



Ask a Professional Home Economist

For Immediate Release

Small Batch Preserves to Make Now for Holiday Giving

by Ellie Topp P.H.Ec.

Get a head start on holiday preparations by making delicious and colourful jars of a cranberry relish or chutney. Cranberries celebrate the season with their rich colour and bright taste and are easily turned into a welcome hostess gift or a treat for a special friend.

Quick Apple Cranberry Chutney has a rich mellow taste and is perfect to serve with chicken or pork. The Cranberry Rum Relish is a splendid accompaniment to the holiday bird. Both of these require less than 15 minutes cooking time. A dollop of chutney on a cracker spread with cream cheese makes a superb appetizer requiring little preparation. And a bit of either the chutney or relish stirred into yogurt becomes a delicious low-fat veggie dip.

Home preserving is easy and can be done safely if proper processing procedures and times are followed. It is essential to use mason-type jars. These jars are widely available in 125 mL (1/2 cup), 236mL, 250 mL (1 cup) and 500 mL (2 cups) sizes which are perfect for creating small gifts. They often come with lids decorated in a holiday motif or, to personalize your gift, cut a circle of holiday fabric and tie it to the lid with ribbon and a card. One short evening spent now will provide you with several tasty gifts ready for holiday giving.

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QUICK APPLE CRANBERRY CHUTNEY

2 cups	chopped cranberries	500 mL
1 cup	finely chopped apple	250 mL
1/2 cup	each: finely chopped red onion and sweet red pepper	125 mL
1/2 cup	cider vinegar	125 mL
2	cloves garlic, minced	2
1 tbsp	finely chopped gingerroot	15 mL
1/2 cup	packed brown sugar	125 mL
1/4 tsp	each: ground cumin and salt	1 mL
1/8 tsp	each: freshly ground pepper and hot pepper flakes	0.5 mL

1. Combine cranberries, apple, onion, red pepper, vinegar, garlic and gingerroot in a stainless steel or enamel saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat, reduce heat and boil gently, covered, for 5 minutes or until cranberries pop.

2. Add sugar, cumin, salt, pepper and hot pepper flakes. Cook for 5 minutes or until thickened.

3. Process 10 minutes for half-pint (250 mL) jars and 15 minutes for pint (500 mL) jars as directed below, or store in refrigerator up to 3 weeks.

Makes 2 cups (500 mL).

CRANBERRY RUM RELISH

1/3 cup	dark rum	75 mL
1/4 cup	finely chopped shallots	50 mL
	Grated rind of 1 orange	
3 cups	fresh or frozen cranberries	750 mL
1 cup	granulated sugar	250 mL
1/2 tsp	freshly ground pepper	2 mL

1. Combine rum, shallots and orange rind in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat, reduce heat and simmer for a few minutes until rum has reduced and mixture is a syrupy glaze.

2. Add cranberries and sugar. Stirring constantly, continue to cook until cranberries pop and sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and stir in pepper.

3. Process for 10 minutes for half-pint (250 mL) jars and 15 minutes for pint (500 mL) jars as directed below, or store in refrigerator up to 3 weeks.

Makes 2 cups (500 mL)

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TO PROCESS CHUTNEY OR RELISH:

1. Before beginning recipe, partially fill a boiling water canner with hot water. Place required number of clean mason jars in canner and bring water to a boil. Meanwhile, place snap lids in hot water according to lid manufacturer's directions.
2. When recipe is finished, remove jars from canner and ladle chutney or relish into jars to within 1/2-inch (1 cm) of top rim (head space). Wipe jar rim to remove any stickiness. Centre snap lid on jar; apply screw band just until fingertip tight. Place jars in canner and adjust water level to cover jars by 1-2 inches (2.5-5 cm). Cover canner and return water to boil over high heat. Begin timing when water returns to a boil and process for amount of time as directed in recipe. Water should be kept at a steady boil during processing time.
3. At end of processing time, remove jars from canner and cool for 24 hours. Check jar seals to ensure the lids turn downward indicating a tight seal. (Any jars with unsealed lids may be kept in the refrigerator for up to three weeks.) With a properly sealed snap lid, the screw ring can be safely removed, dried and replaced to prevent rusting during storage. Label jars and store in a cool, dark place ready for holiday giving.

Recipes adapted from *The Complete Book of Year-Round Small-Batch Preserving* by Ellie Topp, P.H.Ec. and Margaret Howard, RD, P.H.Ec. (Firefly 2001).

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Ellie Topp is a Professional Home Economist and certified culinary professional. She is co-author of several cookbooks, including *The Complete Book of Year-Round Small Batch Preserving* and *Savoury Wisdom: Delicious Recipes for Two*.

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