

Dowfold House Seville Orange Marmalade

Makes approx. 6 x 1lb jars

Ingredients

3lb Seville oranges (don't try and do more, the average preserving pan's capacity + all the other ingredients, could result in boiling over and great stickiness)

2 lemons

6lb granulated sugar (less is fine, say 5.5 lb)

6 pints water

Method



Cook the fruit in the measured water, bring to boil and simmer for 45-60 mins – until soft (ideally the evening before you want to make the marmalade, so it will be cool to work with the following morning). This softening of the fruit makes the flesh removal and shredding or chopping the peel very easy.

Take the fruit out of the water, draining it in a colander over a bowl so as not to lose any liquor. Measure the cooking water and whatever has drained and make it up to the original volume with more water. Start heating gently and add the sugar to dissolve slowly.

Meanwhile, cut the fruit into quarters and scrape as much of the flesh, pith and pips off the skin as you can, putting it into a muslin cloth-lined sieve over a bowl. Gather the cloth and tie the ends to the handle of the pan so that the bag and its contents are in the liquor. Cut or shred the fruit peel as finely or as coarsely as you like (include the lemon as well) and add to the pan once the sugar has dissolved.

Prepare some jars to receive the marmalade by putting dishwasher-clean jars in a slowish oven (gm 2, 150 deg C) for 20 mins or so to sterilise.

Bring the pan to a rolling boil and when it can't be stirred down, and the bubbles are more sluggish, test for a set on a ready-chilled saucer (turn off the heat, spoon a little marmalade onto the saucer and when cool, push the mixture with your finger. If a skin is visible, it's done, if not put on to boil for a little longer). When ready, turn off the heat, leave in the pan for up to 30 mins to cool a bit. This means that the peel won't sink to the bottom of each jar, but lie evenly suspended in the amber jelly from the top to the bottom!

Place the warmed jars on a tray (to contain any drips – the stickiness does get everywhere) and decant the marmalade. I use an old dishwasher salt filter funnel (but you may have a proper jam funnel) and ladle the marmalade into each jar. It will be very hot. Put the lids on loosely and tighten once things have cooled down a bit. The jars will need a thorough wipe (have I mentioned the stickiness?) and labels, of course.

By the way, to spread the batch load, freeze some of the oranges until you have time to make marmalade. The Sevilles do seem to be in the shops for such a short period.