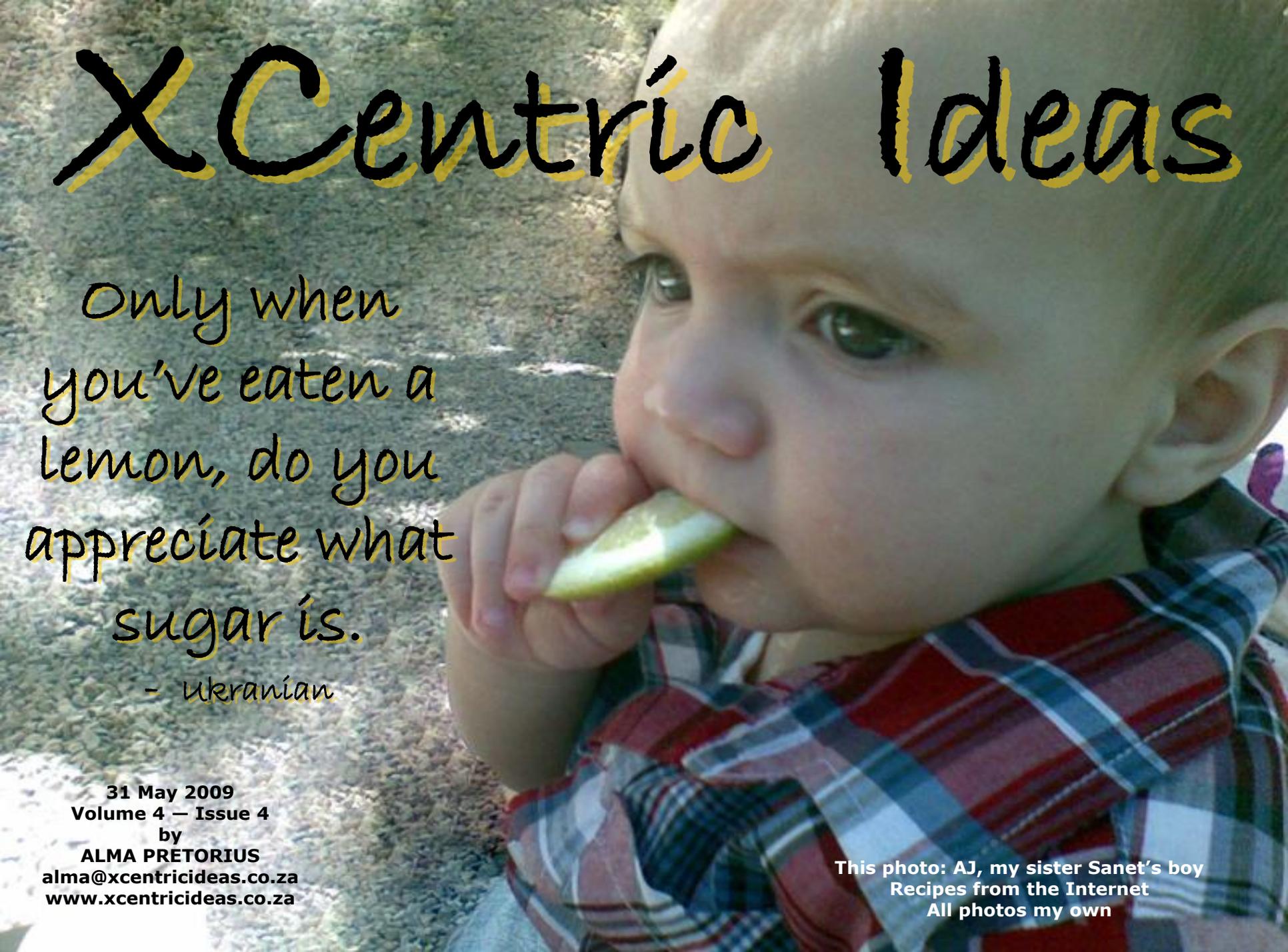


XCentric Ideas



Only when
you've eaten a
lemon, do you
appreciate what
sugar is.

