



"Teaching research-based practices of safe home food preservation to the residents of Solano and Yolo Counties."

Trying a New Recipe: Preserved Lemons

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A friend recently gave me a large batch of fresh Meyer lemons. I usually juice and freeze them in individual ice cube trays, make some lemonade and lemon curd, and freeze the zest. I've been meaning to try two recipes for the first time: traditional preserved lemons and candied citrus peel. Now is the time. This month I'll share how I made the preserved lemons; next month will be the candied citrus peel.

I enjoy Middle Eastern food, but often times recipes call for preserved lemon. It's not something I can just run down to the supermarket to buy. It's easy to preserve lemons but it does take a couple of weeks—but there's no canning involved and they are supposed to keep well in the refrigerator. Here's a photo log of the process using a recipe from *Ball*. The final steps will be demonstrated at the May 4 and June 1 Amador/Calaveras Master Food Preserver classes.

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| Ingredients: 10 lemons
4 bay leaves
1 tsp whole black peppercorns (optional) | ½ cup pickling or canning salt, divided
4 cinnamon sticks (each about 4 inches) |
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The traditional recipe calls for a butterfly cutting technique, but there's a variation using quartered lemons. I'm all for simplicity, so that's the route I chose.

The first thing I did was to sterilize a quart jar and lid.

<p>1) Wash 5 of the lemons in warm water, scrubbing well. Dry with paper towels. Quarter the 5 lemons.</p> 	<p>2) In a large bowl, combine lemon quarters with salt and toss to mix.</p> 	<p>3) Fill the jar halfway, add the bay leaves, cinnamon sticks and optional peppercorns.</p> <p>Continue adding lemons until the jar is filled, pushing lemons well down to squeeze in as many as possible.</p> 
<p>4) Juice the remaining 5 lemons to measure 1½ cups juice. (I added some bottled lemon juice since 5 lemons didn't provide 1½ cups.)</p>  <p>Fill the jar with lemon juice to within ½ inch of the top of the jar.</p>	<p>5) Apply lid, finger tight. Place jar in a dark, cool cupboard for 2 weeks, shaking every day to distribute the salt.</p> 	<p>6) After 2 weeks, the lemons are ready to use. Remove pulp and membrane, using only the peel.</p> <p>Rinse under water to remove excess salt and dry with a paper towel.</p> <p>Store preserved lemons in the refrigerator.</p> 

Recipe from Ball Complete Book of Home Preserving, 2012 edition. Page 295. NOTE: Bay leaves, cinnamon sticks and peppercorns are optional

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