



## The Better Butter



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The scent of spring fills every corner of my kitchen. Fragrant edible flowers and pungent herbs dry on screens and await their places of honor in fresh, homemade butter.

Although I love the image of sitting in the kitchen with a vintage wooden churn, the reality is with a food processor or mixer anyone can make flavored butters in just a few minutes. The results are beautiful and nothing store bought can compare with the fresh and complex tastes of a flavored butter made at home.

First get your flowers and herbs ready. Preserve edible flowers and herbs by picking them at their prime early in the morning after dew has dried. Rinse, pat dry, and spread in a single layer on screens, cookie sheet, or dehydrator, dry until brittle. Store dried flowers and herbs in a tin or lidded jar in a cool, dark cupboard until use.

Here is a recipe for making butter modified from Richard Helweg's *The Complete Guide to Making Cheese, Butter, and Yogurt at Home*:

- 1 pint (not ultra-pasteurized) cream
- flaky sea salt, to taste
- 4 cups of ice water for washing the butter

Pour the cool (60 degrees) cream into your food processor or mixer. Turn the mixer or processor to low. Slowly increase the speed till peaks form. The consistency will change. Continue churning until the solids and liquids separate and form a clump if using a mixer. If using a food processor, the butter will look like grains of rice. Let sit for about 5 minutes and pour through a strainer. Then pour the strained liquid through a double layer of cheese cloth to catch the butter. If using a mixer, pour off liquid

(buttermilk), push against solids with a spoon till liquid is removed. Save the liquid (buttermilk) by storing in the refrigerator and use for baking.

Place butter in a bowl and pour 1/2 cup of ice water over it. Press the butter with your fist until water clouds. Rinse. Discard water. Repeat until water is clear. Knead in edible flowers or herbs. Add salt if desired. Form patties, wrap with plastic and parchment paper labeled with date and ingredients. Refrigerate for two weeks or freeze for three months.

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