- Ukrainian

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by

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This photo: AJ, my sister Sanet's boy
Recipes from the Internet
All photos my own

Using Lemons

1. Juicing a lemon at room temperature will yield more juice.
2. If the lemon is very cold, you can microwave it for a few seconds before squeezing. Freeze for later. Freeze the juice in ice cube trays, when frozen save in a plastic bag.
3. Fill ice cube trays with lemon slice quarters. Top with water and freeze. That way your G&T is instantly livened up with ice & a lemon slice.
4. Grate lemon zest; seal tightly in plastic bag & freeze for later use.
5. Put lemon wedges inside the cavity of a whole chicken.
6. Tenderize meat by marinating it in lemon juice.
7. Squeeze lemon on vegetables while steaming, to keep the colors bright.
8. Add it to rice while cooking to make it fluffier.
9. A few drops of lemon juice improves the taste of other fruits.
10. Pouring lemon juice around areas that ants frequent is said to repel them.
11. Heat a bowl of water and lemon slices in your microwave for 30 seconds to a minute; then wipe out the oven. Stains will be easier to remove and old food odours neutralized.
12. Rub lemon juice into your wooden chopping board, leave overnight and then rinse.
13. 4 Tablespoons of lemon juice mixed with half a gallon of water makes an effective window cleaner.
14. You can also rub cut lemons directly on elbows to lighten and soften them.



Pumpkin & Orange Soup

1 small onion, diced
1 kg pumpkin, peeled and seeded
1 cup orange juice
1 tablespoon sugar
1 orange, thinly sliced
Slosh of Port (optional)

25 g butter
5 cups veggie/chicken stock
1 orange, zest of
salt & pepper
1 tbsp fresh cream
Another 1 tbsp sugar

Sauté onion gently in butter in a large saucepan until transparent. Add chunks of pumpkin, stock, juice, zest and sugar.

Simmer 20-25 minutes until cooked. Season with salt & pepper.

Puree in a food processor or blender or push through a sieve. Return to saucepan, add sliced orange, fresh cream, port & 1 tbsp sugar and reheat gently for 10 minutes.

Serve with fresh crusty bread. Freezes well (without the cream & Port).

(This tastes exactly like Woolworth's Butternut & Orange Soup.)



Warm Beetroot Salad with Orange, Bacon & Caraway Seed

300g beetroot trimmed
1 tbsp olive oil
2 tsp caraway seeds
5 tbsp orange juice
salt and pepper

4 rashers of smoked streaky bacon
3 oranges, skinned & sliced
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 tsp sugar

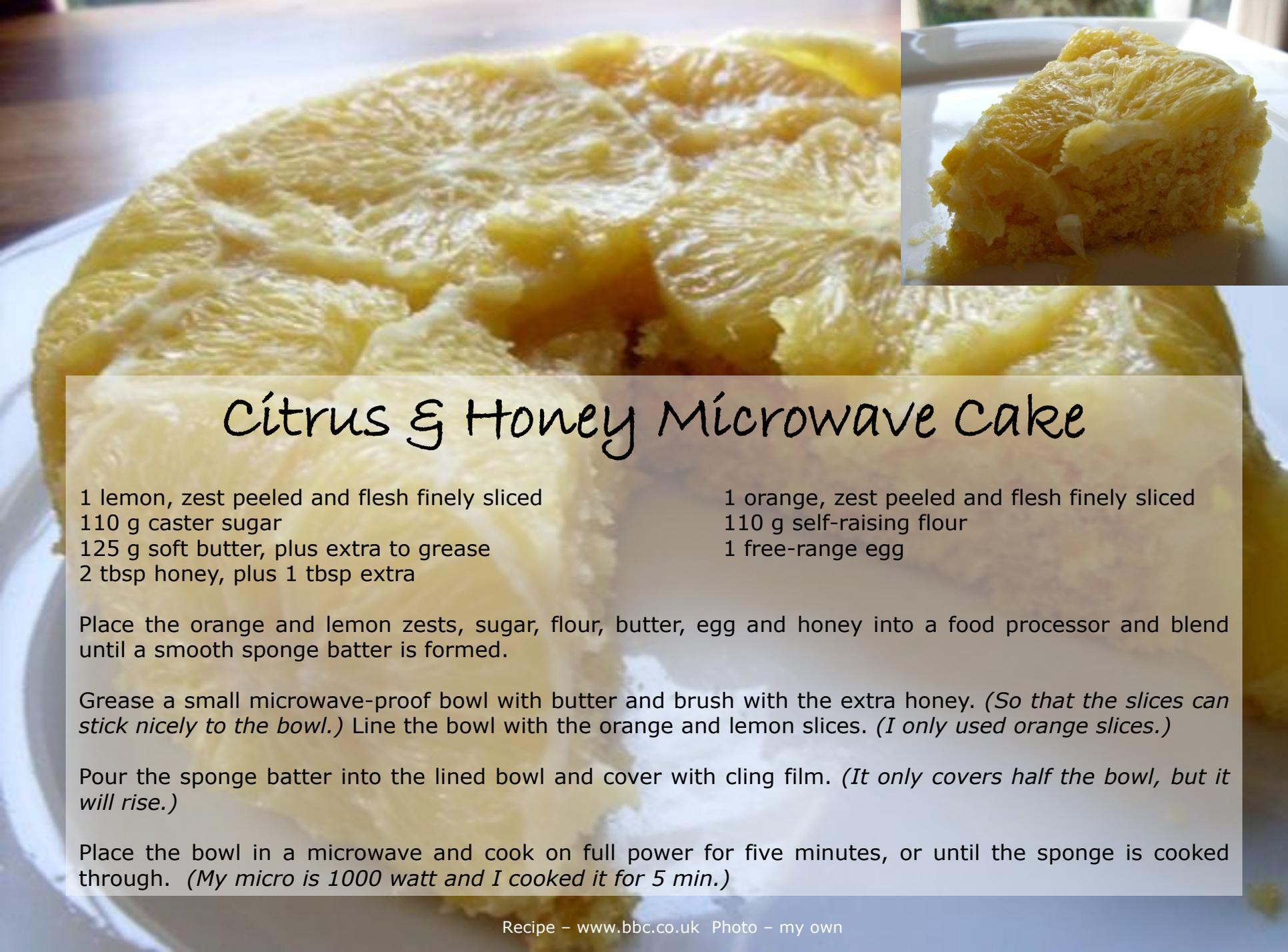
Preheat the oven to 200° C. Place the beets in a baking dish with ½ cm of water, cover and bake until they are tender. This will take about 45 minutes depending on size.

