

## PLUMS AND PEACHES

**P**LUMS and peaches are now ripe, and plentiful, and it behoves us all to make the best possible use of them. There are two ways of doing this. One is to eat them fresh and raw, and also to make them into tempting desserts and puddings. The other way is to preserve them for winter pies and puddings, and also to make into jam, jelly, chutney, and sauce, or wine. This week I shall give some recipes and suggestions for the preserving of them, and next week we shall take the desserts.

### Preserving Plums (without sugar)

Wipe the plums, which should be firm, and not over-ripe. Pack them carefully into slightly warm, clean jars. Fill to the top with cooled boiled water, put the lids on loosely, and sterilise either in the oven, or in a water bath, till they are done, and the juice begins to ooze out. Then overflow with boiling water, and screw down airtight. As with all preserves, the jars must be airtight.

### Preserving Peaches

If desired, peel the peaches, or better still, put the peaches into a steamer for about 7 minutes, when the skins will slip off easily. The peaches look nicer done this way. You may cut them in halves, or leave them whole, whichever you like. One or two cracked peach stones help to enrich the flavour. Pack them into heated jars, pour over water

which has been boiled and slightly cooled. If you have sugar, pour over heated syrup, instead of plain water. Adjust the rubbers, put lids lightly in position, and sterilise the fruit till it is cooked, and the juice begins to ooze out. If using the oven, this will take about an hour; and if using the water bath method it will take about 50 minutes to one hour. Remove the jars one by one, and make airtight.

A little stick cinnamon added to each jar gives a lovely flavour. Powdered cinnamon may be used, but it rather spoils the appearance of the preserves.

### Pickled Peaches (No. 1)

To every 8 lbs. peaches, allow 4 lbs. pale brown sugar, and sufficient vinegar to cover. Stick four cloves into each peach, and place them in a jar. Make a syrup of the vinegar and sugar, and when boiling pour it over the peaches. Let stand till cool. Pour off the vinegar, re-boil, and pour over the peaches again. Repeat twice more, and then boil the peaches in the syrup, till the skins begin to break. Cover, and use in three months.

### Pickled Peaches (No. 2)

Wash firm ripe peaches, and rub off as much fluff as you can. Boil 1 pint of vinegar, 1 teaspoon of cinnamon, 1½ cups sugar, and a few cloves for about ten minutes. Then add the peaches to

the syrup, and boil till tender, but not too soft. Lift the peaches out and fill the jars. Pour over the boiling syrup. Put a few cloves in each jar, and screw down.

### Peach and Plum Chutney

Slice and stone 2 lbs. each of plums and of peaches. They must be ripe but firm. Put the slices in layers in a dish, and sprinkle each layer with a little pepper and salt; leave for 24 hours. Drain, and put the fruit in a saucepan with 4 cups of vinegar; ½ lb. brown sugar; 3 oz. preserved ginger; 2 oz. cloves; and ½ lb. onions cut up finely. Boil slowly till the peaches are tender. Strain through a sieve, and fill small jars. Make airtight.

### Peach Chutney

Cut up 6 lbs. peaches, and nearly cover with vinegar. Add 3 lbs. brown sugar; 1 small teaspoon cayenne; 2 oz. garlic cut very small; 6 oz. salt, or less to taste; 2 lbs. sultanas, minced if liked; and ¼ lb. whole ginger, bruised and put in a muslin bag. Boil all to a pulp, remove the ginger in the bag, and bottle.

### Plum Sauce (without onions)

Six pounds of plums; 3 pints vinegar; 3 lbs. brown sugar; 1 handful of bruised ginger; 6 teaspoons salt; 1 teaspoon cayenne; 1 oz. cloves. Butter the bottom of the pan. Put everything in, and boil for 2 hours, keeping it well

### APRICOT JAM

*WIPE the apricots with a damp cloth, and divide in halves. If they are wet, the jam will ferment. Weigh, and allow equal quantities of sugar. Put the fruit into the preserving pan, cover with the sugar, and leave overnight. Next day, bring to the boil over a very slow heat, gradually turning the fruit over and over with a wooden spoon until all the sugar is melted. Then cook rapidly for 30 to 40 minutes, or until the jam is clear and will set when tested. A few of the kernels added to the jam will improve the flavour.*

stirred. Strain through a colander, bring it back to the boil, and bottle. Seal carefully.

### Plum Sauce (with garlic)

Six pounds blue diamond or dark plums; 2 lbs. plain sugar; 3 pints vinegar; 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper; 6 teaspoons salt; 2 teaspoons ground cloves; 2 teaspoons ground ginger; 1 teaspoon black pepper; 1 teaspoon ground mace; 1 oz. garlic. Boil all together till reduced to a pulp. Then press through colander. Bottle when cold. Keeps quite well. Must be well sealed.

### Plum Chutney

Six pounds of plums; 3 lbs. onions; ¼ lb. salt; ½ lb. each dates, raisins, and preserved ginger; 3 lbs. apples; 2 lbs. sugar; 1 level teaspoon pepper; 1 level teaspoon mustard; 3 cups vinegar; a piece of garlic cut up finely; and 1 dessertspoon each of whole allspice and pickling spices.

Peel and core the apples, cut them into quarters; cut up the onions finely. Boil the plums in the vinegar first, and then put through a colander to keep out all the skins and stones. Add the cut up apples, onions, and the other ingredients. Stir well, and boil 2 hours. Chop the ginger, and tie the spices in a muslin bag, so that they can be taken out easily after the chutney is cooked. The ginger gives a very nice flavour. (From Spreydon, Christchurch.)

### Plum Sauce With Apples

Six pounds of red plums; 1 tablespoon salt; 1 dessertspoon cayenne; 3 large cooking apples; ½ oz. cloves; 3 lbs. sugar, brown for preference; 3 pints good vinegar; 2 or 3 large onions; ½ oz. allspice; ½ oz. bruised ginger. Boil all for 1½ hours. Strain and bottle.

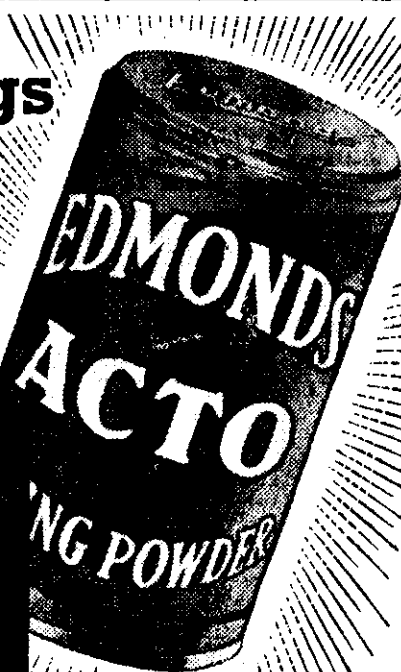
### Peach Jam

Three pounds of peaches; 3 pints of water; 5 lbs. of sugar; and a tablespoon of butter. Cut up the peaches, and boil them in the 3 pints of water, until soft.

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