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Green Tomato Chutney

with Apples, Golden Raisins & Ginger

NATURALLY DELICIOUS RECIPES • Janice Feuer-Haugen

For two weeks last September, we dutifully covered both our flowers and vegetable garden to protect them from the low nighttime temperatures. And then we stopped. With a forecast of snow and a low of 24 degrees, we gave up trying. We harvested all the herbs and green onions and most of the carrots and chard. Then my husband brought in almost eight pounds of green tomatoes. We've had some past success attempting to ripen tomatoes by hanging the plants upside down in our garage. With so many unripe tomatoes, though, I decided instead to make green tomato chutney.

Where the inspiration came from I don't know as I've only heard about, though never tasted, such typical green tomato dishes as fried green tomatoes or green tomato jam. Chutney just seemed like a great use for this bounty of green tomatoes. After a bit of research, I combined a number of ideas to create this recipe for lightly spiced, honey sweetened and easily made *Green Tomato Chutney with Apples, Golden Raisins & Ginger*.

WHY CHUTNEY?

Beautifully green and hard, end-of-the-season tomatoes taste of ... not much. When tomatoes haven't much more than a smidge of red, they rarely ever ripen. By the time their color changes, if it does at all, they lack even the slightest hint of any home-grown tomato flavor.

Though, when softened by cooking, green tomatoes provide a neutral and textural background for all the great spices. I've used mustard and fennel seeds, red pepper flakes, a stick of cinnamon and ground cardamom, allspice, nutmeg and cloves. Plus, by including naturally sweet apples and raisins in the mix, only a little additional sweetener is necessary.



5 WAYS WITH CHUTNEY

To inspire you to make *Green Tomato Chutney*, here are a number of delicious ways to enjoy it:

1. Alongside Indian meals and Buddha bowls
2. Atop soft goat cheese or warm brie and served with crackers or toast
3. Spread on sandwiches (especially grilled cheese) and wraps
4. Stirred into a mild vinaigrette as a salad dressing
5. Spooned over a little yogurt or ice cream as a quick dessert

HEALTH BENEFITS OF GREEN TOMATOES

Unripe green tomatoes are less sweet than when fully ripened, and are best eaten cooked. The book *Whole Foods Companion* advises against eating green tomatoes raw because of a poisonous toxin in them.

Although unripe green tomatoes are not quite as nutritious as vine-ripened tomatoes, they do have many nutritional benefits:

- High in fiber, which can reduce the risk of heart disease and helps keep the digestive system working well.
- Low in sodium, green tomatoes support healthy blood pressure.
- Rich in beta-carotene and vitamins C, A, and E and good amounts of potassium, magnesium and vitamin K.

GREEN TOMATO CHUTNEY WITH APPLES, GOLDEN RAISINS & GINGER

I hadn't planned on canning my Green Tomato Chutney. But as I made so much of it, and as canning is so easy, I changed my mind. I've included some basic canning guidelines at the end of the recipe. For more thorough instructions visit FreshPreserving.com. Otherwise, place the chutney into clean containers and store it in the refrigerator for up to two months.

Thanks to David Lebovitz and Elise Bauer for inspiring this recipe.

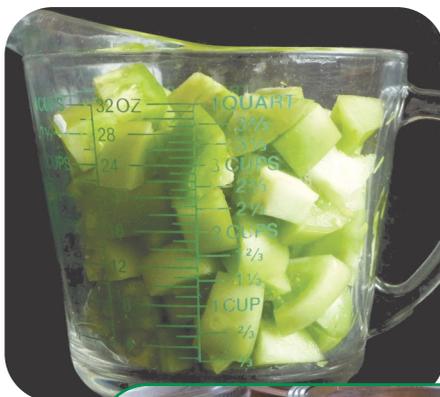
Makes 6 cups
Active time: 20 minutes
Total time: 1¼ hours

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ½–2 ¾ pounds unripe green tomatoes, cored, chopped into roughly ½-inch chunks (8 cups)
- 1 pound apples, peeled, chopped into roughly ½-inch chunks (3 cups)
- 1 cup thinly sliced onion
- 1 cup golden raisins
- ¾ cup apple cider vinegar
- ½ cup light honey
- ⅓ cup 1/8-inch diced candied ginger
- 1 jalapeno or Serrano chili, seeded, finely diced (or more to taste)
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard seeds
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon fennel seeds
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- ½ teaspoon ground cardamom
- ½ teaspoon ground allspice
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
- Large pinch ground nutmeg

DIRECTIONS

1. Place everything in a large, heavy bottomed soup pot.
2. Bring the chutney to a boil over high heat, stirring to distribute the ingredients.
3. Reduce the heat to a low boil. Partially cover the pot. Cook for 35 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove the cover and cook for another 10 minutes.
4. Transfer the Green Tomato Chutney either to sterilized jars for canning, or into clean containers for storing in the refrigerator.



BASIC CANNING GUIDELINES

1. To sterilize the jars and lids: Set the jars upright on a steamer rack in a large stock pot. Add enough water to fill and completely cover the jars. Turn the heat to high and boil for 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and add the lids.

Let the jars and lids sit in the water while you cook the chutney.

2. When ready to fill the jars, carefully empty them of water. Place the jars on a kitchen towel. Remove the lids from the water and set them aside to dry.

3. Scoop the chutney into the jars. Leave at least ¼-inch "head space" between the chutney and the top of the jar.

4. Use a clean, damp paper towel to wipe the rim of each jar. Top each jar with a sterilized lid. Screw on a canning ring.

5. Set the filled jars once again on the steamer rack in the pot of hot water. Add enough additional water to cover the jars with an inch of water. Bring the water to a boil over high heat. Cover the pot. Process the jars at a rapid boil for 20 minutes if your altitude is between 1000 and 6000 feet. At lower altitudes, process the jars for 15 minutes.

6. Carefully remove the jars from the very hot water. Place them on a dish towel to cool. You'll hear a popping sound as the jars seal.

7. When the jars are completely cool, press the center of each lid. A taut lid means a good seal. Otherwise reprocess the jar(s) in boiling water. Or store that jar in the refrigerator.

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