



Preserving Foods: *Asian Pears*

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Asian pears (also called apple pears or Oriental pears) are a unique fruit. Although some have the shape and crispness of an apple, they actually are a true pear. There are more than ten varieties available.

Selection/Picking

Unlike other pears, Asian pears ripen on the tree. The fruit is ready to pick when it is easily removed from the tree. (Do not tug!) The color of the ripe fruit will be yellow for yellow varieties and yellow green for the green varieties.

Asian pears are usually sold ripe and ready to eat or preserve. They can be stored for about a week at room temperature and up to 3 months in the refrigerator. Store them in a plastic or paper bag.

There are several varieties of Asian pears which vary in flavor, color and texture. The acidity can also vary among varieties. Some can be classified as “low acid.” As a result, precautions must be taken when canning.

All home-canned Asian pears must be acidified to prevent growth of the bacteria which cause botulism food poisoning. Adding lemon juice before canning will bring the acidity of lower acid varieties into the safe range. They then may be safely canned using procedures for other types of pears.

Canning Procedure

Wash pears. Peel, cut in half and remove cores. Slice, if desired. To prevent browning, put cut fruit into water containing either an anti-darkening product (using manufacturer’s instructions) or ascorbic acid powder (1 teaspoon of crushed vitamin C tablets per gallon of water.) Drain just before packing hot or raw.

Process in a boiling water canner. Ask your county Extension office for time adjustments if you live above 1,000 feet in altitude.

Hot Pack

Heat fruit in either hot water or syrup. (For lightly sweetened syrup, dissolve 1½ cups sugar in 5¾ cups water.) Pack hot fruit into jars and cover with boiling water or syrup, leaving ½ inch headspace. **Add 1 Tablespoon bottled lemon juice per pint jar (2 Tablespoons per quart).** Remove air bubbles with a plastic spatula or blunt knife. Wipe jar rims and adjust canning lids. Process pints for 20 minutes in a boiling water canner; quarts for 25 minutes.

Raw Pack

Pack raw fruit into jars. **Add 1 Tablespoon bottled lemon juice per pint jar (2 Tablespoons per quart)**. Cover with boiling water or syrup as above, leaving ½ inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims and adjust lids. Process pints for 25 minutes in a boiling water canner; quarts for 30 minutes.

Drying

Wash and remove outer skin. Core and cut into ½ inch thick slices. Dry until leathery and pliable with no moisture pockets.

Eat as a snack or use in recipes for dried pears.

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Source: Family Food Education Program