

Jam embodies *resilience* - and *dogged* optimism

Even in this strangest of summers, June marks the beginning of the jam calendar. As the first fruits come into season — pallid green strawberries turning ruby red, gooseberries swelling, apricots donning their downy fuzz — sweet-toothed *hoarders* set to work.

resilience 恢复力; 韧性

dogged 顽强的

hoarder 囤积者

slather 厚厚的涂; 大量使用

Bread-making may be the culinary craze of the lockdown, but it helps to have something to *slather* on top.

You do not, as you might fear, need a thermometer, beautiful gingham-topped jars or a preserving pan to make good jam. You need only time and a watchful eye.

Warm the mixture of sugar and fruit on a low heat until the sugar is dissolved, then bring it to a rolling boil. Drop a dollop onto a chilled dish, leave it for about a minute and push a finger through. If it crinkles, the jam is ready to be decanted into jars.

It will be messy — transferring molten liquid from a bubbling cauldron into a jar takes *deftness* and patience. When you succeed, and wipe your brow in relief, you will leave a warm sticky smear across your forehead.

deftness 熟练; 灵巧

All this requires resilience; but then, that is what the stuff itself embodies. Jam is also a form of reassurance — those dusty jars kept at the back of a cupboard, just in case, are a silent comfort. Above all, it is an expression of dogged optimism, since preserves reflect a *tacit* intention to hang around long enough to *reap* the benefits. As Joanne Harris, a novelist, has put it, jam betokens "seasons that turn in the same place, in the same way, year after year, with sweet familiarity"

tacit 不言而喻的; 默许的

reap 收获; 收割