



Preserve Today, Relish Tomorrow

UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County

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Melon Jam

Cantaloupe do well in my garden here in El Dorado County. I cannot eat them all, so this jam is a great way to preserve my melon harvest. A common jam in France, serve with mild soft or hard cheeses with mild crackers. This would be an impressive and exotic addition to a cheese board.

- 14 cups cantaloupe or other orange-fleshed melon, chopped into 1" cubes, about 2 large melons.
- ¼ cup kosher salt (see note)
- 4 cups sugar
- ¾ cup bottled lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. crushed pink peppercorns (optional).

Toss together melon and salt in a large bowl. Cover and let stand for 2 hours. Drain, rinse with cold water, drain again.

Stir together melon, sugar, and lemon juice in a large stainless steel or other non-reactive pot. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer, uncovered for 20 minutes or until melon is soft.

Mash melon with a potato masher. Simmer, uncovered, stirring often, about 1 hour or to gelling point (read about gelling point here: <http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/files/304297.pdf>). Melons release a lot of liquid so cooking time may vary. Skim foam, if necessary, and, if desired, stir in peppercorns.

Ladle hot jam into hot jars one at a time, leaving 1/4-inch head space. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace, if necessary, by adding hot jam. Wipe jar rim with a clean, damp cloth. Attach lid. Place jar in canner. Continue to fill remaining jars one at a time.

Process half-pint jars in a boiling water bath or atmospheric steam canner for:

0-1000ft. = 10 minutes, 1001-6000 ft. = 15 minutes, above 6000 ft. = 20 minutes.

Before removing canner lid, wait 5 minutes for boiling water or 2-3 minutes for steam canner, then remove jars, cool, and store. Cool jars for 12-24 hours, wash, label, and store in a cool dark.

Yield: ~ 5 half-pint jars.

Source: Ballmasonjars.com

Cook's Note:

All salts are not created equal. Read more about preserving with salt here:

https://ucanr.edu/sites/mfp_of_cs/files/355330.pdf

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