In Praise of Winter Jam

FLAVORED WITH SPICES, SPIRITS AND MORE, WINTER JAMS CAN REQUIRE—AND REWARD—CREATIVITY. BUT EVEN THE SIMPLEST KINDS ARE SURPRISING.

BY SARAH DEGREGORIO

IT’S NO KNOCK on summer jam to say that the winter kind can be more inventive. After all, when you’re working with August fruit at its sweet and drippy peak, the less you do to it the better. But in winter, confronted with yet another box of pears pulled from the dark depths of cold storage, the best jam makers feel compelled to use all their creativity. They’re even excited about it. As Laena McCarthy of Brooklyn’s Anarchy in a Jar puts it, “Winter is the time to play.” For her, playing means combining grapefruit with smoked salt; for Liz Cowan of Portland, Oregon’s Three Little Figs, it means simmering apples with coffee and stout. Cowan, for her part, points out one more advantage of preserving in winter instead of summer: “The kitchen’s not 120 degrees!”

Liz Cowan of Three Little Figs adds freshly grated nutmeg, coffee and stout to chutney, RIGHT.
**Homemade Jam Tips**

**CANNING**
Spoon the hot jam into hot, sterilized canning jars to within ¼ inch of the rims. Seal the jars, then submerge them in a pot of boiling water and boil for 5 to 10 minutes. Remove the jars and let cool. Check the lids to make sure they’re fully sealed; refrigerate any jars with imperfect seals. The processed jam can be stored at room temperature for 6 months.

**PECTIN**
Every brand thickens in a slightly different way, so be sure to use the specific one called for in each recipe.

**MAKE AHEAD**
Unprocessed, these jams can be refrigerated for 3 weeks.

**Grapefruit Marmalade with Smoked Salt**

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<th>Total</th>
<th>35 min</th>
<th>Makes 7½ cups</th>
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“I call this my gateway marmalade,” says Laena McCarthy of Brooklyn’s Anarchy in a Jar. “It’s less bitter because it’s made with the zest of the grapefruit, not including the pith.” Use a mild smoked salt, such as Maldon, so as not to overpower the sweet and aromatic grapefruit. This marmalade is great stirred into a gin or bourbon cocktail.

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the sugar with the smoked salt and pectin.
2. In a large saucepan, whisk the grapefruit zest with the grapefruit and lemon juices and the calcium water and bring to a boil. Gradually whisk in the sugar mixture and bring back to a boil over high heat, whisking, until the sugar dissolves, about 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and skim off any foam. Test the marmalade: Spoon 1 tablespoon onto a chilled plate and refrigerate until it cools to room temperature, about 3 minutes; the marmalade is ready when it is thickened slightly and a spoon dragged through it leaves a clear trail. If the marmalade is too loose, continue simmering and test every 5 minutes.
3. Pour the marmalade into glass jars and let cool completely.

**NOTE** Pomona’s Universal Pectin (the brand favored by McCarthy for this recipe) is activated with calcium. A packet of calcium powder is included in each box—simply combine ¼ teaspoon of the powder with ¼ cup water to make the calcium water, which can be refrigerated for several months.
Three Brilliant Jams to Buy

ANARCHY IN A JAR
Laena McCarthy makes jam, chutney, mustard and marmalade in Brooklyn. anarchyinajar.com.

THREE LITTLE FIGS
This Portland, Oregon, producer incorporates red wine and cider vinegar into its sweet-savory jams. threelittlefigsjam.com.

INNA JAM
Each jar contains only organic, single-source vegetables and fruits picked in Northern California. innajam.com. —CHELSEA MORSE

Cranberry-Clementine Preserves
Total 45 min plus overnight macerating
Makes 5 cups
Elizabeth Madden of Chicago’s Rare Bird Preserves says she’s invigorated by the seasonal nature of jam making. “We never get bored, because we’re working on new flavors,” she says. “When you haven’t seen an ingredient in a year, you’re like, ‘Oh, my God, this is so beautiful!’” She feels that way in particular about cranberries, which she puts to great use in this bright, tangy preserve; it’s fantastic on a turkey sandwich.

