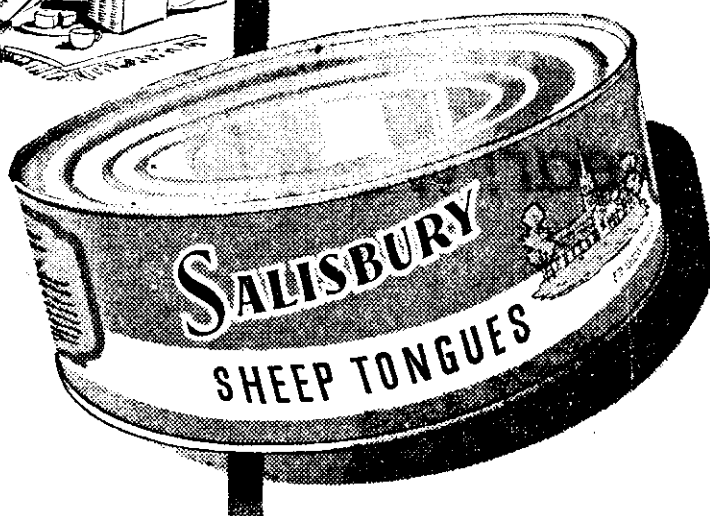




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## ASK AUNT DAISY

### The Fig Tree and the Vine



THERE are many places in the North Island where people might "sit under their own vine" (as in Biblical days), but very few indeed where they can sit under their own fig tree! Nevertheless, splendid fresh figs are grown around Auckland, and requests for recipes using them come in to me at this time of the year. One Link in our Chain was told she could have the whole crop of a big fig tree. So here are some recipes for fresh figs as well as grapes.

#### Fresh Fig Conserve

Eight pounds figs, weighed when peeled, juice 4 or 5 lemons, 6 lb. sugar, 1 lb. preserved ginger. Cut peeled figs in halves or quarters, put in pan with sugar and ginger. Pour over lemon juice. Heat slowly till sugar is dissolved, stirring gently. When dissolved, boil fast for about 1½ hours, or till it will set when tested.

#### Fresh Fig Jam

**First Method:** Four pounds fresh figs peeled and cut up, 3½ lb. sugar, juice 4 lemons, thinly peeled rind of 1 lemon, few pieces of root ginger, 3 cups cold water, tiny pinch of salt. Peel and cut up figs, put in buttered preserving pan with sugar, lemon juice, lemon rind, and ginger. Pour over the water, leave all night. Next day stir well, bring slowly to the boil, stirring. Boil quickly 1 to 1½ hours, or till thickened and will set. When it drops slowly off spoon, pour into hot jars, after removing ginger and lemon rind. Cover when cold. Keeps well.

**Second Method:** 2½ lb. figs, ½ lb. apples, 2 oz. preserved ginger, 3 lb. sugar, ½ breakfast cup lemon juice, 2½ breakfast cups water. Tail figs and slice small. Peel and cut apples small. Cut ginger small. Put all in preserving pan and bring slowly to the boil. Boil about 40 minutes. Test before taking up. A lovely amber colour.

#### Fig Jam (With Vinegar)

Twelve pounds green figs, 12 lb. sugar, 1 breakfast cup vinegar, 1½ lb. preserved ginger, 1 breakfast cup water, 2 oz. whole ginger. Wipe and slice figs, sprinkle with half the sugar, and stand overnight. Next day, add rest of sugar, sliced up preserved ginger, whole ginger tied in a muslin bag, and bring to the boil in vinegar and water. Boil about 3 hours, or till it will set. Use asbestos mat as it catches easily. Remove the whole ginger.

#### Fresh Figs for Eating

People who like to eat fresh figs should pare thinly the outer skin, and serve them cut in halves, or sliced, with cream. Or split them and arrange on lettuce, topped with cottage cheese and mixed with nuts. Serve with French dressing.

#### Fresh Fig Chutney

One and a half pounds fresh figs, 3 oz. raisins, 2 oz. preserved ginger, ½ lb. onions, 3 oz. dates, 6 oz. brown sugar, ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon cayenne, 1 pint vinegar. Cut figs into rings, also cut dates and ginger into cubes. Boil vinegar and sugar, pour this on to all other ingredients, and leave all night. Next day boil till thick and dark, about 3 hours. This is a "different" chutney, very nice on plain biscuits, or in sandwiches.

#### Grape Juice (To Keep)

There are two or three ways of preserving grape juice: (1) Home Science

#### Department Method:

Six ounces grapes, 1 cup sugar, boiling water. Thoroughly clean a quart jar (preferably a glass top). Wash the grapes, put into the jar and add the sugar. Fill the jar with boiling water and close tightly. No processing. The juice is ready for use in 6 weeks. (2) *Do as for other soft-fruit juices:* It 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, and add ½ lb. sugar to each pint of juice and stir till dissolved. Then boil for 5 minutes steadily. Bottle while boiling.

#### Grape Juice Cocktail (Spiced)

Combine in a saucepan 3 cups grape juice (fresh or bottled), ¼ teaspoon cinnamon, ¼ teaspoon nutmeg, a speck of powdered cloves. Simmer gently for 5 minutes. Strain through fine cheese cloth and chill. Serve in small glasses.

#### 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.

#### Grape Jelly

Put freshly-picked grapes, stalks and all, into pan, nearly cover with water. Crush and boil till well mashed, strain through jelly bag. Bring juice to boil, and boil a few minutes. Add 1 lb. sugar to each pint of juice, and boil till it will set.

#### Grape Jam

**First Method:** To 1 lb. grapes allow ¾ lb. sugar. Put fruit in buttered pan, crush a few to start juice. Bring to boil, add sugar, and boil till it will set. No water. Skim off seeds. Juice of a lemon may be added.

**Second Method:** Two pounds grapes, 1 teacup water, 1¾ lb. sugar. Put grapes

(continued on next page)



(C) Punch

"Since when in a calypso do you have to have a rhyme for Margaret?"

N.Z. LISTENER, APRIL 15, 1955.