



This is a repeat article, but 'Tis the Season and it is worth repeating.

There are a couple of citrus products I enjoy making every year. I love marmalades of various kinds. My favorite way to preserve citrus, though, is to make candied citrus peel. This is a delectable treat to enjoy "as is". Just pop them in your mouth and enjoy the flavor burst. Other uses for this versatile product is to use them in pastries: oatmeal cookies, in cakes, on cakes as a decoration. Combine chopped citrus peel into custards. Add some into your apple or pear mincemeat before you can it, too.



CANDIED CITRUS PEEL

Refreshing, addictive, and absolutely satisfying at the end of a meal. Candied citrus peel keeps so well that it's a good idea to double the recipe.

2 grapefruit or 3 oranges or 6 lemons

2 cups sugar

3 tablespoons light corn syrup

water

Peel the fruit in large strips, using only the zest and white peel. If the white is very thick, trim it down a little. Put the peel in a pan, cover with cold water and simmer for 30 minutes. Drain, cover with cold water again, and simmer until tender. Drain and cut the peel into small strips, about 3/8" inch wide and 2 inches long. Mix one cup of the sugar with the corn syrup and 1/4 cup water in a heavy saucepan; add fruit peel and stir over low heat until most of the syrup has been absorbed. Cover and let stand overnight. Reheat and bring to a simmer again, then cool a little and drain. In a baking dish, spread several thicknesses of paper towels with the remaining cup of sugar and roll the peel in it, turning so that all the pieces are coated. Let them stand until they are dry enough to handle. Stored airtight, they will stay fresh for several months. If they become too dry put a lemon in the container for a day or two and the peel will soften. Yield: Approximately 2 cups.

***What I do:

I cut the peel in ~3/8" strips. 1/4" is too thin and it tends to break. 1/2" is too wide

I line my dehydrating trays with parchment paper and put in a layer of sugar about 1/8" deep. I lay the peel in the sugar and turn it to thoroughly coating each piece of peel. I use chopsticks, but you may find another method that works well for you. Fill each tray placing the peel so they do not touch.



Dehydrate like any other fruit. About 3 to 3 ½ hrs. Rotate trays every hour or so to insure they dry evenly. The product should be dry but pliable. Not crispy.



Conditioning: loosely pack dried citrus peel in quart jars, ¾ full, and close with a lid. Shake the jar daily for about a week to release any residual moisture. If moisture, or condensation, appears on the inside of the jar then return the product to the dehydrator. Dry for another hour or so, then repeat the conditioning process. If your citrus peel is not dried correctly it may mold over time.

Store in an air tight container. If dehydrated properly it will keep for a year. If not, it will mold.

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