

The Bloody Mary: Perfectly Preserved Bloody Mary Mix

A Bloody Mary is a cocktail that is made with a very specific, and sometimes highly secretive mix of tomato juice, other ingredients, spices, and an alcohol which is usually vodka. When I started canning, I remember thinking that a good Bloody Mary recipe was one thing I needed to learn to can. Making the mix fresh is certainly possible, but canning it in advance means that you can have the fresh taste of summer tomatoes served to a group any time of year minus the preparation time. Restaurants guard their brunch standby recipe closely, families have their go-to formulas, and it is one cocktail that a canner can use to showcase their talents. Here is my rendition of the Bloody Mary, and I'm calling it the Perfectly Preserved Bloody Mary, because that's exactly what it is. Read on for a selection of impressive canned garnishes to add to your jar as well. This recipe makes 8 quarts which is more than what will fit in a standard pressure canner but I figured you may want to enjoy a quart, fresh, for your labor.

You will need

16 cups tomato juice, fresh or canned

2 cups lemon juice

1 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup Worcestershire sauce

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons cracked black pepper (note: black peppercorns can be used instead- use 3 tablespoons if so- I like them for the visual interest and they don't get stuck in your teeth the way ground pepper does)

1 heaping tablespoon best-quality salt.

1 heaping tablespoon celery salt

1 tablespoon hot sauce- home canned or store bought. Popular commercial options include: Tapatío and Tabasco sauces but feel free to experiment. It is safe to add as much as a tablespoon or as little hot sauce as you prefer.

Combine ingredients in a stockpot and bring to a boil.

Prepare your pressure canner, jars and lids. Fill jars with hot Bloody Mary Mix, leaving 1 inch headspace. Add 1/2 teaspoon of citric acid to each quart jar. Apply new lids and rings fingertip tight, and place on the pressure canner rack. Secure the pressure canner lid. Exhaust as per the manufacturer's directions (typically for 10 minutes) and process at 11 pounds of pressure for 25 minutes for quarts. Will yield 8 quarts.

Horseradish

There are no tested methods for canning horseradish, sadly. However, I wanted to share a great little recipe here for your own grated horseradish that you can store in your refrigerator (this type of recipe is called a "refrigerator pickle"). Add this to your freshly prepared Perfectly Preserved Bloody Mary! Horseradish is best stored in a cool, dark place as light is what turns the roots green which is undesirable. Keep horseradish roots in a paper bag, in a cool place like the refrigerator until ready to use. The delicious pungency of the horseradish fades quickly so only make small quantities at a time; this isn't a recipe to double unless you're sharing with friends.

You will need:

2 pounds freshly washed, peeled and then grated horseradish

1 cup best quality (what you'd eat, not clean with) white vinegar 5% acidity (not cider vinegar as that will darken the horseradish)

1/2 teaspoon pickling (additive-free) salt

1/2 teaspoon ascorbic acid powder (see note on page xxx about ascorbic acid which is simply powdered vitamin c).

Grate the horseradish with a box grater or food processor. Combine with remaining ingredients and fill into clean canning jars. Leave a 1/4 inch headspace, add a clean lid and ring, and refrigerate. Use within 2 months.

When you prepare your Bloody Mary cocktail, add in horseradish to each glass; you'll need about a tablespoon per cocktail.

How to Pressure Can, an excerpt from The Pressure Canning Cookbook

Center the pressure canner on your stove-top burner.

Fill the jars you plan to fill with preserves with very hot tap water or water from a tea kettle. Place next to the stove or sink (preferably, if such a location exists, near both) on a towel-covered countertop. The heat from the water heats the glass jars nicely and the towel insulates hot jars from a potentially cold countertop and protects them from thermal shock which can cause a hot jar to break. You'll pour the water down the drain one jar at a time which will keep the jars warm while filling others with preserve.

Start by checking your manufacturer's directions for how many quarts of water to put in the bottom of your pressure canner. Typically, it is between 2 - 4 quarts of water that is required. I use hot tap water. Place the canner with the rack on the bottom with the required amount of water onto the stove and turn on low. Dump one jar's hot water out into the sink. Using a funnel and ladle, add the preserve (in this case, the Bloody Mary Mix) to the jar and be sure to maintain proper headspace (the distance between the top of the food and the top of the jar, indicated in the recipe, ½ inch for this recipe). Add a new lid and ring and tighten finger-tip tight. Place the filled and lidded jar into the warm water in the pressure canner by using a jar lifter (remember, the contents of the jar are likely very hot!). Repeat this process until the canner is filled with filled jars or until you run out of preserve. Jars should not be touching. Keep the jars upright; do not allow the food therein to slosh around as that can compromise your seal. Place the lid on the pressure canner according to the manufacturer's directions. The lid will be locked firmly in place, likely by screwing or twisting either the lid itself or screws along the edge of the lid. Turn the heat on the stove to medium or medium high, and be sure the weight is off of the vent port OR if your model of canner has one, the petcock is OPEN. Set the weight or the pressure regulator in a safe place beside your work area. As the canner warms, not much will visibly happen. This is normal. In a few minutes,

depending on your stove and canner, a vent of steam will be visible through the port. Start the timer for the amount of time indicated on your manufacturer's directions, typically 10 minutes. This critical step is called exhausting or venting. This step fills the canner with pure steam. In my canner for example, and with most canners, we are required to let 10 minutes of continuous steam flow out of the vent. Then, after the 10 minutes (or other time indicated in your manual) has passed, place the weight on top of the port OR close the petcock. Now, pressure will begin to build inside the canner and the many safety features of your newer pressure canner will be hard at work. The rubber plug will not move and nothing will happen with it during a safe canning process. It is a safety valve for releasing pressure in the instance of too great of pressure build up. There's the metal vent lock that will, in perhaps 5 minutes, pop up, out of the lid indicating that pressure is beginning to build inside the pressure canner. Then, the dial on the gauge will start to climb.

All recipes have pounds of pressure required for safe processing. The dial climbs to between 10 to 15 pounds of pressure and at this point, the heat can be reduced to medium or medium low to maintain the pounds of pressure for the duration of the processing time. Once the pounds of pressure are reached for your particular recipe and elevation, you may start the processing timer (for this Bloody Mary recipe, you'll process at 11 pounds of pressure for 25 minutes for quart jars). Remember, above sea level you'll be required to add pounds of pressure. Once the processing time has elapsed, turn off the stove. **DO NOT DO ANYTHING.** Let the pressure canner cool. Opening the canner too early is an excellent way to hurt yourself. An incredible amount of pressure has built up inside; the worst thing you could do is open the canner before pressure has slowly decreased naturally. I usually will turn the heat off at the end of the processing time and then go to something else for an hour or two. Then, when I return, everything is quite cool and there is no question that it is safe to open the lid. The lid is safe to open when the metal vent lock is down, the lid is cooler to the touch (you could comfortably touch it with a bare hand), and the dial reads zero pounds of pressure within the canner. Open the lid away from yourself, remove the jars to a towel covered countertop.

The contents of the jar will bubble for sometimes a few hours after being removed; this is normal. Do not disturb the jars and do not touch the lid to “force” a seal. Once cooled completely (typically 24 hours later) remove rings, wipe jars with a warm, damp cloth to remove any food debris, label, and store in a cool, dark place.



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