



Preserving Florida's Harvests
Culinary Class with Chef Lisa Fidler

Awesome Roasted Veggies

Ingredients

- Any Root Veggie
- Scallions, whole-ends removed
- Bell Peppers
- Onions
- Squashes
- Mushrooms
- Brussels Sprouts

Directions

- Preheat your oven to 450-475 degrees.
- Line a pan with foil (optional).
- Place the pan in the oven WHILE the oven is heating and for at least 10 minutes after it reaches temperature.
- Dice your veggies so they are all the same size. If you are doing Squash or Scallion or softer veggies, roast separate from the heartier ones that will need longer.
- Place your veggies in a bowl, drizzle with a little olive oil, salt & pepper.
- When your oven and sheet pan are ready, carefully pull the pan out and place it on the door to the oven (use an oven glove). Spread the veggies in an even layer on the pan... be careful... the pan is hot and may warp a little, but will go back to shape.
- Place the pan back in the oven and roast for at least 10 minutes... or longer, depending on the size of your cut veggies.
- Remove from oven and you're welcome!! Totally awesome roasted veggies!!

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Blanching Vegetables

Ingredients

- Vegetables
- Water
- Ice
- Salt

Tools

- Large bowl
- Slotted spoon
- Plate lined with a cloth or paper towel
- Large pot
- Cutting board and knife

Directions

- Have ready a large bowl of ice water (known as an ice bath), a slotted spoon, and a plate lined with a cloth or paper towel.
- Bring a large pot of water to boil over high heat.
- Meanwhile, prepare the vegetables. Doing this just before blanching prevents oxidation. Cut them into uniform pieces to ensure even cooking.
- Just before blanching the vegetables, add couple of tablespoons of salt to the boiling water. Salt helps to maintain color and improve flavor, but it may be omitted if you wish.
- Add the vegetables to the pot in small batches so that the water continues to boil. If blanching more than one type of vegetable, blanch each one separately and blanch lighter colored ones first, as darker colored ones will tinge the water and subsequent vegetables.
- After about 30 seconds, test for doneness. Remove one piece, dip it into the bowl of ice water, and taste. Keep tasting every 30-60 seconds until the vegetables are cooked to your liking. Most vegetables take between 2-5 minutes.
- When the vegetables are done, quickly remove them from the boiling water with a slotted spoon and plunge them into the ice bath to stop the cooking process. (This is called "shocking.")
- When the vegetables are completely cool, remove them from the ice bath and drain on the towel-lined plate.



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Cilantro Lime Vinaigrette

Ingredients

- ¼ cup fresh lime juice
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 3 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 shallot, minced
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon coarsely ground pepper

Directions

- Whisk together first 5 ingredients; gradually whisk in olive oil until well blended.
- Keep this Vinaigrette in the refrigerator for up to a week.
- This is just a basic recipe. You could easily use different juices or acids and different herbs/spices.

Have fun... experiment!!!



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Freezing Fruits and Vegetables

Freeze fruits and veggies when they're at their peak of freshness.

Blanch vegetables first; then submerge in ice water. Dry thoroughly.

Freeze fruits and vegetables quickly.

Store in heavy-weight, air-tight containers or freezer bags.

Fill containers to the top and remove as much air as possible from freezer bags.

Vegetables that hold up well to cooking (corn, peas) generally freeze well, too.

For better texture, try eating previously frozen fruit before it's completely thawed.

Fruits and veggies freeze best at 0-degrees F or colder.

Store frozen fruits for about a year; vegetables, about 18 months.
(Storing longer is fine, but the quality may decline.)

Freezing Fruits

- Wash fruits and sort for damaged fruit before freezing. Some fruits do best with a sugar or sugar-syrup preparation. Blueberries, currants, and cranberries do fine without sugar.
- Here's a trick for freezing delicate berries like strawberries or raspberries: Arrange them in a single layer on a baking sheet. Once frozen, transfer to a plastic freezer bag or container. You can also prepare delicate berries with sugar or sugar syrup.
- For fruits that tend to brown, like apples, peaches, nectarines and apricots, treat with ascorbic acid (Vitamin C). Look for the powdered form in health



- food stores, drugstores, and some grocery stores in the vitamin aisle. To make an ascorbic acid wash: Dissolve 1/2 teaspoon of ascorbic acid powder (or finely crushed vitamin C tablets) in 3 tablespoons water. Sprinkle this mixture over the cut fruit.
- An acceptable substitute: Slice the fruit and dip the slices in an acidulated water bath — about one quart water plus a tablespoon of lemon juice — before drying and freezing.

