

HEARTLAND COOKING

From the Kitchen of: Marcia Adams

Spiced Tomato Butter

makes 6 pints

"Fruit butters are nearly a thing of the past; occasionally you'll find them in specialty stores, but not often. They are an old-fashioned preserve made with far less sugar than jams or jellies. They do require long cooking as well as vigilant watching, since they scorch easily. Cook the butter in your heaviest pan over the lowest heat possible.

Butters are best served, I think, on hot little biscuits when you are having roast meat, such as beef or pork."

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| 8 large cooking apples, such as Jonathan or McIntosh, peeled, cored and diced (about 8 cups) | 1 cup cider vinegar |
| 8 large ripe tomatoes, cored, peeled, seeded and diced (about 8 cups) | 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon |
| 2 ^{1/2} pounds brown sugar | 1 teaspoon ground allspice |
| | 1 teaspoon ground ginger |
| | 1 teaspoon ground cloves |
| | 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper |

In a large, deep, heavy kettle, place the apples and tomatoes. Bringing to a boil, lower the heat immediately and cook until they are very soft. Press through a sieve or food mill and return the puree to the kettle.

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Over ...

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Add the remaining ingredients, bring to a boil, and lower the heat immediately to the lowest possible point. Cook, uncovered until the desired thickness is reached, about 25 to 35 minutes, stirring constantly. (This is very imprecise, for the cooking time depends on the amount of water in you area.) When finished, the mixture should round slightly in a spoon and have a gloss to it. Pack while still hot in hot sterilized pint jars, leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Wipe the rims, seal and process the jars in a hot bath for 10 minutes. Remove to a rack to cool and store in a dark place.



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