

RED CURRANT JAM

INGREDIENTS

1 quart red currants

1/2 cup water

juice from 1/2 lemon

2 1/4 cups granulated sugar

a few tablespoons of cassis or vodka

(because red currants naturally have such a high pectin level, no additional pectin is needed)

DIRECTIONS

This is a small batch recipe because currants can be both difficult to find and expensive unless you grow your own. But if you have an abundance of them, by all means double the recipe.

Wash the currants and remove them from their stems. In the meantime, sterilize your canning jars, per your usual method. While the jars are sterilizing, put the red currants, water and lemon juice in a large, non-reactive pot. Gently crush the currants with a potato masher. Add the sugar. Cook the mixture over medium-low heat, stirring constantly to dissolve the sugar.

Once the sugar is completely dissolved, raise the heat to high and boil, stirring often, until the jam reaches the gel point (about 8-10 minutes). Remove the red currant jam from the heat and skim off any foam that has formed on the surface. Ladle the hot jam into the sterilized jars leaving 1/4 to 1/2-inch head space. Let cool with the lids off (cover with a clean dish towel). Once completely cooled, pour on a small amount (1/2 teaspoon per glass) of cassis or vodka and swirl to have the alcohol cover the jam (this will help sterilize a bit as well). Screw on canning lids. You can simply allow the jars to cool and then store them in the refrigerator for up to 3 months. For longer term storage at room temperature, process the jars in a boiling water bath for 5 minutes per your usual method.