

Cherry-Rhubarb Jam Makes 5 8-ounce jars

2 1/2 lbs cherries, pitted
1 1/2 cups chopped rhubarb
1 lb. sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon butter
1/2 vanilla bean, seeded and scraped

1. Place all the ingredients in a stainless steel or copper pot, or an enamel-lined dutch oven (not an aluminum pot). Let macerate for about 10 minutes. Place a small plate in the freezer as this will be used for testing later.

2. Turn heat to medium-high. The mixture will bubble and froth vigorously. Skim the foam off the top and discard (or save it and put it on cheese or yogurt; super tasty). The boil will subside to larger bubbles, but still bubble vigorously. Be sure to begin gently stirring the jam frequently to prevent it from sticking and burning to the bottom.

3. After about 20 minutes begin testing the jam by placing a small amount on the cold plate. Allow 30 seconds to pass and then run your finger through it to see what the cooled consistency will be. Boil for a few minutes longer if desired for a thicker jam.

4. Ladle into hot, sterilized canning jars and seal leaving 1/4 inch of head space. Wipe the rims of the jars clean before applying the lids. Screw on the rings to finger-tight. Work quickly. Process in a water bath to ensure a good seal. If you want you can skip the water bath and just screw the lids on tight where the heating-cooling process will create a vacuum seal, but the water bath is a surefire method for a secure seal.

*To sterilize the jars, rinse out clean mason jars, dry them, and place them, without lids, upright in a 200°F oven for 10 minutes. To sterilize the lids put them in a shallow bowl and pour boiling water over them.