

# Food & Drink

## Give the gift of taste this season

When socks and ties just won't do for those difficult names on your holiday gift list, raid your root cellar for the perfect home-canned gift.

For a most delectable, portable gift, carrots take the cake. These colourful chameleons go from sweet to sour with ease, and make delicious, golden gifts.

To celebrate the harvest, home economists at Bernardin Ltd., Canada's leading supplier of home canning essentials, have created a sassy carrot and pepper salsa spiked with jalapeno and cilantro flavour pizzazz.

And who could resist a jar of jam that tastes like carrot cake? Pears, crushed pineapple and a hint of cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves make this jam super spe-

cial.

You can also wrap up a jar or two of pickled peppers, or even your home-made spaghetti sauce.

Home canning not only gives the cook a tremendous sense of satisfaction, but your handiwork will touch the hearts of friends and family.

It also evokes memories of bygone days when every family had a dark, mysterious root cellar filled with bushels of produce and shelves of carefully-packed jars filled with delicious home-canned specialties.

If you don't have a root cellar to store your precious preserves, find a dark, cool cupboard in your home or apart-



**COLOURFUL GIFT OF TASTE:** Who wouldn't want one of these jars of tasty jams, jellies, or sauces as a holiday gift? These gifts you make in your kitchen are perfect for the hard-to-buy-for person or people who deserve a more personal, home-made gift than any available in the stores.

Photo by STEVE SOMERVILLE

### Choose wine colour you enjoy

While there is a type of wine which is best suited for every meal, the product consultant at the Liquor Licence Control Board in Unionville said people shouldn't be constrained by the rules.

If you are going over to someone's house for dinner and want to bring a bottle of wine, Ed Flanagan said knowing what will be served is helpful.

"The basic rule is white wine (goes) with fish and white meat, while reds go with lots of other things (including) roast beef."

If you don't know what is being served, you should choose the type of wine which the host enjoys, he said.

But, he added, you should be prepared to purchase a good quality wine



### Food for Thought

Lisa Cartwright

— spending between \$10 and \$20 a bottle.

Flanagan himself suggested a middle-of-the-road, easy-drinking wine.

"A chardonnay, if it's white. (If it's a red) — a Bordeaux or a nice Canadian red wine," he said.

"You should drink what you enjoy. I wouldn't be constrained by the rules of matching wine" to dinner, he suggested.

#### CARROT PEPPER SALSA

3 cups (750 mL) coarsely-grated carrots, about 6

6 cups (1500 mL) peeled, coarsely-chopped tomatoes, about 3 lb/1.4 kg

1 1/2 cups (375 mL) cider vinegar

1 1/4 cups (300 mL) light brown sugar

1/2 cup (125 mL) finely-chopped onion

1/2 cup (125 mL) seeded and finely-chopped jalapeno peppers, 5 peppers

1 1/2 tsp (7 mL) pickling salt

1/2 tsp (2 mL) black pepper

1/4 cup (50 mL) chopped fresh cilantro

Combine carrots, tomatoes, vinegar, sugar, onion, jalapenos, salt and pepper in a large, deep stainless steel or enamel saucepan. Bring to a boil; reduce heat, boil gently, stirring occasionally until thickened, about 1 hour. Add cilantro during last 5 minutes of cooking.

Fill boiling water canner with water. Place 5 clean half-pint (250 mL) mason jars in canner over high heat. Boil Snap Lids 5 minutes to soften sealing compound.

Ladle salsa into a hot jar to within 1/4 inch (0.5 cm) of top rim (head space). Use rubber spatula to remove air bubbles. Readjust head space if required. Wipe jar rim removing any stickiness.

Center snap lid on jar, apply screw band just until fingertip tight. Place jar in canner. Repeat for remaining salsa.

Cover canner, return water to a boil. Boil the filled jars for 10 minutes at altitudes up to 1,000 ft. (305 m). Remove jars. Cool 24 hours. Check jar seals. Properly sealed lids curve downward. Remove screw bands, store separately. Wipe jars, label and store in a cool, dark place. Makes 5 half-pint (250 mL) jars.

