

Preserve It! Sunshine in a Jar!

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Published in the *Mountain Democrat* 2/7/24

What do Paddington Bear, Queen Victoria (of England), Sir Edmund Hillary (who ascended Mt. Everest in 1953), and the well-known fictional character James Bond have in common? Marmalade! Paddington Bear kept a jar under his hat, Queen Victoria was smitten by it thereby making it a popular staple, Sir Edmund Hillary carried it as part of his provisions, and James Bond had it as part of his daily breakfast habit. A classic orange marmalade is made with the rather bitter Seville orange, which, despite the blockade in WW2, was allowed to continue to be transported to England because Winston Churchill considered marmalade necessary for the morale of the English people. British recipes of this “sunshine in a jar” date back as far as 1587 in *A Book of Cookrye*.

While Seville oranges are the classic citrus fruit to make marmalade, there are many safe, tested recipes using all the various citrus fruits as well. This is an invitation to make a batch (or two) of marmalade with three different citruses: grapefruit, orange, and lemon. Citrus has natural pectin in the peel, thus creating a soft fruit jelly with small pieces of fruit and peel suspended in that jelly.

There are a couple Master Food Preservers who are known for their marmalades. With the county fair only four months away, let's give them some keen competition by making a marmalade and entering your efforts in May. This recipe comes from *So Easy to Preserve*, 2020.

Citrus Marmalade

Makes 3 or 4 half-pint jars

3/4 cup grapefruit peel (from 1/2 grapefruit)

3/4 cup orange peel (1 orange)

1/3 cup lemon peel (1 lemon)

1 quart cold water

Pulp of 1 grapefruit

Pulp of 4 medium-sized oranges

2 cups boiling water

3 cups sugar

To prepare fruit:

Wash and peel fruit. When peeling citrus fruits for marmalades, be sure to include some of the white, spongy membrane (albedo) found just under the skin. This is where the most pectin is located. Cut peel in thin strips; put into a saucepan. Add cold water and simmer, covered, until tender (about 30 minutes). Drain.

Remove seeds and membrane from peeled fruit. Called “supreming,” this technique removes the membrane from citrus fruit so it can be served in sections. The result is no rind, no pith, just sections (carpels) of fruit. Cut fruit into small pieces.

To make marmalade:

Prepare canner, jars, and lids. Sterilize jars for 10 minutes and keep hot.

Combine peel and fruit in saucepan, add boiling water and sugar. Boil rapidly to 8 degrees F above the boiling point of water (212 degrees F at sea level), stirring frequently. Remove from heat; skim. Ladle hot marmalade into hot jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Wipe rim. Center lid on jar. Screw band down until resistance is met, then increase to fingertip tight.

Place jars in boiling water canner, ensuring they are completely covered with one inch of water. Bring to a boil and process 5 minutes*. Remove canner lid. Wait for 5 minutes, then remove jars, cool 12 to 24 hours, label, and store.

*The processing times given for processing jellied fruit products are for processing at altitudes of less than 1000 feet. Add 1 minute to the processing time for each 1000-feet of additional altitude.

Join the UC Master Food Preservers for Ask a UC Master Food Preserver online via Zoom on Wednesday, February 14 for a general Q&A session. [Registration is required](#). Learn about this and other events at our website, https://ucanr.edu/sites/mfp_of_cs/Classes_-_Events/Calendar_of_Events/.

Do you have a question for the UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County? Ask a Master Food Preserver with this link https://ucanr.edu/sites/mfp_of_cs/Ask_a_Master_Food_Preserver/. Or, call the UCCE Master Food Preserver Helpline 530-621-5506 and leave us a detailed message.