

From Frumpy to Fabulous
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Too busy to do more than prepare a simple meal? Jazz up your old stand-bys with sauces, syrups and juices to transform that simple meal into a gourmet delight. When your pantry is filled with delicious home-preserved sweet and savory sauces, you can create a delicious dinner any night of the week without spending hours at the stove. Fresh ingredients, combined with safe food preservation techniques, will insure that your pantry can provide a quick pick-up for an otherwise uninspired dish.

The Master Food Preservers in Placerville offer free classes to the public on Tuesday and Saturday mornings, from 10 a.m. to noon, at the Bethell-Delfino Agriculture Building, located at 311 Fair Lane. This Cooperative Extension Program from the University of California Davis offers expert advice on home food preservation. The Master Food Preservers share their knowledge and demonstrate the proper methods of preserving. Take advantage of the classes on Tuesday, September 28 and Saturday, October 2 to learn how to preserve the juices, sauces and syrups that can take your week-day meals from plain to just plain fantastic.

For example, serve pasta with a robust Chunky Basil Pasta Sauce, and a nice, hot baguette. Add a fresh salad and ice-cream for a complete meal. Did I mention ice-cream? Try the scrumptious Frambois Sauce instead of your usual chocolate, caramel or strawberry. Friends and family alike will be astonished by the elegant and edgy tastes. Spice up your ordinary fare and enjoy extraordinary dining every day.

Take advantage of abundant tomatoes to make this delicious pasta sauce:

Chunky Basil Pasta Sauce

8 cups tomatoes, peeled and chopped (4 lbs.)	½ cup fresh basil, chopped
1 cup onion, chopped	1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced	1 teaspoon pickling salt
2/3 cup red wine	½ teaspoon granulated sugar
1/3 cup red wine vinegar	1 can tomato paste (6 oz.)

In a large kettle combine tomatoes, onion, garlic, wine, vinegar, basil, parsley, salt sugar and tomato paste. Bring to a boil over high heat; reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 40 minutes or until thickened to desired consistency, stirring frequently.

Ladle hot sauce into hot jars leaving ¼ inch headspace. Carefully run a non-metallic utensil down inside of jars to release trapped air bubbles; readjust headspace if required. Wipe jar rims clean. Place hot lids on jars and screw on ring bands until just tight (finger-tight). Process in a boiling water canner for 35 minutes (adjusting for altitude if necessary). Yield about 8 half-pints. *Source: Master Food Preservers Handout, September 29, 2009*

Be sure to use a rack in the boiling water bath canner and to lower the jars into boiling water that covers the tops of the jars by at least an inch. Begin to time the process when the water returns to a boil. Remove the jars from the canner when the time is up, and

place the jars on a rack or towel away from drafts and cool surfaces. Do not tilt or turn the jars...keep them level and allow to cool thoroughly. Do not remove water from the tops of the jars, as this may interfere with the sealing process. When the jars have cooled completely, remove the ring bands and check to see that the jar has sealed. Test by pressing the lid with your finger. It should not give. Clean the jars with a damp cloth and store after labeling and dating.

Oh, that ice-cream I mentioned....the Frambois Sauce may be the best-ever sauce to put on top of that frozen treat. Come to the free public class to learn how to preserve a few jars for yourself.

Frambois Sauce

3 10oz. packages of frozen raspberries, thawed	2 cups sugar
½ cup frambois or other raspberry brandy	½ cup freshly squeezed orange juice

In a large kettle, combine raspberries, frambois, sugar and orange juice. Cook over medium heat to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes. Remove from heat and strain into a clean saucepan. Place over medium heat and bring to a boil. Boil until reduced and syrupy. Skim off any foam. Remove from heat and ladle into hot jars leaving ¼ inch headspace. Wipe rims, place lids and bands on jars, tighten bands finger tight. Process for 15 minutes in a boiling water canner (adjusting for altitude if necessary). Yield about 3 half-pints. Note: May store in the refrigerator for up to six weeks without processing in the boiling water canner. *Source: Homemade by Judith Choate*