¾ lb. clementines, unpeeled, thinly sliced crosswise and seeds discarded
¾ lb. fresh or frozen cranberries
3 cups sugar
2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
Fine salt
½ cup warm water
½ cup warm apple juice
1. In a food processor, pulse the clementines until coarsely chopped. Add the cranberries and pulse until the clementines are finely chopped and the cranberries are coarsely chopped. Transfer the fruit to a large nonreactive saucepan and stir in the sugar, lemon juice and a pinch of salt. Bring just to a boil, then simmer over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until the kiwis start to release their juice, 3 to 5 minutes. Reduce the heat to moderately low, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the fruit is nearly submerged in juice, about 15 minutes.

2. Stir the water and apple juice into the fruit in the saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to moderately high and boil, stirring occasionally, until the preserves are thickened slightly and a spoon dragged through them leaves a clear trail. If the preserves are too loose, continue simmering and test every 5 minutes. Let the preserves cool completely, then transfer to glass jars and refrigerate until chilled.

Kiwi Jam
Total 40 min; Makes 6 cups
California’s kiwi season runs from October to May, making the fruit fair game for Dafna Kory of Inna Jam. She sources all of her produce from within a 150-mile radius of her Emeryville, California, kitchen.

2½ lbs. kiwis, peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces (5 cups)
½ cup water
Salt
2 cups sugar
½ cup plus ½ tsp. Ball Low or No-Sugar Needed Pectin
3½ Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1. In a medium saucepan, combine the kiwis, water and a pinch of salt and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until the kiwis are coarsely chopped. Transfer the fruit to a large nonreactive saucepan and stir in the sugar, lemon juice and a pinch of salt. Bring just to a boil, then simmer over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until the kiwis start to release their juice, 3 to 5 minutes. Reduce the heat to moderately low, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the fruit is nearly submerged in juice, about 15 minutes.

2. Bring the fruit to a rolling boil. Add the sugar and boil over high heat, stirring until the sugar dissolves, about 2 minutes. Whisk in the pectin and boil over high heat for 1 minute. Remove from the heat, stir in the lemon juice and skimm off any foam. Transfer the jam to glass jars and let cool completely.

Puddletown Pub Chutney
Active 20 min
Total 1 hr 15 min plus cooling
Makes 3 cups
This chutney is an homage to Oregon: Liz Cowan, who runs Portland’s Three Little Figs jam company, uses Oakshire Brewing’s Overcast Espresso Stout from Eugene, Oregon, and Walla Walla sweet onions. The result is a sweet-savory chutney that’s stellar with sharp cheddar and charcuterie.

4 Granny Smith apples—peeled, cored and cut into ⅛-inch dice (5 cups)
2 cups finely chopped sweet onion
12 oz. espresso stout beer
1 cup packed dark brown sugar
½ cup apple cider vinegar
½ cup brewed strong coffee, cooled
½ cup currants
2 bay leaves
2 Tbsp. unsulfured molasses
1½ tsp. yellow mustard seeds
1 tsp. brown mustard seeds
1 tsp. fine sea salt, plus more for seasoning
½ tsp. black pepper
¼ tsp. Chinese five-spice powder
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
1½ Tbsp. Ball Low or No-Sugar Needed Pectin
1. In a large saucepan, combine all of the ingredients except the pectin and bring to a boil. Simmer over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until the chutney is thickened and reduced to 3 cups, 45 to 50 minutes.

2. Bring the chutney back to a boil over high heat. Whisk in the pectin and simmer for 1 minute. Remove from the heat and let cool completely. Discard the bay leaves. Season the chutney with salt and transfer to glass jars. Serve at room temperature or slightly chilled.