



## “Salsa and Pickles”

October 27th , 2016

Host: Alison Juta

Remember these simple things for safe canning:

- Low acid foods must be processed in a pressure canner
- High acid foods may be processed in a water bath canner
- You must use the recommended time, pressure and methods.
- Adjust for altitude.
- Tomatoes – add 1T lemon juice when canning tomatoes. Acidity levels then rise and make it safe to can tomatoes in a water bath.

Never ever....

- Home can meat products (even in a pressure bath)
- Can beans in water + herbs only – botulism is ever present and will KILL YOU
- Use second grade or non -fresh veg or fruit – they carry fungi, bacilli, bacteria – which will cause spoiling and could cause death.
- Forget to top and tail all veg that you are canning – it is in the stalk and the left over flower end that the diseases, fungi sit.

### **EASY SPICED PICKLED BEETS**

Makes 8 cups or 4x500ml jars

10 whole cloves

8-15 fresh beets (about 2lbs/1 kg)

1 tsp allspice

2 cups granulated sugar (I use ½ cup – this is plenty sweet enough for us!)

2 cinnamon sticks, about 4 inches long or 2 tsp ground cinnamon

2 cups white vinegar or a mix of malt, apple cider and white

2 tsp pickling salt (coarse or kosher salt)

1 bay leaf

1/3 cup water or beet juice

1. Trim beets, leaving 1 inch ( 2.5 cm) of stem and tap root attached. Place in a large saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil over high heat, reduce heat, cover and simmer for 15 to 45 minutes or until tender. Drain and rinse under cold water. Remove skins and cut beets into large pieces. (Use gloves or you will get purple hands!)
2. Combine sugar, vinegar, allspice, cinnamon, bay leaf and salt to water in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring occasionally.
3. Remove hot jars from canner and pack beet pieces into jars.

4. Pour hot liquid over beets to within ½ inch of rim (headspace). Process 10 minutes for 500 ml jars and 15 minutes for 1L jars.

*VARIATION:* For an interesting variation, add ¼ tsp (1 ml) hot pepper flakes to each jar. For a less sweet taste, add thinly sliced onions in layers with the beets before adding the sauce.

## Simple Salsa

Makes 4x500ml jars

8 cups tomatoes, take out stem core, peel\* and chop – approx. 5lbs

2 cups sliced onions – about 1.5 lbs

1 cup minced green pepper/garlic/ basil mix – normally 1 or 2 large peppers, 1 bulb garlic, 2 oz basil leaves

2oz cilantro finely chopped (optional) ½ cup sugar

½ - ¾ cup 5% vinegar

½ 6 oz can tomato paste

1 tbsp pickling salt

½ tsp black pepper

½ -1 tsp chili powder

½ tsp cumin

Other spices such as cardamom, various hot peppers (optional)

1. Place tomatoes in large thick bottomed pot and start cooking, stirring regularly. Heat – just above medium
2. Add onions and pepper mix, continuing to stir
3. Add all other ingredients
4. Continue stirring regularly and cook for another 10 minutes. If the mix appears sloppy drain off excess tomato juice and make soup or freeze as a base for other dishes. When mix is fairly “solid” it is time to jar it. This will depend on the water content of the tomatoes
5. Ladle into jars and process for 15 minutes