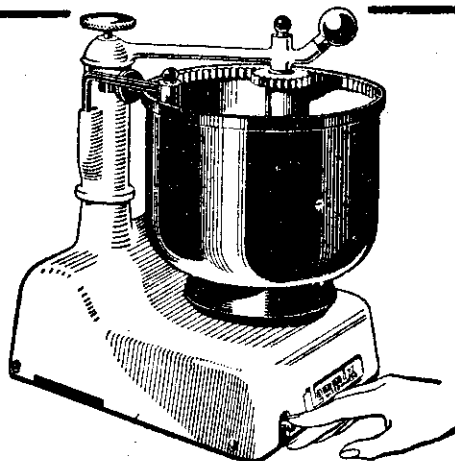


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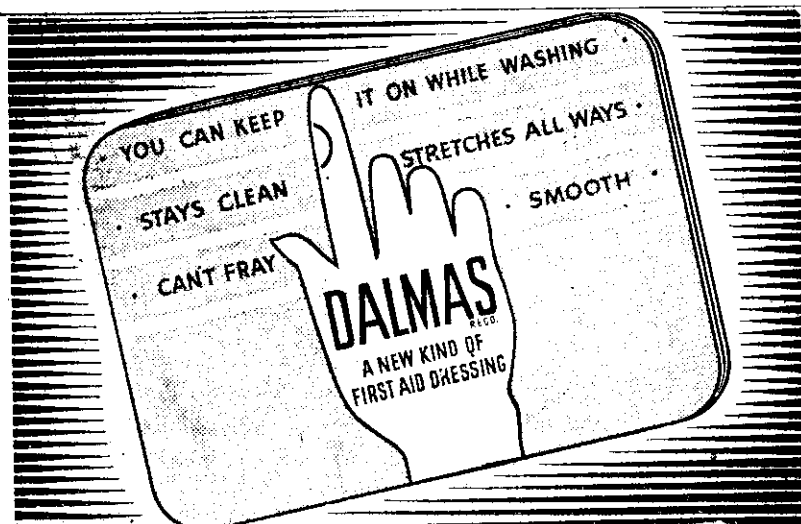
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SUGGESTIONS FOR PLUMS

PLUMS are one of our most useful fruits because they combine well with the less plentiful and more expensive berries and currants, both in desserts and in jams, as well as making good pies, puddings and preserves by themselves. It is a good idea to strain plum jam through a coarse sieve, to get out the skins and stones. Do this before adding the sugar.

Plum Sauce

Six pounds red plums, 3 lb. brown sugar, 1 tablespoon salt, 3 pints vinegar, 1 small dessertspoon cayenne, 3 large onions, 3 large cooking apples, 1/2 oz. all-spice, 1/2 oz. cloves, 1/2 oz. bruised ginger. Boil all 1 1/2 hours. Strain and bottle. Or: Six pounds plums, 3 pints vinegar, 3 lb. brown sugar, a handful bruised ginger, 6 teaspoons salt, 1 teaspoon cayenne, 1 oz. cloves. Grease preserving pan, and boil all 2 hours. Strain through colander, bring back to the boil, and bottle.

Plum and Berry Jam

Boil till soft 4 lb. plums and 2 cups water. Press carefully through sieve, leaving only skins and stones. Add 2 lb. loganberries, strawberries or raspberries to pulp, and bring back to boil. Then add gradually 5 1/2 lb. warmed sugar, and stir well over moderate heat until sugar properly dissolved. Bring up heat and boil fast until jam will set when tested on cold plate. You can vary this jam according to fruit available. Barely cover plums with water in preserving pan or saucepan, and boil till soft, then strain. Bring back to boil, adding an equal quantity of berries, or less, or more, according to what you have. When berries are cooked, measure all with a cup, and add the same number of cups of sugar except one (8 cups of pulp, 7 cups of sugar). Warm sugar first, so that it will dissolve quickly. Stir until you are sure it is properly dissolved, then give the jam a rolling boil until it will set when tested (perhaps 1/2-hour).

Plum and Black Currant Jam

Four pounds plums, 3 lb. black currants, 2 pints water. Boil till soft, then rub through colander. Put into pan, bring to the boil, slowly add 7 lb. sugar, and boil 40 minutes, or till it will set. Raspberries can be done in the same way.

Damson Jam

Boil 8 lb. damsons with very little water till tender. Strain through coarse sieve. Add to pulp 6 lb. sugar. Stir till dissolved and boil till it will set when tested.

Fresh Plum Pudding

Cook about 1 1/2 lb. fresh plums in about 1 teacup water, adding 2 tablespoons sugar; when soft, remove stones. Line a pudding basin or mould neatly with slices of stale bread. Cut these into wedge-like pieces and fit them neatly round the sides, with a round piece of bread at the bottom. Carefully soak this lining with some of the plum juice. Now put in a layer of the soft plums, and then a layer of thin bread, and so on until basin is full, finishing with a layer of

bread. Cover with a saucer or plate which fits tightly, and put a weight on top. Leave till cold. Turn out of basin and serve with custard or mock cream.

Plum Jelly

Make a syrup with about 3/4 pint water and 2 tablespoons sugar boiled 2-3 minutes. Drop in about 1 lb. small plums, and cook slowly till soft, keeping them whole. Lift them out into a serving dish; make up the syrup to a pint with water and with it make up a packet of any jelly crystals preferred. Have ready a pint of custard, just cooling, and beat this into the jelly as it is beginning to set. Pour this over the plums in the dish and leave till firm. Serve with cream.

Plum Chutney

Six pounds plums, 3 lb. apples, 3 lb. onions, 2 lb. sugar, 1/4 lb. salt (bare), 1 level teaspoon pepper, 1 level teaspoon mustard, 3 cups vinegar, small piece of garlic cut finely, 1 dessertspoon each whole allspice and pickling spices, 1/2 lb. each of dates, raisins and preserved ginger (if available). Peel, core and quarter apples, cut onions fine. Boil plums in vinegar, put through sieve. Add apples, onions and other ingredients, stir well, and boil 2 hours. Have ginger chopped, and spices in a muslin bag.

Pulping

This is an excellent way of preserving fruit ready for making into jam, or sauce, or for use in pies and tarts later. By pulping, it is preserved until needed, and can be made up a little at a time, as sugar is available. Boil the fruit till soft and pulpy, using only enough water to prevent burning. Soft berry fruit and tomatoes should be crushed against sides of pan to draw sufficient juice to commence cooking, and no water will be needed. Harder fruits need a little water, according to kind. When all is pulpy, fill hot sterilised jars, one by one, to overflowing with boiling pulp, and seal airtight immediately. When making into jam, bring pulp to boil, add cup for cup of sugar, stir till dissolved, and boil fast till jam will set when tested. For plum pulp, boil fruit well, strain through a sieve to remove stones, then re-boil, and bottle as above.

FROM THE MAILBAG

Original Sponge Filling

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Here is our favourite recipe for sponge fillings, which has the advantage of requiring no icing sugar. One and a half tablespoons butter, 1 1/2 tablespoons ordinary white sugar, 1 1/4 tablespoons boiling milk, a little vanilla. Mix all ingredients well, cool, and beat till thick and creamy. It can be varied in no end of ways—by beating in a mashed banana or some mashed strawberries, or passion fruit, or crushed pineapple, etc., or orange essence, or coffee essence, while peppermint is very nice for a chocolate sponge. If any juicy fruit is added it is as well to reduce the amount of liquid in the recipe. It is important, when mixing, to dissolve the sugar as much as possible or the filling will be gritty when finished, but there is no need to panic if it is slightly so when first made, as it seems to dissolve after a while and