Freezing Vegetables

- The best vegetables for freezing are low-acid veggies. When freezing vegetables, first blanch them briefly in boiling water. Then quickly submerge the veggies in ice water to prevent them from cooking.
- Dry thoroughly on paper towel-lined sheet pans. Why blanch? Blanching prevents enzymes from damaging color, flavor, and nutrients. Blanching also destroys unkind microorganisms that might be lingering on the surface of vegetables. Pack vegetables snugly to avoid air contact.



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Fruit-Infused Vodkas
Makes about 3 cups vodka

Ingredients

- 2 cups chopped fruit, a single fruit or a mix of fruits
- 2 to 3 cups 80-proof or 100-proof vodka (see Recipe Note)
- Optional extras: citrus peels, minced ginger, fresh herbs, split vanilla beans, whole cloves, whole star anise, whole cinnamon sticks, peppercorns, and other whole spices.

Equipment

- Chopping board
- Knife
- 1-quart canning jar or other container with lid
- Strainer
- Cheesecloth (optional)
- 4-cup measuring cup
- Small funnel (optional)
- Glass bottles with caps — empty liquor bottles, swing-top bottles, cleaned glass soda bottles, or canning jars

Directions

- **Prepare the fruit:** Wash and pat the fruit dry. Chop the fruit into small pieces, trimming away any stems, cores, seeds, or blemishes. Peels can be left on or peeled off — I like the extra flavor and richer color that peels add, but leaving them off gives a sweeter, purer fruit flavor. Berries and other very small fruits can be left whole.
- **Transfer the fruit to the canning jar:** Transfer all the fruit to the canning jar, along with any extra herbs or spices you'd like to use. Pour any juice from the cutting board into the jar. If you're using berries, muddle them with a wooden spoon to break them up and release their juices.

- **Cover the fruit with vodka:** Pour the vodka over the fruit. Use enough to completely cover the fruit and fill the jar, about 2 to 3 cups in a 1-quart jar. Seal the jar tightly and put it somewhere out of direct sunlight.
- **Infuse for 3 to 5 days:** Shake the jar of fruit and vodka daily. You'll see the vodka gradually take on the color of the fruit. Taste it after 3 days and continue infusing to your liking. Most fruit vodkas are finished in 3 to 5 days, but you can continue infusing the vodka for longer.
- **Strain the fruit vodka:** When the vodka has been infused, separate the fruit and the vodka by straining it into a measuring cup. If your fruit had a lot of seeds or sediment, line the strainer with cheesecloth before straining. Discard the fruit after straining.
- **Transfer the fruit vodka to bottles:** Pour the vodka into clean glass bottles — a small funnel helps with this step. The bottles don't necessarily need to be completely filled, but they do need to be able to be sealed or the vodka will evaporate. Store the vodka out of direct sunlight; it will keep indefinitely.

Recipe Notes

- **80- vs. 100-proof vodka:** Either 80-proof or 100-proof vodka can be used in this recipe. I find 80-proof to be more drinkable on its own and in cocktails. 100-proof will extract better fruit flavor, but can taste a bit "hot" and raw in drinks — you can cut the liquor with water or a simple syrup to taste.
- **Sweet fruit liqueur:** To make a sweet liqueur, similar to limoncello, mix the strained vodka to taste with simple syrup (**equal parts water and sugar**, simmered until sugar is dissolved).



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Lisa's Pesto

Ingredients

- 2 cups packed fresh basil leaves
 - *I never use all basil. I mix with Parsley, Cilantro, or sometimes I just use both, Parsley & Cilantro... Experiment!*
- 2 cloves garlic
 - *Personally, I use 4-6 cloves... I like Garlicky*
- 1/4 cup pine nuts
 - *You can use any nuts as long as they are oily. Walnuts, macadamia nuts, etc.*
- 2/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
 - *I use a lighter version of 1/2 E VOO & 1/4 Veg Stock*
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Pecorino cheese
 - *Shredded parmesan works too or a combo of a nice, salty dry aged cheese*

Directions

- Place the herbs, garlic & nuts in a food processor, pulse until well blended.
- Pour the oil in while the blender is running.
- Add the cheese, blend until a nice paste forms taste and add salt & pepper, to taste.



