

GRAPES FOR PRESERVING AND VINEGAR

MANY people have written to me about vinegar being in short supply. Actually, the real shortage has lain chiefly in the bottling of the vinegar, and we generally find that if we take our own bottles to the grocer or store-keeper, he will fill them for us. Try to co-operate by leaving the bottles all day and calling for them on the way home, for the storekeepers are mostly short-handed, and can only fill these bottles during slack intervals. However, for those people who can get plenty of grapes cheaply, here is a method for making Grape Vinegar. It must be left 5 or 6 months to mature, and even then improves with keeping.

Grape Vinegar

Dark grapes make dark vinegar, white grapes light vinegar. Have them fully ripe, bruise and crush them, and to every 3lb. of grapes add 2 gallons water which has been boiled and cooled. Leave standing in earthenware or wooden vessel for 6 or 7 days, stirring well twice a day with wooden spoon. Then strain through coarse cloth, and add one pound of sugar to each gallon of liquid (measured). Return to a clean earthenware or wooden vessel, and leave for 6 months, covered only with a cloth to keep out the dust. Then strain and bottle.

Grape Vinegar (Without Water)

Crush the grapes, put into an earthenware or wooden vessel with sugar in the proportion of a cupful to a gallon of grapes. Stir each day for a week, using a wooden spoon. Then strain through coarse cloth, and leave for a second week, when it must be strained through a finer cloth into glass or earthenware jars, and left uncorked for 3 or 4 weeks. Then strain and bottle; cork down. It is best left now for 3 or 4 months before using.

Grape Ketchup

This is delicious, especially with poultry, rabbit or veal. Five pounds grapes, 1 dessertspoon spice, 2 cups brown sugar, 3 cups white sugar, 1½ tablespoons cloves, 1 teaspoon salt, ½ pint vinegar, pinch cayenne, 1½ table-spoons cinnamon. Steam and wash the grapes and put in pan with just enough water to prevent sticking. Simmer till tender, stirring often. Then pass through sieve to remove skins and stones, return to pan and add vinegar, sugar, salt and spices, and boil till thick. When cold, bottle and cork and seal.

Grape Juice (Unfermented)

This should keep well, if bottled in hot, sterilised bottles while at boiling point, and a teaspoon of olive oil poured on top to make sure of being airtight. Then cork tightly. When using, soak up the olive oil with cotton wool or blotting paper. Crush the grapes well, and allow to stand a little while. Then add a very little water and place over low heat to make juice flow. Gradually bring to boiling point, and then strain

through muslin. Bring to the boil again, add ½lb. sugar to each pint of juice and stir till dissolved. Then boil for 5 minutes steadily. Bottle while boiling.

Pickle of Grapes

This is a Perthshire recipe, rather unusual, and quite refreshing with any cold meat. Select large, firm grapes, and pack into jars, leaving a little bit of stem on each grape. Boil up sufficient vinegar to cover, with brown sugar (½lb. to a quart), ¼oz. of cinnamon and 1oz. of whole spice. Let it get cold, then pour over the grapes and seal airtight.

Green Grape and Blackberry Jelly

Take an equal quantity of green grapes and blackberries. Boil with a little water till soft. Strain through jelly bag as usual. Allow cup for cup of sugar. Bring to boil, add sugar and boil till it will set when tested.

Green Grape Jam

Two pounds grapes, 1 teacup water. 1¾lb. sugar. Put grapes and water in pan, press and cook till soft. Then add sugar and boil till it will set. Strain through strainer to get out skins and seeds, and add the juice of a lemon. Flavouring essence may be added if liked.

Grape Jam

To 1lb. grapes allow ¾lb. sugar. Put fruit in buttered pan, bring to the boil, add sugar and boil till it will set. No water. Skim off seeds.

FROM THE MAILBAG

Don't Throw Away the Skins

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I've used your Peach Chutney for some years, but I always use 6lbs. of peach *peelings* instead of the peaches.

The Golden Queen peach and some others must be peeled for preserving, if they are sliced. All the peaches are cleaned first; then the peelings can be cut up with scissors and used for chutney. The chutney has more substance made from the peelings.

Hoping this letter may help someone who cannot grow peaches.—Yours sincerely, *Another Daisy*.

If Starch is Scarce

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I noticed an article in the paper saying starch is in short supply. In this connection the public may find the following useful. Many years ago, I ran out of necessary starch on wash-day, and asked my neighbour to oblige. To my surprise, knowing her immaculate linen, she replied she never used starch—she always used ordinary flour, dissolving a heaped dessertspoon to a tablespoonful (according to size of wash), in cold water, mixing to a smooth paste, and adding boiling water and a squeeze of blue. That is over 30 years ago, and I have never used anything else, finding it most satisfactory.—N.S.

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