and potential fat content can cause problems with drainage and septic tanks.

- Freeze whey in ice cube trays and use whey in any baking recipe that calls for water (or even milk). Recipes like fresh bread, cornbread, pancakes, waffles, muffins, biscuits, tortillas and more. It lends a sour tang.
- Use whey to cook pasta, potatoes, oatmeal, or rice.
- Add whey to fruit smoothies or milkshakes.
- Use whey to soak whole grains, legumes and even ground flours. Add several tablespoons to your soaking water 12 hours prior to cooking.
- Use whey for the lacto-fermentation of vegetables, condiments and chutneys.
- Use to make traditional ricotta cheese.
- Use in the garden as a soil amendment.
- Feed it to animals by mixing in a little whey with their dry food.
- More information on using whey is available at:  
<https://blog.cheesemaking.com/?s=using+whey>

## REFERENCES & RESOURCES



### Sources of Cheesemaking Supplies and Information

#### **The Beverage People**

thebeveragepeople.com or [Fermenters Warehouse | The Beverage People](#)  
1845 Piner Rd Ste D, Santa Rosa, CA 95403 ·  
(707) 544-2520

#### **Napa Fermentation**

napafermentation.com or [NAPA FERMENTATION SUPPLIES, SINCE 1983 - HOME](#)  
575 Third St, Bldg. A  
Napa, California, 94559

#### **New England Cheese Making Company**

cheesemaking.com/[Home Cheese Making Supplies | Cheese Making Supply Co.](#)

Blog.cheesemaking.com/[A Better Whey | finding a better whey with cheesemaking.com](#)

#### **The Cheese Maker**

thecheesemaker.com/[Cheese Making Supplies | Cheese Making Equipment | Cheese Making Kits - The CheeseMaker](#)  
(877) 424-3393

### Water Bath Canning Information

[MF3241 How-to Guide to Water Bath Canning and Steam Canning \(ucanr.edu\)](#)

[MF3172 What's Your Elevation? \(ksu.edu\)](#)

#### **"Ask a Master Food Preserver in Sonoma County "**

Do you have a question for the UC Master Food Preservers of Sonoma County? Are you getting ready to start a food preservation project and have questions? Would you like to have a UC Master Food Preserver give a presentation or demonstration? We are available to help you plan! Please fill out our "Ask a Master Food Preserver" [online information request form](#) (<https://surveys.ucanr.edu/survey.cfm?surveynumber=32501>) and someone will respond within 2 business days.

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