

Preserved Lemons

Preserved lemons are, in my view, indispensable in the making of tagines. You can buy them bottled in supermarkets but these are a pale shadow of those you make yourself. Fortunately they are very easy to make requiring no more than lemons, salt, water, a suitable preserving jar and time.

This recipe is for 3 preserved lemons because that's what fits most of my Kilner/Parfait jars. They need to fit the jar snugly otherwise they float and don't remain submerged. The recipe is basically 25g/1oz salt for each preserved lemon so you can scale it according to what will fit your jar.

Once made, leave them for at least a month. They will keep indefinitely so you won't waste them.

Planning

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| serves: | n/a |
| prep time: | >1 month |
| cooking time: | n/a |

Ingredients

4 fresh lemons, unblemished
& preferably unwaxed
75g/3ozs salt
water

Method

First of all, I sterilize a Kilner/Parfait preserving jar by washing it then drying it in a 125°C oven. Let it cool down before proceeding.

Cut each of three lemons almost into quarters lengthwise - leave the quarters attached at the stem, though. Splay each lemon and spread salt liberally on all the cut surfaces before squeezing them back together and cramming them tightly into the jar. I usually find it necessary to split one lemon completely in half and use these two halves to wedge the other two lemons. However you do it, make sure they are tight. Tip the remaining salt into the jar. Juice the remaining lemon and pour the juice into the jar. Now top up with water to just above the lemons - they should be completely submerged.

Seal the jar and leave it for at least one month.

When using preserved lemons, it is traditional to use only the skin. Remove and discard the flesh.