

WARNING!

Ask an adult for help with cooking on the hob.

THE LAB

Lots of things to make and do

Kitchen chemistry

FINGER-LICKIN' GOOD

The word chutney comes from the Hindi word *chatni*, meaning to lick.

Make Christmas chutney

This festive jam is perfect with pigs in blankets, or spread on cheese and biscuits.

What you need

- 1kg plums, finely chopped
- 3 onions, finely chopped
- 100g dried cranberries or raisins, roughly chopped
- 1 tbsp grated ginger
- 1 tbsp mustard seeds
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tbsp paprika
- 400ml red wine vinegar
- 500g light Muscovado sugar
- 2 tsp salt
- Pan
- Wooden spoon
- Sterilised jars

Instructions

- 1** Add all the ingredients, apart from the sugar and salt, to a large pan. Put it on the hob and bring to a boil, stirring all the while. Then, pop the lid on the pan and simmer on a low heat for 10 minutes, or until the plums become tender.
- 2** Pour in the sugar, along with two teaspoons of salt, and stir well until it has all dissolved. Keep the pan on a low simmer, uncovered, for 20 to 30 minutes until it thickens, stirring occasionally to keep the mixture from burning.
- 3** Allow the chutney to cool, and then spoon it into jars. Seal them and leave to rest for at least two weeks before eating. The chutney will stay good for at least six months, so be sure to label the jars with the date (and what is in them).

Allergy warning! Ingredients in **bold** are allergens (substances that cause allergic reactions). Learn more at tinyurl.com/SN-allergy

Slowly simmer your plums first.

How does it work?

Boiling fruit releases a substance called pectin. Pectin is a kind of starch found in fruit, and when it is released from the skins and cores of fruit, it forms a thick, jelly-like material. This substance is called a gelling agent, and it's made up of tiny particles that link together to weave a web that locks up the juicy liquid and pieces of fruit in chutneys, jams and other preserves, like a sugary cement. Without it, your chutney would be a loose sticky mess. Adding sugar and an acid, like vinegar, helps the pectin particles bond together even better.

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