

"Juice and Strain™" process - clear apple juice making made simple

Apple juicing time will be coming round for another year. If you work on a relatively small scale, have you ever wished that this task could be carried out in the comfort of your kitchen? Have you had enough of the cold and wet? A novel development now makes this possible - you can use the Juice and Strain™ (J&S) process. What is this innovation and how did it come about? Our story follows below.

In 2011 we retired neighbours and friends in Scillonian Road, Guildford, Surrey found ourselves with an abundance of surplus garden apples, approximately 500kg. That was after making apple jelly, apple sauce, apple pies, tarts and turnovers and giving away apples to family and friends. To use our surplus fruit productively, I suggested to Nick, across the road from us, that we could perhaps try making cider. Neither of us had done this before. But what did we have to lose?

We did not want to spend serious money on our project. Neither did we want the hard graft of manually crushing apples. My daughter offered us her little domestic juicer, which would accept seedless apple slices and off we went. Three hours later three of us had generated just three demi johns full of juice and a horrible mess in the kitchen. Worse, we'd managed to take only a small bite out of our bumper crop of apples. By chance, Nick was in a charity shop a few days later and spotted a 450W centrifugal whole fruit juicer on the shelf - a Breville JE2. To our delight we discovered that our productivity was transformed with a tenfold increase in efficiency. Once again though the kitchen ended up sticky and messy from apple juice spillages, as my wife didn't hesitate to point out! Nonetheless, we persevered and in that first cider making season we produced, after straining, 300 litres of clear apple juice, most of which we fermented out to golden crystal clear cider. This was enjoyed, after six months' storage, by the makers, family and friends.

However, it was not an entirely happy outcome. Following a full and frank exchange of views with my wife, I realised that the juice and **then** strain method of obtaining clear apple juice was in need of innovative improvements to eliminate mess. The alternative would be a ban from using the kitchen.

The "Juice and Strain™" process is born

In the winter that followed I bought online (eBay) a range of second hand centrifugal juicers in the Breville JE series. These ranged in power up to 1200W, the latter being a particularly robust semi-commercial machine designed for juice-bar use - a Breville JE4. Remarkably, they all gave a 65% yield by weight of juice on a 5kg of apples scale. The main difference between these machines was the fruit processing rate. The higher the power rating, the faster it appeared that you could work. For example, the 1200W juicer completed the task in just under two minutes.