

Delicious, quick, easy...

Herb jelly

Herb jellies are simple to prepare and make attractive and useful gifts. You can use them just like fruit jellies, but that is only the beginning. Glaze roast or broiled meat, fish, and chicken with herb jellies. Spread them on peanut butter sandwiches, or dab them into thumbprint cookies. Spread them with cream cheese on crackers, or on herbal rolls hot from the oven.

It is also possible to create great-tasting jellies with honey as a healthier alternative to sugar.

Take the following steps to ensure success when making your jelly:

- Make sure you wash and dry your herbs thoroughly.
- Sterilize your jars and lids, and keep them hot while you prepare the recipe. You can use paraffin to seal the jars, but recent research suggests that rings with rubber seals are safer.
- Skim off any foam that forms during the cooking process.
- Pour the jelly into the hot jars, screw the lid on tightly, then invert to coat the lid and create a seal. Leave the jars upright until they're cool. Store in a cool, dark place.

Apple Herb Jelly

2 ½ cups	Bottled, filtered, unsweetened apple juice
½ cups	Dry thyme
Or 1/3 cup	Dry basil
Or 2 tbsp	Dry rosemary
Or ¼ cup	Dry mint
3 tbsp	Lemon juice
3-½ cups	Sugar
1 pouch (3 oz)	Liquid pectin

In a heavy-bottomed 6- to 8-quart pan, bring apple juice to a boil.

1. Remove from heat, stir in herb, and cover.
2. Let stand for:
 - 30 minutes for thyme
 - 2 hours for basil
 - 15 minutes for rosemary
 - 10 minutes for mint
3. Pour mixture through a jelly bag or cheesecloth-lined colander.
4. Squeeze out and reserve liquid; discard herbs.
5. Rinse pan; return liquid to pan.
6. Stir in lemon juice and sugar.
7. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly.
8. Pour in pectin all at once.
9. Bring to a full rolling boil; boil, stirring, for 1 minute.
10. Remove from heat and skim off any foam.
11. Ladle hot jelly into freezer jars or freezer containers, leaving a ½-inch headspace.
12. Apply lids.
13. Let stand for 12 to 24 hours at room temperature.
14. Freeze for up to 1 year, or refrigerate for up to 1 month.

Makes about 4 half-pints.