

Apricot-Rosemary Preserves

5 lbs fresh apricots, halved and pitted

4 c. sugar

1/3 c. lemon juice

1-2 T. fresh rosemary, chopped

Don't waste your time peeling the apricots. The skins are so thin and delicate that they will pretty much dissolve during the cooking process. And the skin adds flavor and fragrance you don't want to omit. Toss apricots, sugar and lemon juice in a large stock pot. Set aside for four hours or overnight in the fridge. Bring to a slow boil, being careful to stir often to prevent any sticking. Boil the mixture down by about half until thickened. I test mine by taking a spoonful, cooling it down, then turning the spoon on its side. If it's a gel-like consistency, it's ready. If it's too watery, it needs more time cooking. Remove the pot of preserves from heat. Then stir in 1 tablespoon of the fresh rosemary. Once combined, do a taste test and decide whether to add another tablespoon. It can easily overpower the apricot flavor. When you're ready, carefully pour preserves into your clean, sterilized canning jars (I like 1/2 pints or full pints). Wipe the rims clean and adjust two-piece caps. Boil in hot water bath for fifteen minutes.