



Extension

CANNING WITH CHOCOLATE GENERALLY NOT SAFE FOR HOME CANNING (WITH “VERY” FEW EXCEPTIONS)

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Homemade chocolate sauces are fun to make and are great to have on hand for quick dessert toppings or to give as gifts. It may be tempting to can your own sauces or other types of spreads that include chocolate products, but unfortunately canning your own recipes- or those you may find on the Internet- is **NOT** a safe practice. Because of its low acidity, **chocolate should not be canned unless it is a recipe that has been scientifically tested for safety.**

There are a very few tested and approved canning recipes which include small amounts of chocolate. These tested recipes include other ingredients, such as fruit and bottled lemon juice, that raise the overall acidity level of the final products, which then makes them safe for home canning. Currently there are four safe tested recipes from Ball® and they are included in this handout.

Safe, tested recipes generally call for “unsweetened cocoa powder”. Do not use sweetened hot chocolate or cocoa mixes, chocolate syrups or chocolate bars. Dutch-process cocoa (aka Dutched cocoa or Alkalized Unsweetened cocoa) also cannot be substituted, as the alkali solution used to make Dutch-process cocoa further lowers its acidity level and this type of cocoa has not been tested for safety.

In summary:

- Use only tested recipes from approved sources when canning with chocolate
- When cocoa powder is listed, use only natural, unsweetened cocoa powder
- Do not make any substitutions in the type of chocolate/ cocoa called for in the recipe



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CHOCOLATE RASPBERRY SUNDAE TOPPER

Makes about six 8-ounce jars

- ½ cup sifted unsweetened cocoa powder
- 6 tablespoons or 1.75 ounce package of original powdered pectin
- 4 ½ cups crushed red raspberries
- 4 tablespoons bottled lemon juice
- 6 ¾ cup granulated sugar



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1. Prepare canner, jars and lids.
2. In a medium bowl, combine cocoa powder and pectin, stirring until evenly blended. Set aside.
3. In a large stainless steel saucepan, place crushed raspberries and lemon juice. Whisk in pectin mixture until dissolved. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring frequently. Add sugar all at once and return to a full rolling boil, stirring constantly. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and skim off foam.
4. Ladle hot sundae topper into hot jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace, if necessary by adding hot sundae topper. Wipe rim. Center lid on jar. Screw band down until resistance is met, then increase to finger-tip tight.
5. Place jars in boiling water canner, ensuring they are completely covered with 1-2 inches of water. Bring water to a boil and process for 10 minutes at sea level. Adjust processing time for high altitude. When processing is complete, remove canner lid. Wait 5 minutes, then remove jars from canner, cool, check for seals, label, date and store.

BLACK FOREST PRESERVES

Makes about seven 8-ounce jars

- 6 ½ cups granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup sifted unsweetened cocoa powder
- 3 cups firmly packed, coarsely chopped, pitted sweet black cherries
- ½ cup bottled lemon juice
- 2 pouches (3 ounces each) liquid pectin
- 4 tablespoons amaretto liqueur or ½ teaspoon almond extract



Photo by pamela_d_mcadams, stock.adobe.com.

1. Prepare canner, jars and lids.
2. In a small bowl, combine sugar and cocoa powder. Stir well and set aside.
3. In a large, deep stainless steel saucepan, combine cherries and lemon juice. Stir in reserved cocoa mixture. Over high heat, stirring constantly, bring to a full rolling boil that cannot be stirred down. Stir in pectin. Boil hard, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Stir in liqueur or extract. Remove from heat and skim off foam.
4. Ladle hot preserves into hot jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace, if necessary by adding hot preserves. Wipe rim. Center lid on jar. Screw band down until resistance is met, then increase to fingertip tight.
5. Place jars in boiling water canner, ensuring they are completely covered with 1-2 inches of water. Bring water to a boil and process for 10 minutes at sea level. Adjust processing time for high altitude. When processing is complete, remove canner lid. Wait 5 minutes, then remove jars from canner, cool, check for seals, label, date and store.

