

Gifts from a Joyful Kitchen Recipes

Granola

Adapted from thekitchn.com

3 cups rolled oats

1 cup pepitas

½ cup chia seeds

½ cup chopped almonds

1 tsp cinnamon

½ tsp ground cardamom

1 ½ tsp kosher salt

½ cup olive oil

½ cup maple syrup

¾ cup dried apple pieces

Preheat the oven to 350. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a large bowl mix oats, pepitas, chia seeds, almonds, cinnamon, cardamom, and kosher salt. Stir in olive oil and maple syrup. Spread mixture onto a parchment lined baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes. Rotate pan and bake for an additional 10-15 minutes until golden around the edges. (This makes a chunky granola, if you desire you can stir the granola every 10 minutes to prevent clumping.)

Remove from the oven and let cool. Once cool, stir in dried apples. Store in an airtight container.

Cinnamon Applesauce Ornaments

The ratio is 1:1 cinnamon to applesauce. Mix 1 cup cinnamon and 1 cup applesauce (if the applesauce is watery use less). Mix thoroughly and form a ball. The dough should not be sticky but rather the consistency of rolled cookie dough. Add more cinnamon if too wet or more applesauce if too dry. Sprinkle cinnamon on a board (and rolling pin) and roll dough to a little less than ¼" thick. Too thin and the ornaments crack easily. Dust cookie cutters with cinnamon and cut out shapes. Simple shapes about 2 - 3 inches work best as appendages may break easily. Be sure to poke a small hole through the cutout shape so a hanger can go through later. The dough will shrink a bit when dry. Bake 200 degrees fahrenheit for 2 hours checking occasionally. Or simply allow ornaments to dry on the counter on a wire rack for a couple of days. When dry thread a ribbon, yarn or string through the hole and hang as ornaments or gift tags. The silver sharpie works pretty well for decorating, dating and labeling as desired. These ornaments last years and smell wonderful!. No special storing conditions needed.

Muesli

3 ½ cups rolled oats
½ cup shredded coconut
½ cup pepitas
1 cup chopped almonds
¼ cup raisins
¼ cup dried cranberries
½ cup dried apples
Pinch of salt

Preheat the oven to 325. Combine oats, coconut, pepitas, and almonds on a baking sheet and toast in the oven for 10 minutes stirring once. Remove from the oven and let cool. Mix in raisins, cranberries, dried apples, and salt. Store in an airtight container.

Feathered Friends Wreath

5 teaspoons unflavored gelatin (two small envelopes)

½ cup warm water

3 tablespoons corn light syrup

¾ cup white or whole wheat flour. Mix until smooth.

4 cups bird seed mix

cranberries - whole or dried (optional)

vegetable oil for oiling mold

Bundt pan or other pan with a hole in the center

Wide ribbon

Dissolve gelatin in the warm water. Add syrup. Stir in flour until smooth. Add the birdseed (one cup at a time) to the sticky mixture. Mix thoroughly so the seeds adhere well in the wreath. You may want to use plastic gloves or small plastic baggies over your hands to make clean up easier - this is sticky. Work quickly as the mixture may begin to stiffen.

Generously oil a bundt pan. (Cooking spray oil or simply a cloth wet with cooking oil works well.) Place a few whole or dried cranberries on the bottom of the pan which will be the front of the wreath. Optional - place a few thin twigs overlapping or interlocking (grapevines works well) into the mold to increase structural rigidity - two spaced layers of twigs even better. Fill the mold with the sticky bird seed mixture and press down firmly into the pan. Keep pressing the mixture to pack tightly. Set the filled mold on a counter or in the refrigerator for several hours or overnight to harden. Gently remove the wreath from the mold by covering with a board and flipping slowly. The wreath should release easily. Allow to completely dry at room temperature for an additional 48 hours. It will be very firm. It is now ready to hang! Use a very wide ribbon to hang the wreath outside in freezing temperatures (it breaks down quickly in wet or warm weather. Optional: Add peanuts, cracked corn, and dried fruit when mixing but the combined seed and added treats should still be 4 cups. Cookie cutters can be filled to make bird seed ornaments. Be sure to poke a hole through the ornament as soon as the mold is filled so you have a place to thread the hanger through (yarn, ribbon, string, etc.). Your feathered friends will cheerfully thank you by visiting often.

