



*ajvar*

# *about ajvar*

Ajvar is a spread made primarily from horn peppers and aubergines. Garlic, chili peppers, salt, and black pepper are added in smaller quantities. Ajvar is made when horn peppers and aubergines are abundant, and it's part of preparing the winter stores, along with pickling and fruit preserving.

Ajvar is made in the following, time-consuming steps (it's a lot of horn pepper):

1. Cleaning the horn peppers and the aubergines;
2. Cooking the vegetables in sour water;
3. Turning the vegetables into a mush;
4. Cooking the mush;
5. Pasteurizing the jars.

Language note: Although I say cook here, the verb actually used is also used when frying potatoes, baking bread, and roasting vegetables, but none of them exactly fit here, so cooking it is.

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The photos featured in this zine were taken in the autumn of 2023. I remembered to take the photos only partway through the process, but it's more than I remembered this year.



I forgot to take photos of me full of pepper seeds, and mum did the cooking in sour water, so here are the cooked horn peppers and aubergines.



Ignore the dirty chest freezer. The ratio of pepper and aubergine in the bowl is important because too much aubergine gums it up.





The bowl of the food processor broke, so I had to switch to the immersion blender. Later on, we found huge pieces of horn pepper that I missed.



The veggies have all been processed and put into this huge pot. At this size, it takes half an hour to heat it up and then it needs to simmer for hours.



This is what ajvar looks like after three hours. It's mum's turn to stir. Earlier, she had fallen victim to ajvar splatter, hence the ice pack. Next, jars!

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