BLACK FOREST MACAROON CONSERVE

Makes about seven 8-ounce jars

- 4 cups granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup sifted unsweetened cocoa powder
- 3 ½ cups firmly packed, coarsely chopped, pitted sweet cherries
- 2 tablespoons bottled lemon juice
- 2 pouches (3 ounces each) liquid pectin
- 1/3 cup unsweetened flaked coconut
- 4 tablespoons Kirsch or cherry brandy or 1 teaspoon brandy extract



Photo by marylooo, stock.adobe.com.

1. Prepare canner, jars and lids.
2. In a medium bowl, combine sugar and cocoa powder.
3. In a large, deep stainless steel saucepan, combine cherries, lemon juice and cocoa mixture. Over high heat, stirring constantly, bring to a full rolling boil that cannot be stirred down. Stir in pectin. Boil hard, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Remove from heat and add coconut and Kirsch or brandy; mix well. Skim off foam.
4. Ladle hot conserves into hot jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace, if necessary by adding hot conserves. Wipe rim. Center lid on jar. Screw band down until resistance is met, then increase to fingertip tight.
5. Place jars in boiling water canner, ensuring they are completely covered with 1-2 inches of water. Bring water to a boil and process for 10 minutes at sea level. Adjust processing time for high altitude. When processing is complete, remove canner lid. Wait 5 minutes, then remove jars from canner, cool, check for seals, label, date and store.

CHOCOLATE CHERRY JAM

- 6 cups fresh or frozen pitted dark sweet cherries, coarsely crushed
- 6 tablespoons or 1.75 ounce package of original powdered pectin
- ¼ cup bottled lemon juice
- 6 cups sugar
- 2/3 cup unsweetened powdered cocoa

1. Prepare boiling water canner. Heat jars in simmering water until ready to use, do not boil. Wash lids in warm soapy water and set aside with bands.
2. Combine first 3 ingredients in 4 quart stainless steel saucepan. Bring mixture to a full rolling boil that cannot be stirred down, over high heat stirring constantly.
3. Meanwhile, stir together sugar and cocoa powder until blended; add all at once to the boiling cherry mixture. Return mixture to a full rolling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Skim foam, if necessary.
4. Ladle hot jam into a hot jar, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Remove air bubbles, adjust headspace by adding more jam if necessary. Wipe jar rim. Center lid on jar. Apply band and adjust to fingertip-tight. Place jar in boiling water canner. Repeat until all jars are filled.
5. Process jars 10 minutes at sea level, adjusting time for high altitude. Turn off heat, remove canner lid and let jars sit for 5 minutes. Remove jars and cool 12-24 hours. Check lids for seals, label, date and store.



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Source: Ball Complete Book of Home Preserving, 2016

INSTEAD OF CANNING, TRY FREEZER CHOCOLATE FUDGE SAUCE



Photo by Melica, stock.adobe.com.

- ½ cup margarine or butter
- 3 squares (3 ounces) unsweetened chocolate
- 2 ½ cups sugar
- Pinch of salt (optional)
- 12 ounce can evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

1. Melt margarine or butter in the top of a double boiler. Add chocolate and melt, while stirring constantly. Add sugar gradually, ¼ cup at a time, while stirring. Then add salt, if desired. Next, stir milk in gradually and finally add the vanilla. Cook until desired thickness—approximately 1 hour, stirring occasionally.
2. Pour sauce into a clean, warm, wide-mouth quart jar or similar freezer-safe container(s). Allow the sauce to cool at room temperature for 1-2 hours. Seal, label and freeze.
3. The sauce should remain soft enough to spoon out portions while frozen.

September 2024- Information updated and adapted from:

- *Preserve It: Canning Basics Canning with Chocolate*. February 2022, UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County. https://ucanr.edu/sites.mfp_of_cs
 - *Safe Preserving: Canned Chocolate Sauce*, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension, 2013
 - *Canning Chocolate Sauces Unsafe*, July 2003, National Center for Home Food Preservation. <https://nchfp.uga.edu/>
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