Citrus sales up in marmalade season

Waitrose reports significant boost for Seville oranges, as it seeks to guide its customers on how to make the preserve

Sales of Seville oranges are up 24 per cent year on year at Waitrose, as the annual marmalade-making season gains full momentum.

In addition to strong sales of the citrus fruit, the Waitrose Cookery School’s ‘Jams, Marmalade and Chutney’ course in February has sold out.

Seville oranges, which are too bitter to eat raw, are the perfect fruit to make marmalade.

They are in season from December to February, when they are at their most flavoursome. Seville oranges have a particularly high pectin content which helps the marmalade to set, so even amateur preserve makers can enjoy making Paddington Bear’s favourite spread.

Tim Stevens, Waitrose citrus buyer, said: "Making marmalade is the new knitting – a comforting and relaxing hobby for people to enjoy in the winter months. I think Seville oranges make the best marmalade, with a pungent aroma and bitterness you don't get with normal oranges. Marmalade is so easy to make, and shoppers are harnessing the intensity of the Seville orange now, while they're at their best.'

Waitrose Seville oranges are organically grown on the family-run Ave Maria farm four miles outside Seville. This year, Waitrose is encouraging shoppers to make marmalade by including a marmalade recipe on the box of pre-packed Seville oranges.