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Recipe number seventy-one

A recipe originally from Morocco that is prepared in various Mediterranean countries.

Limoni in salamoia

Preserved salted lemons

The hardest part is really finding a large jar that closes well and has room for more than one lemon !

For 6 lemons

Sterilise the jar and the lid, that is, boil them in water and stand them on a clean kitchen towel.

1 Liter water
and

500 g sugar
bring to the boil together until the sugar has dissolved. Leave to cool.

110 g salt

110 g sugar
mix in a small bowl.

6 organic lemons wash and dry well.
Stand the lemons upright and cut into them crosswise from the top. They should be almost quartered lengthwise but still joined at the base. Carefully press the quarters apart a little, fill in a generous pinch of the salt and sugar mixture and press the lemon quarters together again. Pack the filled lemons upright and as tightly as possible into the jar; there may even be two layers one above the other. Sprinkle the rest of the salt and sugar mixture over the lemons.

Pour the cooled sugar water over them until the jar is full to the brim. If you have something to hand to weigh the lemons down so that they do not rise but stay obediently in the liquid, so much the better. Close the jar tightly and leave it to mature in a dark, cool place for about 2 months.

This recipe comes from Alain Ducasse's book «Nature II» and made me curious, because it also contains sugar. Some years ago I had already preserved lemons, but only with salt. I did not like those and they mouldered away in the fridge, which apparently happens to many western European cooks ...

So we tried again with the recipe above. It delighted us in every way.

And we developed a lovely rabbit recipe with it (inspired by a Ducasse recipe for lamb tajine in the same book). You will find plenty of information and other recipe ideas at www.salzzitronen.com !

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TIP

Preserve the lemons in the first months of the year. That is the high season for fresh lemons, and it also means you have them to hand for summery dishes ! Always use both parts : flesh and peel, possibly not for the same dish.