Skin the beetroots, trim the ends and slice into thick batons or wedges. (*I've used Woolworths' cooked beetroot.*)

Heat the oil in a large frying pan; fry the bacon until starting to brown and remove from the pan. Whilst pan is still hot, add caraway seeds and garlic. Fry for a few minutes but before the garlic browns, add the orange juice and sugar.

Mix thoroughly and bring to the boil. Tip in the beetroot and coat with the hot dressing. Season well. Stir in the orange pieces and then sprinkle with bacon pieces.

Lovely with watercress or spinach leaves.



Citrus & Honey Microwave Cake

1 lemon, zest peeled and flesh finely sliced
110 g caster sugar
125 g soft butter, plus extra to grease
2 tbsp honey, plus 1 tbsp extra

1 orange, zest peeled and flesh finely sliced
110 g self-raising flour
1 free-range egg

Place the orange and lemon zests, sugar, flour, butter, egg and honey into a food processor and blend until a smooth sponge batter is formed.

Grease a small microwave-proof bowl with butter and brush with the extra honey. *(So that the slices can stick nicely to the bowl.)* Line the bowl with the orange and lemon slices. *(I only used orange slices.)*

Pour the sponge batter into the lined bowl and cover with cling film. *(It only covers half the bowl, but it will rise.)*

Place the bowl in a microwave and cook on full power for five minutes, or until the sponge is cooked through. *(My micro is 1000 watt and I cooked it for 5 min.)*



Sunday Morning Lemon Muffins

1 cup butter/margarine
4 large eggs, separated
2 tsp baking powder
½ cup fresh lemon juice (3 to 4 lemons)

1 cup sugar
2 cups all-purpose flour*
1 tsp salt
2 tsp lemon zest, grated

Preparation:

*If using self-rising flour, omit baking powder and salt.

Cream butter/margarine and sugar until light and fluffy; add egg yolks, beating well.

Combine flour, baking powder, and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with lemon juice, beating well after each addition. End with dry ingredients.

Fold stiffly beaten egg whites into batter; then stir in the lemon zest.

Fill greased muffin cups about three-quarters full. Bake lemon muffins at 190° C for 20 to 25 minutes, until done. Makes about 15 lemon muffins.

(Mine wasn't very high, so you can fill the muffin cups more than 3/4.)



No Bake Lemon Cookies

1/2 cup butter/margarine

1 lemon, juiced and zested

1 1/2 cups tea biscuits, crushed (*I used Marie biscuits – crush coarsely, not too fine!*)

1/2 cup condensed milk

1 cup flaked coconut

In a small saucepan over medium heat, melt together butter and sweetened condensed milk, stirring frequently until smooth.

Stir in crushed biscuits, lemon juice and zest, and coconut; mix well.

Press into a square dish. Refrigerate overnight before slicing or the squares will come out sticky.

(Maybe they meant T-biscuits. I did see some the other day in a shop – it contains coconut.)



