

Jamaican Mirliton Marmalade

By Lance Hill

Prep time: 30 minutes



This recipe makes 8 ozs of mirliton marmalade based on the traditional Jamaican flavor profile for sweet mirliton desserts. It's perfect on buttered biscuits, bagels, or toast.

You can use Louisiana heirloom mirlitons or imported chayote, which Walmart carries year-round as “fresh chayote squash.”

The marmalade can be stored in the refrigerator for two to three months. It can also be canned, but that requires normal canning safety procedures below*

Three key points:

** Use only allspice berries and whole cloves--don't use ground spices.*

** Strain the spiced water through a fine mesh cheesecloth for a golden honey color.*

** I recommend the spatula below with a built-in thermometer. It's more accurate than a candy thermometer when preparing small batches, and it will let you know precisely when the mixture has reached the exact jelling temperature: 220°F.*

Links to the spices and spatula are at the bottom of the page.

Ingredients:

1 mirliton or chayote
12 allspice berries
12 whole cloves
2 tsp of pectin (Sure-Jell)*
1 ½ tsp pure lime juice
8 ozs of water
1 cup of sugar
Pinch of salt
Fine-mesh cheesecloth

Seasoned Water:

Put 12 allspice berries, 12 whole cloves, and 8 ozs of water into a one-quart or larger saucepan and bring to a boil. Cover and reduce to a *very low simmer* for 60 minutes. Strain the mixture through fine mesh cheesecloth to remove spice pieces and achieve the golden honey color. Pour the mixture into a measuring cup and *add enough water to bring the volume back to 8 ozs*. It's essential to have 8 ozs of seasoned mixture to start the marmalade process. (By multiplying the recipe, you can make multiple batches of the mixture and refrigerate for future use)

Mirliton prep:

Peel and de-seed mirliton and julienne it into strips about 1/8th inch thick. Bring a quart of water to boil and add julienned strips. Return to boil and boil for 8 minutes until *al dente*.

Remove, drain, and cool. Weigh out 4 oz of cooked strips for the marmalade.

Marmalade Assembly :

Add the 8 ozs of the seasoned water into a heavy one-quart or larger saucepan.

Bring to a boil

Add 1 ½ tsp lime juice

Slowly stir in 2 tsp of pectin (Sure-Jell)*

Gradually stir in 1 cup of sugar

Bring to a boil

Add 4 ozs of the julienned mirliton strips

Bring to boil and continue on high heat, stirring occasionally, until the mixture reaches “soft ball” stage or 220°F. (about 5 minutes)

Remove from the burner, add a pinch of salt, and stir. (The salt reduces the sweetness.)**

Pour into the jar with a lid.

Cool for at least 8 hours.

Keep refrigerated.

*This recipe is for Sure-Jell. If you use Hoosier Hill Farm Fruit Pectin, it only requires 1 ½ tsp

** To make the fruit distribute more evenly, stir once a minute for five minutes after you remove it from the burner.

Canning:

Sterilize jars and lids, pour cooked mixture in jar leaving ¼-½” headspace, lightly seal, waterbath or steambath for 15 minutes, seal lid tightly.

Links

Allspice berries:

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08JVK1XN5?ref_=ppx_hzsearch_conn_dt_b_fed_asin_title_1

Thermometer/Spatula:

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08PVZGM4F?ref_=ppx_hzsearch_conn_dt_b_fed_asin_title_1

Fine mesh cheesecloth:

https://www.amazon.com/Overlocked-Cheesecloth-Straining-Unbleached-Reusable/dp/B0DTPFP7KR?ref=ast_sto_dp&th=1&psc=1

Mirlitons sold as Walmart as “Chayote Squash”

<https://www.walmart.com/ip/Fresh-Chayote-Squash-Each/44391306>

