

# Making Easy Fig Preserves



The garden is literally bursting at the seams. With the heat, the ripening has exponentially increased. But it's a good thing, as being in the garden is calming for me, especially in

today's chaotic world. To see my post on Gardening 101, please click [here](#).



It is that time of year again when the fig tree is producing fruit. The fig tree is part of the mulberry family (I had no idea). They are low in calories and have no fat. A large fig

has approximately 47 calories making it a great healthy snack. Our fig tree produces twice a year, but this latest crop is producing *figs on steroids*. The fruit is HUGE and fleshy and sweet.



My neighbor's fig; my fig.

I have many books on making preserves, jams and jellies to reference.



But the easiest recipe and one I had not tried before, is from the Williams Sonoma, [The Art of Preserving](#) book.

WILLIAMS-SONOMA

THE ART OF  
**PRESERVING**

HOW TO MAKE  
JAMS  
JELLIES · CURDS  
PICKLES · CHUTNEYS  
SALSAS · SAUCES  
AND MORE  
PLUS RECIPES  
TO USE  
YOUR  
HOMEMADE CREATIONS

RICK FIELD  
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## Fig Preserves

Have ready hot, sterilized jars and their lids (see page 228).

Trim the fig stems, leaving a little of the stem attached to each fig. In a large nonreactive saucepan, combine the sugar and orange and lemon juices. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Add the figs, reduce the heat to medium, and cook, stirring gently, for 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the figs to a bowl. Add the orange zest to the syrup and cook, uncovered, until reduced by one-third, 2–3 minutes. Return the figs to the pan and cook for 1 minute to heat through.

Using the slotted spoon, divide the hot figs evenly among the jars. Ladle the syrup over the figs, leaving  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch (6 mm) of headspace. Remove any air bubbles and adjust the headspace, if necessary. Wipe the rims clean and seal tightly with the lids.

Process the jars for 10 minutes in a boiling-water bath (for detailed instructions, including cooling and testing seals, see pages 228–229). The sealed jars can be stored in a cool, dark place for up to 1 year. If a seal has failed, store the jar in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

3 lb (1.5 kg) figs such as Mission, Adriatic, or Brown Turkey  
 4 cups (2 lb/1 kg) sugar  
 1½ cups (10 fl oz/330 ml) fresh orange juice  
 ¾ cup (6 fl oz/180 ml) fresh lemon juice  
 Grated zest of 1 orange

Makes 5 half-pint (8-fl oz/250-ml) jars

*The high sweetness of the figs shines through in this simple recipe. Any variety will work here. Dark-skinned figs produce an almost purple syrup; green Adriatic figs yield a pale syrup. For some spice, add a pinch of star anise. Quarter the figs and serve on crostini with goat cheese.*



Really, this recipe is so easy. First trim the figs.

