

Canning with Chocolate

GENERALLY NOT SAFE FOR HOME CANNING (WITH A *VERY* FEW EXCEPTIONS)

Homemade chocolate sauces are fun to make and are great to have on hand for quick dessert toppings or to give as gifts. It may be tempting to can your own sauces (or other types of spreads) that include chocolate products, but unfortunately canning your own recipes – or those you may find being passed around the Internet – is not a safe practice. Because of its low acidity, **chocolate should not be canned unless a recipe that has been scientifically tested for safety calls for it.**

There are a very few recipes (such as the *Chocolate-Raspberry Sundae Topper* and the *Black Forest Preserves* recipes from Ball) which include small amounts of chocolate. These tested recipes include other ingredients, such as fruit and bottled lemon juice, that raise the overall acidity level of the final products, which thus makes them safe for home canning.

These safe, tested recipes generally call for “unsweetened cocoa powder.” Do not use sweetened hot chocolate or cocoa mixes, chocolate syrups, or chocolate bars. Dutch-process cocoa (aka Dutched cocoa or Alkalized Unsweetened cocoa) also must not be substituted, as the alkali solution used to make Dutch-process cocoa further lowers its acidity level, and this type of cocoa has not been tested for safety.

In summary:

- Choose only tested recipes from reputable sources when canning chocolate.
- Do not make any substitutions in the type of chocolate/cocoa called for.
- When cocoa powder is listed, use only natural, unsweetened cocoa powder.

For further information on canning chocolate – including a recipe for Freezer Chocolate Fudge Sauce – visit the National Center for Home Food Preservation (NCHFP) website at https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/nchfp/factsheets/choc_sauce.html.

Brought to you by the UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County
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