Celery Salt

Pick off leaves from celery stalks and prepare to dry (oven or dehydrator)

- Oven dry or dry in dehydrator
- Place dried leaves in a food processor, coffee grinder, or even a Nutribullet (grinder blade)
- Add 1-2 tablespoons of sea salt and grind away!
- You will have a nice celery salt powder when finished
- Place in small 1-2 oz glass jars or small 4 oz. Mason jar (I have ordered small jars through Amazon or from local (Albany area) jar manufacturer in Waterford called Burch Bottle: <https://www.burchbottle.com/>)
- Tie a ribbon around the lid with a label and give as a gift. (I have used the round Avery labels to place on top of jars).
- Salt can be used to season vegetables, soups, salads, or meats. Very tasty and versatile and stores well



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1. Fresh celery ready to dry. 2. Dried celery with salt ready to put in processor³



3. Celery salt in the food processor is all processed. 4.Placing salt in a jar. 5. Final product. 6. Some jar examples.

Simple Lemon Curd

Adapted from The Kitchn

1 cup lemon juice
Zest from lemon
1 large egg
2 large egg yolks
1/2 cup granulated sugar
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed
Pinch of salt

In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, bring the lemon juice to a simmer and reduce down to $\frac{3}{4}$ cups. About 3 minutes.

Transfer the juice to a measuring cup to cool, and stir in the zest.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the egg, yolks, and sugar. When the juice has cooled to room temperature, whisk it into the egg mixture in a steady stream.

Set a clean bowl with a strainer over the top next to the stove.

Pour the egg and juice mixture back into your small saucepan and set it over medium heat. Stir slowly but constantly until the mixture has thickened to a pudding-like consistency — about 6 to 8 minutes, or until the mixture is 180°F.

Strain the mixture into the clean bowl to remove the zest and any bits of cooked egg. Stir in the butter and the pinch of salt while the curd is still warm. Mix until smooth. Store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. Freeze for up to 3 months.

Other Favorites

Spiced Pears

From *So Easy to Preserve*

Makes about 4 pint jars

3 ½ pounds medium-ripe pears

2 ½ cups granulated sugar

1 ¼ cups white vinegar (5%)

1 cup water

Tie in a spice bag:

2 teaspoons whole ginger

2 Tablespoons whole cloves

7 cinnamon sticks (3-inch pieces)

Wash, peel, and core pears. Place immediately in a solution of ½ teaspoon ascorbic acid and 2 quarts of water to prevent browning. Combine sugar, vinegar, and 1 cup water; bring to a boil. Add spices tied in cheesecloth bags. Boil for 5 minutes. Drain pears and add to syrup. Simmer for 5 minutes or until soft but still firm. Remove spice bag

Pack pears into hot jars, leaving ½- inch headspace. Fill jars to ½ inch of top with boiling hot syrup. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Process pints for 15 minutes in a Boiling Water Bath.

Apple Pie Filling

From [National Center for Home Food Preservation](#) and *So Easy to Preserve*

Use firm, crisp apples. Stayman, Golden Delicious, Rome, and other varieties of similar quality are suitable. If apples lack tartness, use an additional 1/4 cup of lemon juice for each 6 quarts of slices.

Yield: 1 quart or 7 quarts

	Quantities of Ingredients Needed For	
	1 Quart	7 Quarts
Blanched, sliced fresh apples	3-1/2 cups	6 quarts
Granulated sugar	3/4 cup + 2 tbsp	5-1/2 cups
Clear Jel®	1/4 cup	1-1/2 cup
Cinnamon	1/2 tsp	1 tbsp
Cold Water	1/2 cup	2-1/2 cups
Apple juice	3/4 cup	5 cups

Bottled lemon juice	2 tbsp	3/4 cup
Nutmeg (optional)	1/8 tsp	1 tsp
Yellow food coloring (optional)	1 drop	7 drops

Procedure: See above for suggested quantities. Wash, peel, and core apples. Prepare slices 1/2-inch wide and place in water containing [ascorbic acid](#) to prevent browning.

For fresh fruit, place 6 cups at a time in 1 gallon of boiling water. Boil each batch 1 minute after the water returns to a boil. Drain, but keep heated fruit in a covered bowl or pot. Combine sugar, Clear Jel®, and cinnamon in a large kettle with water and apple juice. If desired, food coloring and nutmeg may be added. Stir and cook on medium high heat until mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Add lemon juice and boil for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Fold in drained apple slices immediately and fill jars with mixture without delay, leaving 1 inch headspace. Adjust lids and process immediately in a Boiling Water Bath. Process Pints or Quarts for 25 minutes. Adjust for Altitude.