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How to Make Homemade Jellied Cranberry Sauce

Are you tired of the bland, nasty-looking jellied cranberry sauce from the grocery store? Which would you rather serve? The homemade, fresh and natural jellied cranberry sauce right, plain or in a mold... or something that schloops out of a can, below?



Wouldn't you rather have fresh, preservative-free homemade cranberry sauce? It is SO easy to make - from

start to finish only about 15 minutes. It's perfect with chicken, turkey, Christmas, Thanksgiving and the winter months! The bright color livens up any dinner table, kids love it and it is loaded with vitamin C and fiber. You can make it with sugar or honey.



It is easy to make to eat now, or to can, if you want some for weeks or months later! Here's how to do it, complete instructions in easy steps and completely illustrated.

Prepared this way, the jars have a shelf life of 12 months to 18 months, and require no special attention.

Other cranberry facts? They're very rich in vitamin C and anti-oxidants! Recent research shows that cranberries are effective at preventing UTI's (urinary tract infections!). In England the local variety is known as whortleberries, wortleberries or bilberries. Where the name "worthleberry" or "whortleberry" comes from, I do not know; but you can find the low growing plants in Wales! In

Directions for Making Jellied Cranberry Sauce

Makes about 1 quart of jellied cranberry sauce

Ingredients

- 2 bags (12 oz each,) Cranberries
- 1 and 1/3 cups of water OR use the same amount of cranberry juice and/or orange juice instead of water (see below).
- 2 cups of Sugar or honey; if you use stevia or splenda, you may not get a good set or gel; see pectin below
- **Optional:** 1 cup of cranberry juice (you can use water instead, but this adds more flavor)
- **Optional:** 1/2 cup of orange juice (a nice complimentary flavor)
- **Optional:** 1 box Pectin (no sugar needed type pectin work best) Pectin is not needed if you use sugar as the sweetener. If you use an artificial sweetener or honey, you will need pectin to get a set (jell). Pectin is a natural product, made from apples and available at grocery stores (season - spring through late summer) and local "big box" stores. It usually goes for about \$2.00 to \$2.50 per box. [See here for more information about how to choose the type of pectin to use.](#)



If you plan to can it for later:

- Jar grabber (to pick up the hot jars)
- Lid lifter (has a magnet to pick the lids out of the boiling water where you sanitize them. (\$2 at mall kitchen stores and local "big box" stores, but it's usually cheaper online from our affiliates)t)
- Jar funnel (\$2 at mall kitchen stores and local "big box" stores, but it's usually cheaper online from our affiliates)t)
- At least 1 large pot
- Large spoons and ladles
- Widemouth Ball jars (Publix, Kroger, other grocery stores and some "big box" stores carry them - about \$8 per dozen quart jars including the lids and rings). You can use regular canning jars, but the wide mouth make it easier to get the cranberry sauce out later, intact
- 1 Water Bath Canner (a huge pot with a lifting rack to sanitize the jars of jellied cranberry sauce after filling (about \$30 to \$35 at mall kitchen stores and local "big box" stores, but it's usually cheaper online from our affiliates) You CAN use a large pot instead, but the canners are deeper, and have a rack top make lifting the jars out easier. If you plan on canning every year, they're worth the investment.

Recipe and Directions

Step 1 - Get your cranberries

There are very few places to pick your own, but happily, they store and transport well, so there probably isn't much difference. Most grocery stores sell the 12 oz bags. Look for firm berries with a dark color.



Step 2 - If you are canning: Wash the jars and lids

If you will be canning the cranberry sauce, now's a good time to get the jars ready, so you won't be rushed later. If you're not canning the sauce, just skip this step. The dishwasher is fine for the jars; especially if it has a "sanitize" cycle, the water bath processing will sanitize them as well as the contents! If you don't have a dishwasher with a sanitize cycle, you can wash the containers in hot, soapy water and rinse, then sanitize the jars by boiling them 10 minutes, and keep the jars in hot water until they are used. Leave the jars in the dishwasher on "heated dry" until you are ready to use them. Keeping them hot will prevent the jars from breaking when you fill them with the hot jellied cranberry sauce.



Put the lids into a pan of hot, but not quite boiling water (that's what the manufacturer's recommend) for 5 minutes, and use the magnetic "lid lifter wand" to pull them out.

Step 2- Wash the cranberries

Pour them in to a large bowl of cold water, and swirl them around, scoop them out with your fingers, feeling for any mushy berries, as you scoop. Discard any mushy, soft berries.



The picture of the 4 berries shows you unripe through ripe. I'd throw out the one on the far left, but use the other 3.



Step 3 - Cook the cranberries

Put in just enough cranberry juice (or water or apple juice), a half cup of orange juice (optional) in a pot, get it boiling!

