

Drunken Fig Preserves

These are absolutely divine. Great as an appetizer spooned over Brie cheese with crackers, cream cheese, or shoot, just eat it on a spoon!

2 lemons

4 lbs. ripe fresh figs (preferably black), stemmed,
cut into 1/2-inch pieces (about 9 cups)

4 cups sugar

3/4 cup brandy or Cognac

1/2 tsp. coarse kosher salt

Using vegetable peeler, remove peel from lemons (yellow part only) in long strips. Cut peel into matchstick-size strips (about 3 tablespoons). Combine lemon peel, figs, sugar, brandy, and 1/2 teaspoon coarse salt in heavy large deep saucepan; let stand at room temperature 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Bring fig mixture to boil over medium-high heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Reduce heat to medium; continue to boil until jam thickens and is reduced to 6 cups, stirring frequently and occasionally mashing mixture with potato masher to crush large fig pieces, 30 to 35 minutes. Remove from heat. Ladle mixture into 6 hot clean 1/2-pint glass canning jars, leaving 1/4-inch space at top of jars. Remove any air bubbles. Wipe jar threads and rims with clean damp cloth. Cover with hot lids; apply screw bands. Process jars in pot of boiling water 10 minutes. Cool jars completely. Store in cool dark place up to 1 year.