

When I sold this jam it had a very loyal following. It was the result of a collaboration between Preservation Society and Dillon's Distillers, a small-batch distillery in Niagara. We settled on combining sour cherries with the classic Negroni cocktail, which is a mixture of gin, sweet red vermouth, and Campari. We used their gin, vermouth, and Orangecello, but you can of course use any brand of gin, sweet vermouth, and bitter aperitivo. Sour cherries can be challenging to make into jam, as they have very little pectin. While for the most part I make jams without pectin, for this I used a little low-sugar pectin to get a soft set, once a lot of the water had cooked off and the jam had the concentrated cherry flavor I was looking for. That said, you don't need to use it if you prefer not to. Just be aware that you will end up with fewer jars, as you'll have to cook off more moisture to thicken the mixture.



Cherry Negroni Jam

Makes four to five 250 mL (8 oz) jars

1 kg (6½ cups) pitted sour cherries
575 g (2¾ cups + 2 Tbsp) sugar
45 mL (3 Tbsp) lemon juice
1 (49 g) package no-sugar-needed
pectin
½ oz gin
½ oz sweet vermouth
½ oz Campari or Dillon's Orangecello

In a large bowl or container, combine the sour cherries, sugar, and lemon juice and let macerate for at least 15 minutes, or up to 1 week, covered, in the refrigerator.

Prepare the jars (see page 20).

Transfer the mixture to a pot or preserving pan and heat on medium-high, stirring occasionally. When the mixture comes to a boil, ladle out a few cups and carefully purée them (hot liquids can be volatile) in a blender to add body to the jam, since the cherries don't really break down. Return the blended cherries to the pan and boil hard again, stirring frequently.



When the jam has reduced and thickened and is looking jammy, slowly add the pectin, stirring constantly. Let the jam cook for a few more minutes until the setting point is reached (see page 23). Remove from the heat and add all the liquor, stirring to combine. Pour into the prepared jars to within $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ inch of the rim. Remove any air bubbles, wipe the rims if necessary, seal, and invert for 1 to 2 minutes. Flip right side up and let the jam sit, undisturbed, for 24 hours.

Recipe pictured on page 169