

Green Fig Preserves

Why green figs?

My mom has been a farmer's wife for years. She is extremely handy in the kitchen and while living on the farm outside Paarl, Western Cape, she used to make jams and preserves from anything she could find.

Naturally, we had fig trees on the farm.

But of course, she used to make big quantities of this fig preserve and did it on the stove.

I would never have dreamt of trying it – except I was given this Afrikaans Microwave Cookbook (Praktiese Mikrogolf kookkuns – Jean Engelbrecht). I love to read cookbooks – so I paged through this one and low and behold! I found a recipe for green fig preserves.

Now I'm really geared to try this. Except, I can't find anyone in Johannesburg with fig trees! I asked friends, I asked the fruit shops – none!

One day we arrived back in Johannesburg from a weekend away and went to Die Boomhuisie in Krugersdorp for breakfast. And as we parked behind the coffee shop, I saw these trees. With figs. I asked the manageress if I could pick some. She was quite hesitant but said yes.

I managed to find a grand total of 10 FIGS!!!! I kid you not!!!

But I promptly read the recipe, reduced the amounts and it came out perfect!



Green Fig Preserves

500g green figs
1 litre cold water
5 ml (1 tsp) bicarbonate of soda
2 fresh fig leaves

Syrup

1 kg white sugar
1.5 litre boiling water
20 ml (4 tsp) lemon juice
1 whole cinnamon stick

Cut a cross at the bottom of the figs.

Mix cold water & bicarbonate, add the figs, top with fig leaves (put leaves upside down onto the figs so that their bottom sides are up) and soak overnight.

Drain figs and rinse thoroughly under cold tap water.

Put figs into a big microwave ceramic dish and add 1 litre boiling water and fig leaves (as mentioned above).

Add the lid and microwave at High (100%) for 8-10 minutes.

Drain the figs and place in hot syrup (*recipe down below*) in big microwave dish. Microwave open at High (100%) for 30 – 40 minutes – stir a few times.

Syrup

Mix all the syrup ingredients in a big microwave dish and stir till sugar has dissolved. Add the lid and microwave at High (100%) for 15 minutes – stir twice. (*If you think the syrup is not enough for all the figs, then just double the quantities.*)

After the figs have been microwaved in the syrup, spoon the figs into sterilized jars and pour hot syrup over. Let cool a bit before you seal the jars.

(Praktiese Mikrogolf Kookkuns - Jean Engelbrecht)