

Brown Sugar Apple Butter

Based on a recipe from 101cookbooks.com

makes: about 40 ounces

equipment: big heavy pot, immersion blender, candy thermometer

ingredients:

4 pounds of apples, peeled and cut into bite sized chunks (I used a pie mix – gala, fuji, braeburn, and granny smith)

1/2 gallon of apple cider

1 3/4 cups of brown sugar

2 teaspoons cinnamon

1 teaspoon allspice

1 teaspoon vanilla

Juice of one lemon

to do:

Prepare your jars. Heat the jars in a warm oven (225 degrees) on a baking sheet to sterilize – at least 20 minutes. Boil the lids in a small pot of water for 10 minutes and set to dry on a clean towel.

Make the butter: In a big, heavy pot over medium/med-high heat add the apples and enough apple cider to just cover. Bring to a simmer. Skim the foam off as it collects. Cook the apples until they are tender, 25-30 minutes. Let the apples cool, then use a immersion blender or regular blender to puree (be careful so the hot liquids don't spatter).

Put the puree back in the big pot over medium heat. Bring puree to a simmer. Let it get to 220 degrees on a candy thermometer. While stirring, add the sugar, spices, vanilla, and lemon juice. Continue to simmer over medium-low heat.

Let it cook for 1 ½-2 hours, until the butter starts to thicken and bubble like lava. Stir it regularly to keep it from sticking. It'll sputter and plop once it's getting close to done. Remove from heat and let it cool.

Can your apple butter: Fill your your biggest, deepest pot with water and bring to a rolling boil. The water level will need to cover the jars. Using pot holders remove the jar from the oven and fill to ¼ inch from the top with the apple butter. Wipe the rims with a clean paper towel. Place the lid on and close tightly. A few jars at a time, boil for 10 minutes.

Take the jars out of the water and place them on a towel-covered baking sheet. Let cool overnight and check the lids to make sure they've sealed properly.