Step 4 - Add the cranberries

Pour the cranberries in. Let them cook for about 5 to 10 minutes, stirring once or twice (you'll hear the berries popping, as the berries cook - you'll kids will get a kick out of that). Once half the berries are popped and the sauce feels mushy, it's done! It should take no more than 10 minutes of cooking over medium heat.



Step 4 - Crush and strain the cranberries

A Foley food mill is perfect for this! You can use other types of strainers, such as the KitchenAid or a Roma / Villaware strainer. In a pinch, a sieve and the bottom of a jar to mush them through the sieve will work, but not nearly as easily as a food mill.

To see a greater variety of [strainers in other types, sizes, and prices, click here!](#)



Another trick? Use a blender to puree the whole cooked berries; it's not as smooth as the strained, but uses the whole berry!

Step 5 - Add the pectin (optional)

Cranberries, if you don't overcook them, will usually set on their own. Cranberries have enough pectin naturally to set on their own, but it's a lot more certain to add the pectin and know it will set! If you make jam, you probably have some pectin

handy. Adding a half packet of it will ensure a good set. Again, it's not necessary, so don't panic if you haven't got it!

Step 6 - Heat the strained cranberries

Bring the strained cranberries with the pectin back to a boil.

Step 7 - Add the sugar and bring to a full boil for one minute

Add 2 cups of sugar. Of course, you can use other sweeteners, such as honey (2 cups), or even frozen concentrated fruit juice (like grape).

Bring it back to a full rolling boil and boil for 1 minute, then remove from heat.



Step 8 - Finishing up

To can, to store and eat later:

If you want to can for later, skip step 8 and jump to step 9.

To eat now:

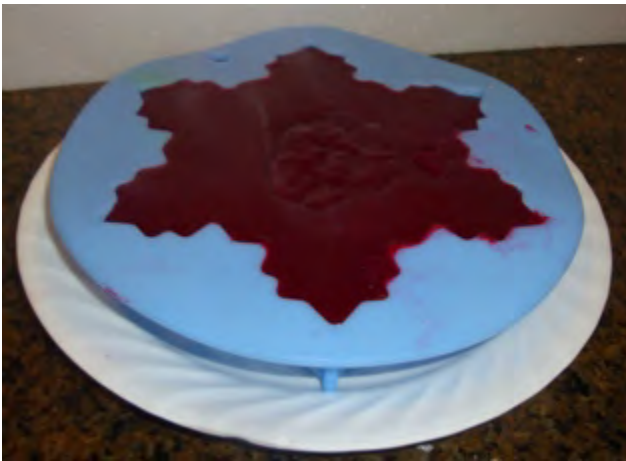


If you don't plan to can any, you're done! Just pour into a mold or serving container, chill in the fridge for a couple of hours and serve!

At left is a plain Pyrex baking dish. I filled it, cooled it in the fridge then inverted on a plate!

TIP: to get the jellied cranberry sauce to come out of the mold intact, especially if it hasn't firmed up hard enough; I stick it in the freezer for about an hour or so. That makes it hard enough that if you run hot water over the outside bottom of the mold, and invert the mold, it should slide out easily and remain intact.

Below is a silicone baking mold; again, just fill, chill and invert! I got this mold for \$2.50 at Target. They also had snowmen molds.



Step 9 - Fill the jars and process them in the water bath

The cranberry sauce does not need any further cooking; just keep it hot until you get enough made to fill the jars you will put into the canner (Canners hold seven jars at once, whether they are quart or pint size). Fill the jars (preferably wide mouth jars) to within 1/2 inch of the top, wipe any spilled cranberry sauce of the top, seat the lid and tighten the ring around them. Put them in



the canner and keep them cover with at least 1 inch of water and boiling. if you are at sea level (up to 1,000 ft) boil pint jars for 15 minutes and quart jars for 20 min. If you are at an altitude of 1,000 feet or more, see this cart:

Recommended process time for Jellied Cranberry Sauce in a boiling-water canner.					
		Process Time at Altitudes of			
Style of Pack	Quart Size	0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 3,000 ft	3,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Hot	Pints	15 min	20	20	25
	Quarts	20	25	30	35

Step 10 - Remove and cool the jars - Done

Lift the jars out of the water and let them cool without touching or bumping them in a draft-free place (usually takes overnight) You can then remove the rings if you like, but if you leave them on, at least loosen them quite a bit, so they don't rust in place due to trapped moisture. Once the jars are cool, you can check that they are sealed verifying that the lid has been sucked down. Just press in the center, gently, with your finger. If it pops up and down (often making a popping sound), it is not sealed. If you put the jar in the refrigerator right away, you can still use it. Some people replace the lid and reprocess the jar, then that's a bit iffy. If you heat the contents back up, re-jar them (with a new lid) and the full time in the canner, it's usually ok.

