

CANDIED BUDDHA'S HAND

Make as much as you have citrus.

By Dennis W. Viau; modified from Internet recipes.

One of the citrus trees given to me is a Buddha's Hand. The fruit is inedible raw, but it can be candied for a sweet treat. You can also candy citrus peel. I've candied orange peel and it is delicious.

Ingredients:

3 cups (600g) sugar, divided

2 cups (475ml) water (more for boiling)

Directions:

Cut or slice your Buddha's Hand citrus, or use pieces of citrus peel (use a vegetable peeler to remove thin strips of the zest).

Heat water to boiling in a large pan. Add the citrus pieces. Return to the boil and simmer until tender. Cooking time will depend on the thickness of the pieces. Drain.

Return the citrus to the pan. Add the 2½ cups (500g) sugar and the 2 cups (475ml) water. Bring to a boil, stirring gently to dissolve the sugar. Reduce heat to medium and cook, monitoring the temperature, until the syrup reaches a temperature of 230°F (110°C). Remove from the heat and let cool. Drain, reserving the syrup for other uses (such as in lemonade or in tea).

Arrange the cooked citrus pieces on a wire rack (with a piece of waxed paper or parchment paper beneath to catch drips). Allow to dry until tacky, several hours or up to 24 hours, depending on the humidity in your kitchen.

Transfer the pieces, a few at a time, to a bag with the remaining ½ cup (100g) of sugar. Shake to coat the citrus with sugar and return to the wire rack. Allow to dry to the texture (chewy or brittle) as you prefer.

If dried well, they'll keep a long time (weeks) well sealed in a jar.



STEP-BY-STEP

1



Buddha's Hand is a strange-looking citrus fruit. Although inedible raw, it can be candied for a delicious treat.

2



The fruit has no juice inside like other citrus. The white flesh is not strongly bitter like the white pith beneath the zest of an orange or lemon.

3



Slice or chop the fruit. I found that thin slices broke up easily. I'll use thicker slices next time and cook them for a shorter period.

4



Cook in simmering water until tender, drain, and return to the pot. Add the 2 cups water and 2½ sugar. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, and cook gently until the syrup reaches 230°F (110°C). This could take a while.

5



Let the syrup cool. Arrange the pieces on a wire rack and let dry until tacky. This could take 12 hours or a lot longer.

6



Finally, place the pieces, a few at a time, in a plastic bag with the remaining sugar and toss to coat the citrus well. Then arrange on a wire rack to dry longer, until as chewy and hard as you prefer.

For fun, I tried coating several pieces with colorful non pareils. I didn't like them.

Conclusion

Although few people will probably have access to this kind of citrus, this recipe can be use to candy any citrus peel. I like to nibble candied orange peel after eating something spicy or to help get an aftertaste out of my mouth. The citrus is refreshing. You could arrange some of these pieces on a platter of holiday cookies. If dried well, I find they keep a long time in a jar.