



2016 FORAGING RECIPES

SPRING GREENS PESTO

Makes about 2 cups

3 tablespoons olive oil

1/2 lb or so greens in season (Rocket, Wild Garlic, Sorrel. You can also use Mint, Parsley, Wild Marjoram or any other greens)

1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

1/4 cup lightly toasted nuts (pine nuts, almonds or hazel/cob nuts)

1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or to taste

1/2 lemon

Place the Spring Greens in a blender, add a dash of olive oil and then whizz it a bit. Next add the nuts and pulse a few times depending on how coarse (or fine) you like the pesto. Keep the blender running and add the rest of the olive oil and the lemon juice in a stream. Add the *parmesan* last, folding it through. Add salt and pepper to taste.

COURGETTE AND YARROW CHUTNEY

700g or so of courgettes, cut into small cubes

4 apples or pears or tomatoes of a combination of all, peeled and cored and cut slightly bigger than the courgettes

3 small or 2 medium onions, chopped quite finely

2 cloves garlic, grated

1 heaped tsp ground ginger

2 cloves

1 tblsp dried Yarrow heads (any aromatic herb will do if you don't have yarrow)

250g brown sugar

250ml white wine vinegar

Put all the ingredients in a large pan. Bring to the boil. Turn down the heat and simmer for about 1.5 hours, stirring occasionally, until the liquid has reduced significantly and thickened, and everything looks soft and gloss

Towards the end of the cooking time, if the vegetables and fruit have not fully collapsed smash them all up a bit with a potato masher. Not too much, as you want a combination of mush and chunks.

ELDERFLOWER CORDIAL

About 25 elderflower heads (Pick creamy white blossoms with no brown bits)

Finely grated zest of 3 unwaxed lemons and 1 orange, plus their juice (about 150ml in total)

1kg sugar



1 heaped tsp citric acid (optional)

Inspect the elderflower heads and remove any insects. Place the flower heads in a large bowl together with the orange and lemon zest. Bring 1.5 litres water to the boil and pour over the elderflowers and citrus zest. Cover and leave overnight to infuse.

Strain the liquid through a scalded jelly bag or piece of muslin and pour into a saucepan. Add the sugar, the lemon and orange juice and the citric acid (if using).

Heat gently to dissolve the sugar, then bring to a simmer and cook for a couple of minutes.

Use a funnel to pour the hot syrup into sterilised bottles. Seal the bottles with swing-top lids, sterilised screw-tops or corks.

RASPBERRY & MEADOWSWEET SYRUP

200 mls water

100 grams sugar

250 grams raspberries

3 bunches Meadowsweet flowers

In a small saucepan heat the water and sugar, until it forms a syrup. Then add the raspberries and meadowsweet and simmer gently for 5-15 minutes, or until the raspberries turn to pulp. Let the mixture cool and then strain through cheesecloth into a sterilised jar or bottle with a tight fitting lid. Refrigerate until ready to use. It will keep for a month in the fridge.

BILBERRY JAM

500g Bilberries

250g Apples

550g Sugar

Juice of 1/2 Lemon

Wash the bilberries and pick out any bits of leaves and twigs and put them in a large, heavy-bottomed pan, then squash them up a bit with the back of a spoon. Next add the sugar and leave to stand for 20 minutes, so the juices from the berries and the sugar have a chance to mix. This will also pull the juices out of the berries and give you a wonderful red and fruity looking mixture

Peel, core and finely chop the apples and add them to the mixture. Tart apples like cooking apples work really well as the sugar will add all the sweetness that you want.

Once the mixture has been standing for 20-30 minutes, put it on the hob and heat gently to cook the apple. Don't heat it too much at this stage, or boil the mixture, or it could burn. Ideally you want the finely chopped apple pieces to begin to break up and start to dissolve into the mixture. This could take a while, so keep an eye on it and keep stirring it every now and then

Once the apple is starting to break up, then turn the heat up and bring the mixture to the boil, and boil hard until the jam starts to set.



Meanwhile, you need to sterilize some jars. To make sure the jars are sterile, give them a good wash and then simply pop them in the oven for a bit to kill any lurking bacteria. Alternatively, use sterilizing solution. It's a very good idea to do this as it stops the jam from going mouldy when you store it for use later.

To test if the jam is near setting, put a small bit of jam on a spoon and place it on an ice cube then leave it to cool down. Once its cool, push it with your finger and if it crinkles and keeps its shape, then it is just about right. When doing this, make sure the jam has cooled enough to touch or else you will burn your fingers!

Once the jam has reached this stage, it's ready to be put into the jars, and have the lids put on. Be very careful at this stage, it the jam is extremely hot! Let the jars cool overnight, then store in a cool, dark place until needed. ([Recipe courtesy of Soup Tuesday](#)).

GORSE FLOWER VODKA

Pick on a sunny day when you can maximise the lovely coconut scent of these flowers!

Ingredients/equipment

A few handfuls of Gorse blossom
Enough vodka to cover the blossoms
Mason or other airtight jar

Method

Put blossom in jar
Cover with vodka
Seal jar.
Shake the jar every day for 3-4 weeks!