

mama eats

navel orange marmalade

I've tried my best to explain everything well, which makes it seem a little long and complicated, which it really isn't. Sit down before you begin and read the recipe completely through first, so you know exactly what to expect, as when you make jam, things move quickly. This recipe is made with navel oranges from our tree- if you use store bought, be sure they don't have a waxy coating. If you need to make marmalade with low sugar, I recommend buying a pack of [Pomona's Pectin](#) and following their recipe included in the box.

- 2 ¼ lbs / 1 kg sweet oranges (this was about 4 large oranges for me)
- one large lemon; or two small lemons
- 6 cups / 1.4 litres water
- 4 cups / 800 g sugar
- ¼ tsp sea salt

- 5 sterilized jam jars + lids

With a sharp knife, cut the peels from the oranges, focusing on mostly taking off the orange part of the skin while leaving some of the white pith behind. You don't need to be too dear about it, just don't take all the pith. The more pith, the more bitter- I like my marmalade to have some bitterness to offset the sweet, but not a huge amount. Slice these peels into lengthwise strips, thin or thick, however you like your marmalade. Also, peel the lemon the same way, but taking care to take as little of the white pith as possible, and cut the lemon skin up into very small strips. Place both the orange and lemon strips in a large, nonreactive pot.

Juice the peeled oranges and lemons and add their juice to the pot, reserving any seeds, pulp, and bits. Place these bits in a muslin or tight mesh bag (I used a cloth tea/coffee sock) along with the hollow, juiced halves. These bits are all high in pectin, and will contribute to thickening the jam without needing to use added pectin. Secure the bag to the handle of the pan. Pour in the water, mix a bit, then let sit overnight on the counter (cover with a lid). This helps the flavors from the peels to seep into the liquid, and makes for a tastier jam.

The next morning, set the pot on the stove, place 2 small saucers in the freezer, and bring your pot, with the bag in it (tie it tightly so it doesn't come loose), to a boil. Reduce to a lively simmer, and cook until the peel is very soft, you should be able to pinch a piece and it squish easily- this should take around 15 minutes. Remove the muslin bag and let sit in a bowl to cool a bit so you can handle it, then using the back of a wooden spoon, press the bag against the side of the bowl, extracting most of the liquid, and add this liquid back to the pot. Discard contents of bag. Add the sugar and salt to the pot and mix well.

Now, for the jam. Give it a good stir again, bring it to a rolling boil, and let it boil away, stirring often to keep the bottom from burning. Keep cooking until it is set, which generally takes about

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40ish minutes for me, but can be more or less, depending. If you have/would like to use a candy thermometer, it should reach 220°F / 104.5°C for a softer set, and 230°F / 110°C for a thicker set. How I do it is by eye- when I think it's set, I turn off the pot heat, put a spoonful of jam on one of the cold plates from the freezer, swirl it around, replace plate in freezer, wait about 30 seconds, then swipe through the middle of the jam with my finger. If it crinkles on the surface and the jam stays mostly on the two sides without running back to the middle, it's ready. If it's not ready, turn the heat back on and check again in a few minutes. There's a visual cue from the viscosity of the liquid, too- it gets slightly thicker when the jam is ready.

Remove the pot from the heat, and let sit for about 5 or 10 minutes (this settles it, making the peels able to be suspended and distributed evenly throughout). While you are waiting, make sure you have everything at the ready- clean jars, warm lids, a clean damp rag to wipe the rims of the jars, and your boiling water canner, if you are canning the jams.

Ladle into warm, clean jars (I use a canning funnel), and wipe down the rims to ensure they are clean of any drips of jam. Add the warm lids on the jars, screw on the rings, finger-tight, and either let cool to keep in fridge or process in a boiling water canner for 10 minutes (I recommend taking a look at the National Center for Home Food Preservation Site to familiarize yourself with techniques, [here](#).) Wipe the jars down, and label/date them.