

Preserved Lemons

Preparation time: 1 month or longer for more intense flavour.

Ingredients:

- 5 large lemons
- Juice of 2 lemons
- ¼ to a ½ cup of sea salt or rock salt.

Preparation

You will also need a glass jar that is just large enough to accommodate the lemons as well as a sharp knife. You can prepare the lemons in 10 minutes or less.

Remove the stems and cut off the tips, pierce down into the lemon making a cross, be careful not to cut through the lemon skin, so the lemon is still whole but this will release the juice once it is in the jar.

The next step is to pack the jar, put a layer of lemons and pack lots of salt between and above the lemons. Make sure the lemons are packed in tightly so that they can't move freely. Compress the lemons as you add them to the jar to squeeze them in and release their juices. Add enough fresh lemon juice to cover the lemons as well as a generous sprinkling of the salt. Cover the lemons tightly and set aside in a cool, dark place. A cupboard or food pantry is fine.

Every 2 or 3 days open the jar and compress the lemons to release more juices using a wooden or plastic spoon. If you have room to add another lemon, do so. The idea here is that the tightly packed lemons won't be able to rise to the surface. Do this for the first week, or until the jar is packed as full as possible and the lemons stay submerged in juice.

At this point, you now want to leave the lemons undisturbed. The lemons will be preserved and ready to use in about 4 to 5 weeks, depending on the variety of lemons used, some varieties with a thicker rind may take longer but once the rinds are very soft they are ready to use. You can continue to preserve them longer if you like, up to a year or more.

Once opened, transfer the jar to the refrigerator, where the preserved lemons should keep well for several months. Rinse the lemons before using to remove excess salt and any film that may have formed in the liquid. Use some of the preserving juice for the next batch before throwing it away and starting again.

Enjoy !