



FOR BABA

Thank you for always being there,
with good food and even better advice.

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Intro - This book is one of a kind, filled with recipes collected by Marlene and now added to by friends and family. To ensure this book lives on please write in your tips and tricks as you cook. Treat this like a scrapbook, glue in photos and scribble along the way. There are 10 blank pages at the end, ready to be filled with new recipe favourites. Remember to share your food with those you love. Dobar tek!

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How to pickle your own olives... 25

There are many different ways to prepare olives and the following old Greek recipe is one of the simplest. Commercial pickling processes generally use caustic soda, food acids and salt. This old-fashioned recipe uses salt only.

Olives can be pickled green or black. A black olive is simply a ripe olive. Generally, the green olives are used for pickling and the Kalamata olives for black pickled olives. When some of the olives begin to change towards black, it will be fairly safe to pick the green olives for pickling. With Kalamata, all olives have to be black.

If the tree is large, place cloth sheets on the ground and strip the fruit from the tree with your hands or with a rake. Collect the fruit from the sheet, remove odd stems and leaves and rinse olives in clean water in a bucket.

Toss immediately into a bucket of clean water in which half a cup of coarse or cooking salt has been dissolved into every ten cups of water. A clean plate can be placed on top of the olives to keep the olives submerged. All olives must be under the liquid. Pour the liquid away each day and replace with fresh salt water (I have occasionally stretched this to every second day). Repeat this washing process for about 12 days for green olives and about 10 days for black olives. The best test is to bite the olive, when the bitterness has nearly gone the olives are ready for the final salting.

Pour off and measure the last lot of water so that you will know the volume of salt brine that will be required. Measure that quantity of fresh warm water into a pan and dissolve the salt, this time at the rate of 1 cup of salt to 10 cups of water. Bring the saltwater preserving mixture to the boil and allow to cool. Place olives in bottles and then pour the saltwater brine over them until the fruit is completely submerged. Top up bottles with up to 1cm of olive oil to stop air getting to the fruit and seal the lids on. No further preparation is required, and the bottled olives will store for up to at least 12 months in a cool cupboard.

The olives are ready to eat straight from the brine mixture. For extra flavour, take out the olives as required and put into a clean jar, add any of the following: garlic, basil, oregano, thyme, or chilli and pour over with olive oil. I always have a jar handy in the pantry with olives, garlic, and thyme in oil (I find this herb preserves well in the oil) and I top up as needed with olives from my brine mixture. This oil mix keeps well for up to a year and I occasionally add extra garlic if required.

Sit back and enjoy the unique flavour of your own pickled olives. You will probably never want to buy chemicalized commercial olives again.

One last word of warning; don't give any away to your olive eating friends to taste or you might finish up with more friends than olives.

GOOD EATING AND GOOD HEALTH!

