



SWEET AND TART LEMON CURD
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Winter is the season for citrus fruit, and there are different ways to preserve your bounty. Freezer lemon curd is a delicious way to use your lemons.

Your lemon curd can be used as a breakfast spread, and it goes very well with scones or muffins. Use it with pancakes, waffles, or as a filling for crepes. Soften cream cheese, and stir some lemon curd into it as a fruit tray dip. Fill tartlet shells, use as a cake filling, or in parfait glasses and alternate with berries and whipped cream. Serve on top of angel food or pound cake, or eat it as is.

Freeze lemon curd for up to 1 year without quality changes when thawed. After thawing, store in the refrigerator in a covered container and consume within 4 weeks.

Freezer Lemon Curd

Yield: Makes one quart or two pint-sized freezer containers

2½ cups superfine sugar*

½ cup lemon zest (freshly zested)

1 cup bottled lemon juice (note that this may contain sulfites)

¾ cup unsalted butter, chilled, cut into approximately ¾" pieces

7 large egg yolks

4 large whole eggs

* Or run regular sugar through a food processor for 1 minute.

Combine the sugar and lemon zest in a small bowl, stir to mix, and set aside about 30 minutes. Pre-measure the lemon juice, prepare the chilled butter pieces and separate eggs to prepare 7 yolks.

Heat water in the bottom pan of double boiler or medium-sized metal bowl, until it boils gently. The water should not boil vigorously or touch the bottom of the top double-boiler pan or bowl in which the curd is to be cooked.

In the top of the double boiler, on the counter top or table, beat the egg yolks and whole eggs thoroughly but lightly with the whisk. Slowly whisk in the sugar and zest, blending until well mixed so that the mixture is not lumpy. Blend in the lemon juice and then add the butter pieces to the mixture.

Place the top of the double boiler over boiling water in the bottom pan. Stir gently but continuously to prevent the mixture from sticking to the bottom of the pan. Continue cooking until the mixture reaches a temperature of 170°F. Use a food thermometer to monitor the temperature.

Remove the double boiler pan from the stove and place on a protected surface. Continue to stir gently until the curd thickens (about 5 minutes). Strain curd through a mesh strainer, into a glass or stainless steel bowl; discard collected zest. Allow the curd to cool to room temperature. To prevent a 'surface skin' from forming, place a clean piece of plastic food wrap down onto the surface of the curd or cover the bowl. Fill freezer container(s) with cooled curd, leaving ½-inch headspace. Freeze or refrigerate.

For questions about safe home food preservation, or to schedule a speaker for organizations or clubs on the topics of food safety or food preservation, call the Master Food Preservers at (530) 621-5506.

For more information, be sure to go to the Master Food Preserver website at http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master_Food_Preservers/. Sign up to receive our Master Food Preservers E-Newsletter at <http://ucanr.org/mfpnews/>.

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