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ASK AUNT DAISY

The Useful Pie-melon

I WAS asked recently whether pie-melons are ever really used to make pies with. They do make pies, with the addition of a more expensive and flavoursome fruit, such as quinces or cape gooseberries or passion fruit, or even some well-flavoured preserved fruit, such as raspberries or plums. Pie-melons were a real stand-by with the early settlers, who found that they could be used to eke out limited quantities of rarer fruits, as they are themselves neutral flavoured. They are easily grown, too, and yield plentifully.

Pie-melon Pie

Cut slices of pie-melon into small dice and gently stew in a little water until quite tender but not mushy. When partly cooked, add sugar and spice to taste. When quite cooked, put into deep pie-plate, adding some fresh or preserved fruit, such as quinces, or preserved passion fruit; or, best of all, some chopped preserved ginger and a little ginger syrup, using a jar of Chinese ginger. Cover with pastry and bake as for any pie.

Melon Jam Hints

Melon jam is a little tricky to make. It goes sugary if over-boiled, and an old melon simply won't boil soft. Do not use an unripe melon, either—but one that is just mature. For a small quantity of jam, it is better to buy part of a large ripe melon than a smaller unripe whole one. Many people put the melon through the mincer, which is quicker than dicing it small, and also cooks quicker, thus saving fuel. Melon jam also takes longer to cook than most jams. The standard method is to prepare the melon overnight, and sprinkle it with half the sugar. Weigh it after preparing, and allow $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. of sugar to each pound of fruit, also a cup of water to each pound, unless your recipe specifies more. For flavouring add the juice of 1 lemon to each pound. Always simmer the pie-melon first, not too violently, until quite tender and soft. Be very particular about stirring when the sugar is added, for if it is not thoroughly and completely dissolved before the last "rolling boil" you will find your jam will turn sugary. If no lemon is available, add $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon tartaric acid about 10 minutes before taking it up, to help it to set.

Pie-melon Jam

Cut up melon small. Allow pound for pound of sugar. Sprinkle half sugar right through the cut-up melon, and leave overnight. Next day, add $\frac{1}{2}$ pint water to each pound of melon. Simmer gently till soft—may be 2 hours. Add rest of sugar, stir till dissolved, then boil rapidly. Flavour with grated rind and juice of 1 lemon to every pound of melon, or $\frac{1}{2}$ an orange, or 1 medium-sized pineapple, or diced preserved ginger, as desired.

Melon and Tree Tomato Jam

Ten pounds pie-melon cut up, 3 lb. yellow or red tree tomatoes, 3 lemons if liked (juice and grated rind), 1 lb. sugar to each 1 lb. fruit. Pour boiling

water over tomatoes, skin and cut up. Add the cut-up melon. Put all in pan, and bring to boil, adding about half the sugar. Boil again, adding rest of sugar. Boil till it will set when tested.



Melon and Passion Fruit Jam

Cut up 6 lb. pie-melon. Put into a basin with 1 lb. sugar. Allow to stand all night. Then take the pulp of 4 dozen passion fruit, and tie in a piece of muslin. Put all in preserving pan with another 5 lb. sugar and boil $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 hours. Excellent.

Bachelor's Melon Jam

This was given me by a bachelor who implored me not to divulge his name—as he felt sure he'd be rushed by the fair sex on account of its excellence! Twelve pounds melon, 9 lb. sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ dozen oranges, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. preserved ginger, cut finely. Cut melon into cubes, grate orange peel into fruit, add also the juice, and 4 cups water, and boil. Stir carefully for $\frac{1}{2}$ hour till tender, then add sugar and ginger. Boil till golden brown. Do not let the cut fruit stand.

Pie-melon Jelly

Take $7\frac{1}{2}$ lb. pie-melon (including seeds and skin). Cut up, and over it sprinkle 3 cups sugar. To draw out juice, leave overnight. To this quantity take 6 lemons, sliced, skin and all, and pour over them 3 pints water. Put in a separate bowl and leave overnight. Boil all together till tender, then strain. Add 1 cup sugar to 1 cup juice and boil till it jellies.

Pie-melon Chutney

Mince 5 lb. prepared melon, put in preserving pan with 1 pint vinegar and a small handful of salt. Add 3 lb. sliced or minced onions and $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups brown sugar. Bring to the boil. When boiling add 1 tablespoon mixed spice, a few cloves, a dessertspoon pepper, 1 large cup currants, 1 large cup sultanas, and 2 peeled and chopped apples. Boil for 3 hours. Before taking off, add mixture of 1 tablespoon flour, 1 tablespoon curry powder and turmeric mixed, and vinegar to moisten. Add to chutney, boil a few minutes longer. Bottle when cold.

FROM THE MAILBAG

A Disaster

Dear Aunt Daisy,

My daughter has a lovely satin pram pad and by some accident some silver nitrate was spilt on it. We cannot get it out, although she has tried everything she could think of. So I suggested writing to Aunt Daisy! You will let us know what to do, I'm sure. The stains are brown, on white satin.

"M.E.A." Linwood.

Here is your answer, from N.J.M., Christchurch: "When single I worked a good deal with silver nitrate, and we always removed it from our fingers with iodine. This would mean an iodine stain but if now I'm certain this could be removed afterwards." To remove the iodine stain, pour a little household ammonia into a saucer, place the stained part in, and rub gently. The stains will disappear. Wash afterwards.

Abernethy Biscuits

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Here is a much nicer Abernethy biscuit than the one in *The Listener*. I have made both so I know! Mine is

N.Z. LISTENER, SEPTEMBER 4, 1953.