#### CARROT CAKE JAM

1 1/2 cups (375 mL) finely-grated carrots, 3 large

1 1/2 cups (375 mL) peeled, chopped pears, 2 large

1 can 14 oz. (398 mL) crushed pineapple, undrained

3 tbsp (45 mL) lemon juice

1 tsp (5 mL) ground cinnamon

1/2 tsp (2 mL) each ground nutmeg and cloves

6 1/2 cups (1,625 mL) granulated sugar

1 pkg. (49 g) Bernardin fruit pectin

Combine carrots, pears, and pineapple including juice, lemon juice, cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves in a large stainless steel or enamel saucepan. Bring to a boil; reduce heat, cover and boil gently 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Fill boiling water canner with water. Place 6 half-pint (250 mL) mason jars in canner. Cover, bring water to a boil; boil at least 10 minutes to sterilize jars at altitudes up to 1,000 ft. (305 m). Boil snap lids 5 minutes to soften sealing compound. Measure sugar, set aside.

Stir fruit pectin into carrot mixture; return to a boil. Add sugar; return mixture to a full, rolling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat.

Ladle jam into a hot sterilized jar to within 1/4 inch (0.5 cm) of top rim (head space). Using a rubber spatula, remove air bubbles and readjust

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head space if required. Wipe jar rim removing any stickiness. Center snap lid on jar, apply screw band until fingertip tight. Place jar in canner. Repeat for remaining jam.

Cover canner, return water to a boil. Boil filled jars for 5 minutes at altitudes up to 1,000 ft. (305 m). Remove jars. Cool 24 hours. Check jar seals. Properly sealed lids curve downward. Remove screw bands, store separately. Wipe jars, label and store in a cool, dark place.

Tip: Because of the short 5-minute boiling water processing time, mason jars destined for sweet spreads must be sterilized in boiling water for 10 minutes prior to filling. Always sterilize jars in boiling water, not in an oven, doing so can cause jars to break when handled.

#### PICKLED ROAST PEPPERS

Extend delicious barbecue flavours into the winter. Toss these roasted peppers into Italian spaghetti sauce, serve them in sandwiches, use as an antipasto or as a garnish for salads.

20 medium sweet red bell peppers (8 lb. 3.6 kg)

4 large cloves garlic, roasted and mashed

1 1/2 cups (375 mL) white vinegar

1 1/2 cups (375 mL) apple cider vinegar

1 1/2 cups (375 mL) dry white wine

1/2 cup (125 mL) water

1 cup (250 mL) coarsely-chopped onion

1/2 cup (125 mL) granulated sugar

2 tbsp (30 mL) dried oregano leaves

4 tsp (20 mL) pickling salt

Roast peppers and garlic over hot coals or under broiler until charred. Place peppers in a paper bag until cool enough to handle. Set garlic aside. When peppers are cooled, remove skins, core and seeds. Cut lengthwise into serving-sized pieces.

Fill boiling water canner with water. Place 4 clean one-pint (500 mL) mason jars in canner over high heat. Place snap lids in boiling water; boil 5 minutes to soften sealing compound.

Combine vinegars, wine, water, onion, sugar, oregano and pickling salt in a large stainless steel or enamel saucepan. Squeeze roasted garlic cloves to remove from peel, mash and add to saucepan. Bring to boil; boil gently 5 minutes.

Pack roasted peppers into a hot jar to within 3/4 inch (2 cm) of top rim. Add boiling liquid, including onions, to cover peppers to within 1/2 inch (1 cm) of top rim (head space). Using a rubber spatula, remove air bubbles and readjust head space if required.

Wipe jar rim, center snap lid on jar, apply screw band just until fingertip tight. Place jar in canner. Repeat for remaining peppers and liquid. Cover canner, return water to a boil. Boil filled jars for 15 minutes. Remove jars. Cool 24 hours. Check jar seals.

Note: This recipe was specially formulated to allow home canners to preserve a low acid food — peppers — in a commonly available boiling water canner. Do not deviate from the recipe ingredients, quantities, jar size, processing method and time. Any change could alter the safety of the end product.

#### Correction

In last week's food page recipe for Chicken and Vegetable Penne, one item was not listed in the ingredients, but was mentioned in the directions: 3 tbsp. of red wine vinegar.

Thanks to the sharp-eyed cook who called us to point out the error. Our apologies.