Microwave Kumquat Jam

3 ½ cups kumquats

1 ½ cups sugar

Wash fruits, cut off the ends and slice thinly – discard the seeds.

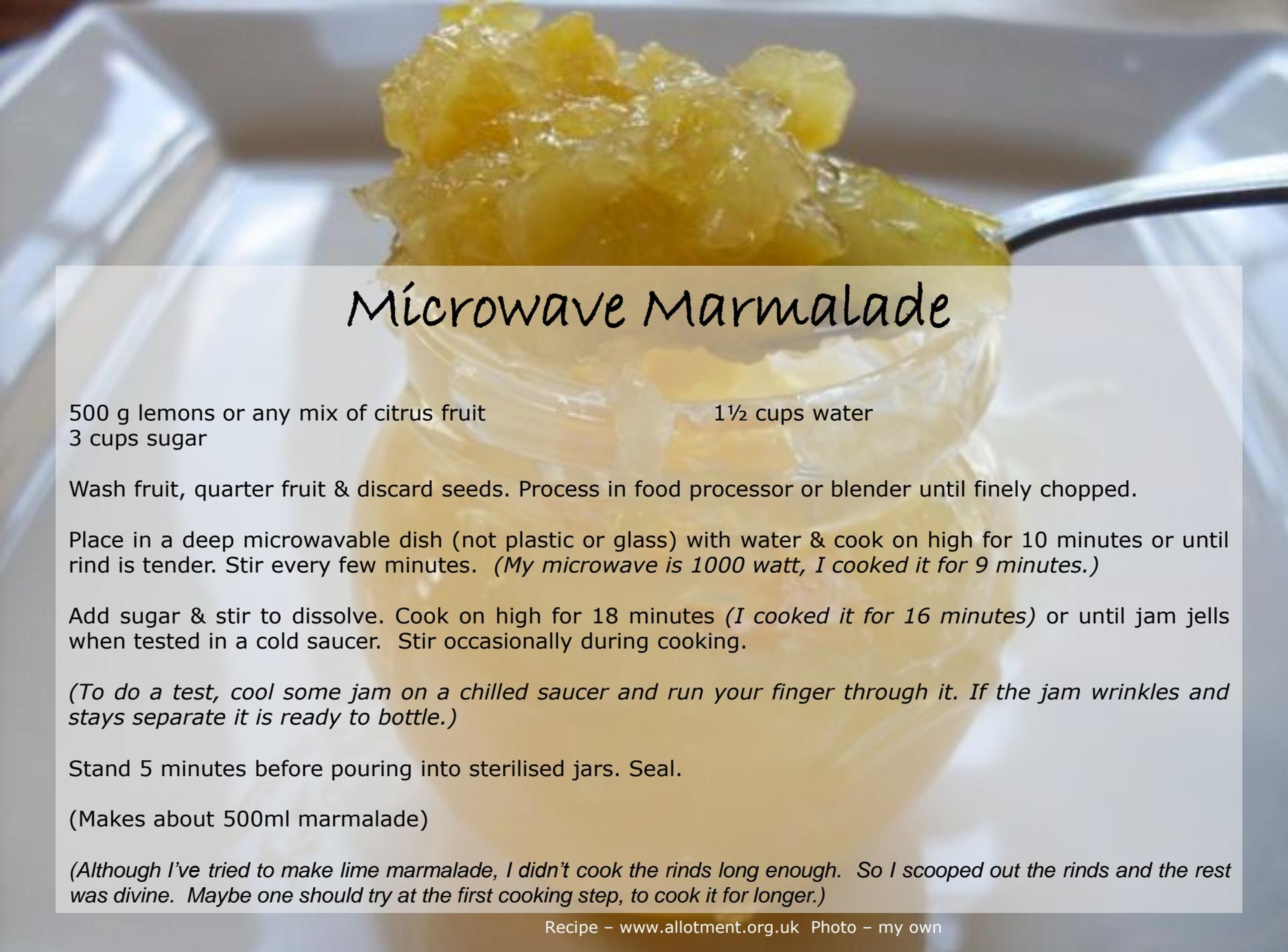
Chop coarse. (*It's optional – I left it in slices*). In a deep microwaveable bowl (not plastic or glass) mix fruit with sugar.

Cook, uncovered on high for 6 minutes - you want it to boil.

Stir down and cook for 10 minutes more uncovered - stopping every 2 minutes to stir down. Remove.

Spoon into sterilised jars. Jam will thicken as it cools. Makes about 500 ml jam.

(This will keep in your fridge for 2 months or freezer for 6.)



