

Carrboro FARMERS' MARKET

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YEAR ROUND *Celebrating 31 Seasons*

Tomato Day 2009

Tomato Jam

Recipe provided by

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Market Vendor Farmer's Daughter

Yields about 2 pints

This is a thick and glossy tomato preserve that is like a grown up, very sophisticated version of ketchup. It is delicious on bread, cheese, roasted chicken, meat, and fish, okra fritters, and beans or peas. This recipe is adapted from my great grandmother's, who never served field peas (usually purple hull peas) and cornbread without it. You can make this jam with virtually any type of tomato, even green (unripe) tomatoes. The juicier heirloom and beefsteak type tomatoes will take longer to cook down than less watery tomatoes, like Romas or other paste tomatoes.

3 ½ pounds of tomatoes
2 teaspoons salt, or to taste
1 cup sugar (I have used unrefined sugar with good results)
½ teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon allspice
Pinch of ground cloves
1 teaspoon freshly ground coriander seed
¼ teaspoon ground celery seed
1 Tablespoon grated fresh ginger, or ½ teaspoon of ground ginger
A big pinch of red pepper flakes or cayenne, or to taste
2 Tablespoons fresh lemon juice

I prefer my tomatoes peeled, but if you don't mind a slightly more rustic preserve, feel free to skip the first step.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Score an "X" on the bottom of each tomato. When the water is at a steady boil, drop in the tomatoes, being careful not to overcrowd your pot, and cook for one minute. With a slotted spoon, transfer your tomatoes to a rimmed baking tray or other container. Let them cool slightly and then slip off the skins. Core them and crush them with your fingers as you transfer them to a wide saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat and simmer rapidly for about 10 minutes to reduce the excess juices. Add the salt, sugar, spices, and lemon juice. Cook the jam over medium low heat, watching carefully and gently stirring regularly, so that it does not scorch on the bottom, until thick and glossy. That should take about 1 hour depending on the variety of tomato that you've chosen. You can then transfer the jam to sterilized jars and water bath can them for longer keeping or simply refrigerate for several weeks.