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Roasted Peppers

Ingredients

- 4 large red or yellow bell peppers, preferably Holland
- 2 tablespoons good olive oil

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 500 degrees.
- Place the whole peppers on a sheet pan and place in the oven for 30 to 40 minutes, until the skins are completely wrinkled and the peppers are charred, turning them twice during roasting. Remove the pan from the oven and immediately cover it tightly with aluminum foil. Set aside for 30 minutes, or until the peppers are cool enough to handle.
- Remove the stem from each pepper and cut them in quarters. Remove the peels and seeds and place the peppers in a bowl along with any juices that have collected. Discard the stems, peels, and seeds. Pour the oil over the peppers. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks.



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Roasted Plum Tomatoes

Ingredients

- 12 plum tomatoes, halved lengthwise, cores and seeds removed
- 4 tablespoons good olive oil
- 1 ½ tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F.
- Arrange the tomatoes on a sheet pan; cut sides up, in a single layer. Drizzle with olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Sprinkle the garlic, sugar, salt, and pepper over the tomatoes.
- Roast for 25 to 30 minutes, until the tomatoes are concentrated and beginning to caramelize.
- Serve warm or at room temperature.

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This is Ina's recipe.... I just can't make it better, so I use hers!!!!



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Stone Fruit Jams *without* Pectin or Canning!

Ingredients

- 2 cups packed fresh basil leaves
- 4 lbs unpeeled stone fruit (10 cups pitted and cut); peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots, or cherries
- 5 cups sugar
- 1 lemon, juice and zest
- *optional spices, herbs, & flavors (see directions for suggestions)

Directions

- Put 2 or 3 plates in the freezer to use later for checking gelling of jam.

PREP THE FRUIT

- Fruit should be pitted and cut, leaving the peel on.
- peaches--chopped in 1/2-inch pieces
- plums and apricots—quartered
- cherries—halved, pitted

COOK THE JAM

- Combine ingredients in 8 to 10 quart, heavy bottom pot. A wide, shallow pan works best, if available.
- Heat on medium heat until sugar dissolves; then increase heat to medium-high. Bring mixture to a boil.
- After sugar is dissolved and fruit has boiled for 10 minutes and softened, use potato masher to press and break up fruit to desired texture. Continue to boil mixture, stirring frequently to prevent scorching on bottom of pan. Mixture will foam up and expand, and then shrink back as it cooks. After foaming subsides, use metal spoon with thin edge to skim foam from surface and discard.

CHECK THE GELLING

- Continue boiling until mixture visibly thickens in to a slow bubbling lava type consistency (approx. 115-117 degrees on a candy thermometer). Test by putting a



spoonful on a chilled plate and return it to freezer for 2-3 minutes. (Remove jam pot from heat while waiting for gel test.)

- Check to see if it has gelled by tilting the plate. If the jam runs, it needs to cook longer; if it stays put or runs very slowly, it's ready. If not, continue cooking, testing again with a chilled plate every 5 minutes until it has gelled.

REFRIGERATE, FREEZE, OR CAN

- Once the jam has gelled, pour it into jars or plastic containers to keep it in the refrigerator for 2 months or freezer it for up to 6 months.
- Use water process canning if you want to safely store the jam in jars at room temperature for a year.

Once the jam is ready, pour it into jars or plastic containers to keep it in the refrigerator for 2 months or the freezer for up to 6 months. Use water process canning if you want to safely store the jam in jars at room temperature for a year.

***ADD SPICES, HERBS, & FLAVORS** (optional), if you like. Here are some possible additions; simply stir these in and cook them along with the fruit, sugar, and lemon mixture. Taste before adding the mixture to jars to make sure you have a desirable balance of flavors; make adjustments as necessary.

- Balsamic Fruit Jam -- add 3 tablespoons aged balsamic vinegar
- Pepper Fruit Jam -- add 1 to 3 minced jalapeno or habanero peppers, with or without seeds depending on how much heat you want (this makes a great appetizer spooned over cream cheese and served with crackers); particularly good with peaches or apricots
- Vanilla Bean Fruit Jam -- split open one vanilla bean and add it to the mixture as it boils; remove bean before adding jam to jars
- Thyme Fruit Jam -- add 10 sprigs of fresh thyme to mixture as it boils; remove stems before adding jam to jars
- Ginger Fruit Jam -- add 2 to 4 tablespoons minced fresh ginger
- Cinnamon Fruit Jam -- add 1 to 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- BOOZE!!!—Add 2-3 tablespoons Rum, Bourbon, etc.. you can add to the sugar and cook, or as I do, add it at the end and have a stronger flavor!