Microwave Marmalade

500 g lemons or any mix of citrus fruit
3 cups sugar

1½ cups water

Wash fruit, quarter fruit & discard seeds. Process in food processor or blender until finely chopped.

Place in a deep microwavable dish (not plastic or glass) with water & cook on high for 10 minutes or until rind is tender. Stir every few minutes. *(My microwave is 1000 watt, I cooked it for 9 minutes.)*

Add sugar & stir to dissolve. Cook on high for 18 minutes *(I cooked it for 16 minutes)* or until jam jells when tested in a cold saucer. Stir occasionally during cooking.

(To do a test, cool some jam on a chilled saucer and run your finger through it. If the jam wrinkles and stays separate it is ready to bottle.)

Stand 5 minutes before pouring into sterilised jars. Seal.

(Makes about 500ml marmalade)

(Although I've tried to make lime marmalade, I didn't cook the rinds long enough. So I scooped out the rinds and the rest was divine. Maybe one should try at the first cooking step, to cook it for longer.)

A close-up photograph of a whole yellow lemon and a slice of lemon on a white plate. The lemon is positioned in the upper half of the frame, and the slice is in the lower half. The background is a plain white surface.

Microwave Lemon Curd

1 cup white sugar
1 cup fresh lemon juice
½ cup unsalted butter, melted

3 eggs
3 lemons, grated rinds (zest)

In a microwave-safe bowl, whisk together the sugar and eggs until smooth. Stir in lemon juice, lemon zest and butter. Cook in the microwave for one minute intervals, stirring after each minute until the mixture is thick enough to coat the back of a metal spoon.

Remove from the microwave, press through sieve and pour into small sterile jars. Store for up to three weeks in the refrigerator.

What do you use lemon curd for? Next page...

Lemon curd uses

Curd Crepe. Spread on a crepe, roll up, powdered sugar on top. You are **so** going to need more lemon curd.

Breakfast lemon curd. On the side, together with croissants, muffins, scones, French toast or waffles.

Lemon Curd Brûlée - Place generous amount of lemon curd in a ramekin. Top with fromage frais and dark brown sugar. Grill on a high heat for 2-3 mins until golden and bubbling.

Cake glaze. Spread lemon curd thinly on cakes. Sandwich together angel food cake and pound cake layers with lemon curd.

Curd tarts. Fill pre-baked tartlet shells with lemon curd, top with a dusting of powdered sugar. Or top with a meringue kiss. Then call it 'deconstructed lemon meringue.'

Fancy parfait. Spread lemon curd on thin cake rounds, top with sweetened whipped cream and berries in alternating layers for individual serving-sized parfaits or trifles.

Eye-catching dessert. Stir berry preserves or a whole-berry sauce into individual servings of lemon curd in small dessert glasses for that perfect eye-catching dessert.

Swirl lemon curd into cheesecake. Spoon a cup of room-temperature lemon curd in drops over an unbaked cheesecake. Use a butter knife to cut the curd into the cake to marbleize it before baking according to your recipe.

Spread lemon curd between the layers of a cake. For a double lemon flavour, top the cake with a fluffy icing made by beating a cup of heavy cream and a teaspoon of vanilla extract until the cream begins to thicken, and then beating in a cup of cold lemon curd until the cream forms soft peaks.

Lemon curd freezes well

Tightly covered, lemon curd will last about a week in the refrigerator. It will last for months tightly covered in the freezer. It doesn't freeze solid, which means you can spoon out exactly what you need when you need it.



Naartjie Meringue Kisses

2 egg whites (room temperature)
1/8 tsp salt
2/3 cup sugar
3 drops lemon juice

2 tsp grated naartjie peel
1 tsp naartjie juice
1 tbsp powdered sugar (*I used Caster sugar*)

Heat oven to 130 oC. Cover cookie sheets with foil. In small bowl, whisk egg whites, naartjie peel, naartjie juice, salt & lemon juice until foamy.

Gradually add sugar; beat 3 – 5 min or until stiff peaks form. Fold in powdered sugar. Spoon mixture into pastry bag fitted with large fluted decorate tip with ½ inch opening. (*I just spooned it on.*)

Pipe meringue kisses about 1 ½ inches in diameter 1 inch apart onto foil-lined cookie sheets. Bake at 130 oC for 50-60 min until crisp and very lightly browned. Cool completely. Remove from cookie sheets.

(I had 2 flops trying to make these – by using the beat attachment to my food processor, instead of the whisk. But to my defense, the recipe only said beat.)

"Citrus is a palette that looks good
in spring. That will never
change."

Tom Cooke

