Recipes

The Native Hibiscus (Hibiscus heterophyllus) occurs along the eastern coast of Australia in New South Wales and Queensland. The petals can be used to make jam, drink and syrup. The flavour of the flowers and buds is very mild. Flowers only last for one day but if they are to be used at night, they can be picked as they begin to unfurl in the morning, then stored in the refrigerator crisper. Removed in the late afternoon, they will open and stay fresh until well into the evening. The flowers make a colourful edible ornament for a salad. Buds can be pickled or boiled as a vegetable; flowers can be stuffed made into fritters or tea. If there are not enough blooms to make jam, syrup or drink, buds can be picked over 2-3 days and stored in the fridge until required.

Hibiscus Syrup
1 cup of boiling water
1 cup of sugar
Microwave* petals and lemon juice on high for 2 minutes. Place the water and sugar into a heavy-based saucepan and heat until sugar has dissolved. Add petals and lemon juice. Bring mix to the boil. Lower heat and simmer gently until the volume is reduced by a third (about an hour). Remove from heat and strain through a fine sieve to remove petals. Pour into a sterilised jar – will keep for 12 months if refrigerated.

Hibiscus Drink
1/2 cup of boiling water
1/2 cup of sugar
Microwave* petals and lemon juice on high for 2 minutes. Dissolve sugar in boiling water. Add petals and lemon juice. Place in a 2 litre bottle and fill with cold water. Stir before drinking.

Native Hibiscus Jam
1/2 cup of boiling water
2 cups of sugar
Microwave* petals and lemon juice on high for 4 minutes. Add boiling water and sugar and stir well. Cook 2 minutes then stir. Cook another 2 minutes, stir and then cook 2 minutes more and stir. Let cool for one hour. When cool, cook for 2 minutes then stir. Test whether jam gels by placing a small amount on a cold plate. If needed, continue cooking but no more than 2 minutes at a time. Pour into a sterilised jar.

This recipe produces a rich red spread with the consistency of honey. It has a distinctive flavour and is delicious on toast or scones. Can be used as a glaze or diluted with white vinegar for sauces or marinades.

All Recipes

Petals only from 10 large or 12 smaller hibiscus flowers:
1/4 cup of lemon juice
Detach petals from calyx and discard calyx. Chop petals finely and place in a very deep pyrex bowl. Cover petals with lemon juice.

*Times based on 600 watts on high. Adjust times as needed.