

Why Make Jams and Jellies?

By Joseph Parish



One of the most enjoyable things a family can do is eat breakfast together. It quickly becomes a time when the family can talk at length about events that are about to take place that day. To add to this enjoyable occasion nothing beats having toast with homemade jelly or jam.

Unfortunately, we as a society have drifted away from making our own jellies and many people simply rush to the grocery store to purchase those that are ready-made. Often as you stand at the shelf where the many flavors of jellies are displayed you realize that with all those different jars neatly placed on the self, the choices are actually very limited. You might see four or five different brands of grape jelly along with several other berry type jams but many are merely duplicating in flavor. It is possible for you to finally try those different types of jams that you see in the magazines by simply making them at home. In fact, most people consider the act of preserving jams or jellies as a more popular activity to do.

You may wonder why all this hoopla on canning your own jellies as opposed to purchasing it from your neighborhood grocery store. First off, by making your own preserves or jellies you are afforded the opportunity to control the actual flavor of the product as well as what is placed into it. Perhaps the commercial grape jelly is simply not strong enough for your taste or possible it is far too strong in its flavor. It could be that you desire to use a true sugar ingredient or even little sugar at all. By making your own jams you determine what goes into your products. You will no longer be restricted to those flavors seen on the grocery shelf. If it can be eaten you can make a jelly from it.

Every jelly or jam that you create is a part of you and as such they tend to make excellent gifts for someone you care about. It could very well be that Aunt Emm once mentioned how tasty your Cranberry Jelly was. Surely Aunt Emm would appreciate a holiday treat of several jars of your homemade preserves. Although a special recipe could earn you the opportunity to make some extra money, I personally like to provide these items as gifts to family and friends. Money to me is not an issue here. Another factor as to why many people prefer to make their own jellies is for economic reasons. Saving money is one of the side benefits found with creating your own jars of jellies or jams. A good quality jelly in the grocery store can be expensive and by being able to make your own you have effectively saved yourself several dollars.

Lastly, imagine how proud you will be as you display your jars of homemade fruit jams created from the produce picked from your backyard. One such event occurred to me as I made a special Strawberry-Kiwi Jam. It was to quickly become a favorite with my grandson. Who to this day demands

that we have to always keep several jars in the pantry to soothe his hunger for the sweet jam? You too can create something of this nature with a little planning and preparation.