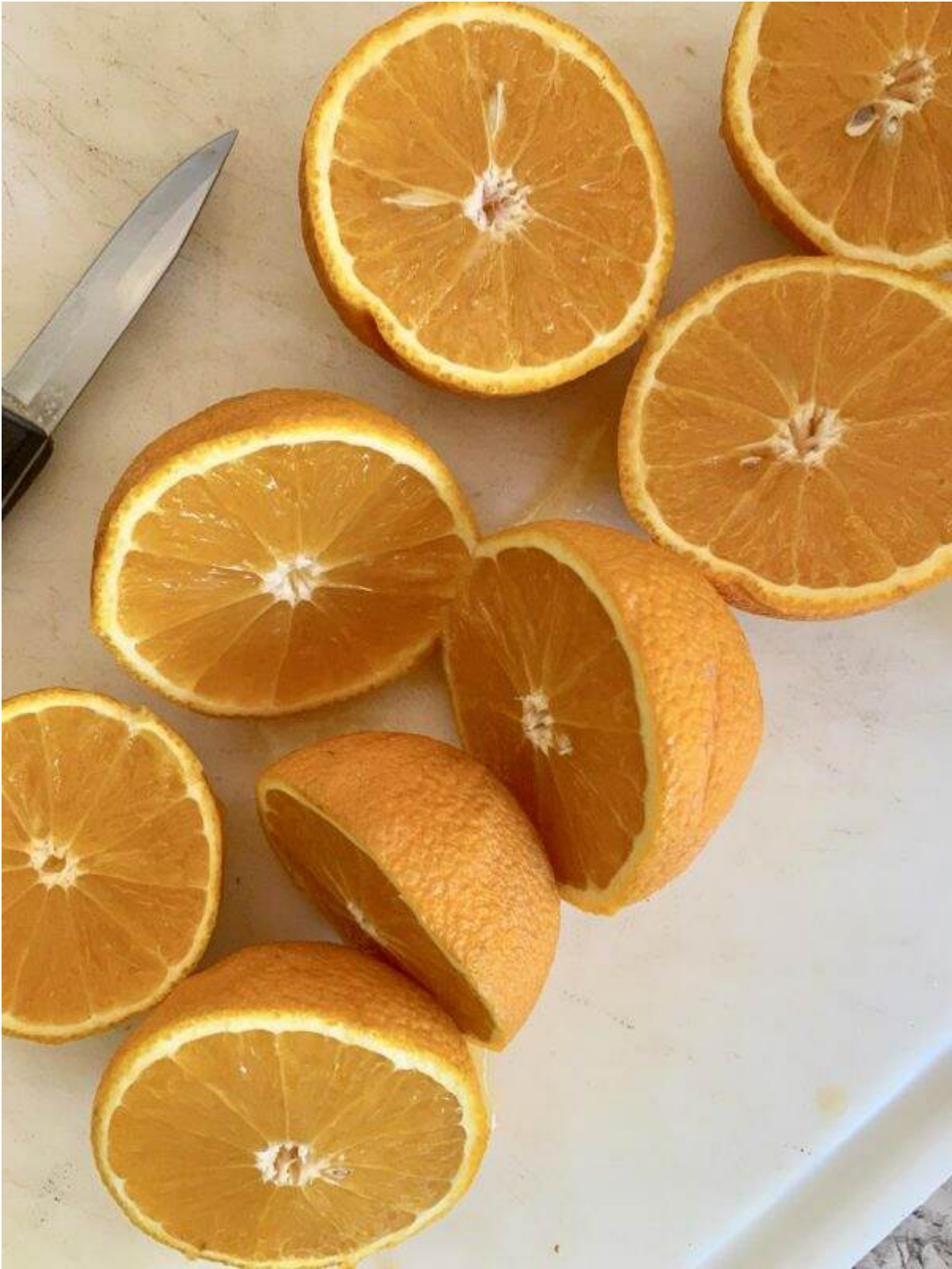


Since I am using a combination of our gargantuan figs and a few smaller ones from my friend and neighbor, Anne, I cut the figs to more or less the the same size.



The figs will cook in a combination of orange and lemon juice. We still have some remaining oranges on one of our trees but you can also use store-bought fresh juice.





Add sugar to the orange/lemon juice combo. Bring to a boil and stir to dissolve the sugar.



Add the figs, reduce the heat to medium, cook and stir gently for 5 minutes.



Using a slotted spoon, remove the figs to a bowl. Add orange zest to the syrup and cook, uncovered until reduced by one-third, 2-3 minutes. I inadvertently added the zest when I added the sugar, but I don't think it affected the taste of the syrup.

Return the figs to the pan and cook for one minute to heat

through.



The oven is my choice for sterilizing the jars and lids. After washing them in hot soapy water, I put the jars in the oven on a cookie sheet for at least 30 minutes at 250 degrees. I then fill them with the hot figs, leaving 1/4" at the top. Any

sticky syrup on the rim is wiped away before I add the lid.



After being severely burned using the hot-bath canning method, I now do all my fruit processing in the oven. (Note: please research this if you are canning meats or other foods that require different sterilization). After the jars are filled

and the lid snugly secured, I replace the jars in the oven for 15 minutes or so to ensure that are completely sterilized.

I let the jars cool overnight to set. They will seal as they cool.



Once the jar is opened and the seal is broken, the figs will last for 30 days in the refrigerator. The fig preserves can be used on chicken or pork. Or spread on warm bread or toast. Or just eaten with a spoon!



One of my favorite uses is a crostini appetizer with goat cheese and figs.



The syrup on this recipe isn't as thick as a jam or preserve, but is very flavorful. All in all, a quick and easy recipe to make. And a way to enjoy figs until the next production cycle!

On a separate note, I know these are troubling times. I want my blog to be a place where you are welcomed, perhaps learn something along the way, and to celebrate the simple beauty in



everyday life. Nearly a year and a half ago, I wrote a post on Kindness. It was difficult to share some personal moments with you, but the message remains the same. Kindness is free and the rewards are tremendous. And it is something we all can practice. If you would like to read this post again, click [here](#). More than ever, we need each other.

Sending all my loving energy your way.

*Mary*

## Easy Fig Preserves

This easy recipe will work with any variety of fig.

- 3 lbs figs (such as Mission, Adriatic, or Brown Turkey)
- 4 cups sugar
- 1 1/4 cups fresh orange juice
- 3/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- Grated zest of 1 orange

1. Have ready, hot, sterilized jars and their lids
2. Trim the fig stems, leaving a little of the stem attached to each fig.
3. In a large nonreactive saucepan, combine the sugar and orange and lemon juices. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Add the figs, reduce the heat to medium, and cook, stirring gently for 5 minutes.
4. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the figs to a bowl. Add the orange zest to the syrup and cook, uncovered, until reduced by one-third, 2-3 minutes. Return the figs to

the pan and cook for 1 minute to heat through.

5. Using the slotted spoon, divide the hot figs evenly among the jars. Ladle the syrup over the figs, leaving 1/4 inch of headspace. Remove any air bubbles and adjust the headspace, if necessary. Wipe the rims clean and seal tightly with the lids.
6. Process the jar for 10 minutes in a boiling water bath. The sealed jars can be stored in a cool, dark place for up to 1 year. If a seal has failed, store the jar in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.