

Preserved Lemons

Swick

Serves 8 | Active Time: 25 minutes | Total Time: 25 minutes

Chef's Notes

You can add spices to the lemons for preserving such as cloves, coriander seeds, peppercorns, cinnamon stick and bay leaf.

Once they are fully preserved, the rind is sweet, soft, slightly pickled and such an incredible flavor addition to any Moroccan influenced dish. Dice some to go into marinades, salads and dressings to take them over the top.

Step 1: Preparing and Preserving the Lemons

- 8 Meyer lemons, washed and scrubbed very well – you can use any lemons you wish, but Meyer has a milder and sweeter flavor
- 1/2 cup sea salt, a bit more if needed
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 tbsp black peppercorns
- 2 tbsp coriander seeds
- 1/2 cup fresh-squeezed lemon juice, if needed

First, gather your mise en place.

Start by placing 2 tablespoons of the sea salt, cinnamon stick, peppercorns and coriander seed in the bottom of a sterilized canning jar and set aside. One lemon at a time, prepare each with the process below. It may seem that there is too much salt, but this is what makes the magic happen.

Start by cutting off the tip of each lemon. Next, cut the lemons as if you are going to cut them in half lengthwise, starting from the tip, yet slicing just close to half-way through. Turn the lemon and make another cut in a similar manner half-way through, and repeat until you have 4 to 6 slices cut around the lemon.

Next, open each side where it is sliced and fill each opening with a generous amount of sea salt. Repeat this process with all the lemons. Set the lemons in a bowl and sprinkle any remaining salt over them.

To preserve the lemons, stuff them in a the jar, squishing them down so that juice is extracted and begins to fill the jar.

Once all lemons are stuffed in, make sure that if pressing them tightly does not release enough lemon juice to cover the lemons to the top, you may need to add additional lemon juice.

All lemons should be packed tightly in the jar. If you choose smaller lemons, you may need to repeat the process to ensure the jar is completely filled.

Finish by topping with 2 tablespoons of sea salt. Close and tightly seal the jar and let sit at room temperature for about 3 days on the counter top. Turn the jar upside down occasionally so that the sediment on bottom is mixed up. After 3 days, put in the refrigerator and let sit, again turning upside down occasionally, for at least 3 weeks, until lemon rinds really soften.

It's a long process but well worth the wait. When you want to use, remove a lemon from the jar, rinse thoroughly in water to remove the salt and discard the seeds.