

How To Make Candied Fruit For Cake Decorating

I remember my mother making fruit cake, she would use candied cherries that she would buy them in little air tight containers. They came in two colors, red and green, but they did not have the best taste. The candied fruit available now is much more beautiful and tastier than it was then. Trust me it isn't just for fruitcakes anymore.

Making your own candied fruit to use as a garnish for dishes, in cookies, as a snack, and in cake decorating. Making candied fruit is a simple process. You infuse fruits and citrus peelings in a sugar syrup. You can candy orange wedges, orange peel, lemon peel, grapefruit peel, pineapple and fresh cherries. You can also candy fruits, such as carrots for carrot cake decorating.

You will need two sauce pans, one for making the syrup, and another to blanch the fruit. This is a recipe for Candied orange peel.

Simple Syrup

This syrup is used for making candied fruits, adding flavor to cold drinks, and adding moisture to sponge cake. There are different strengths of simple syrup for different uses. Thin simple syrup, made with 1 part sugar to 2 parts water, is used to brush on cake layers, mostly sponge cake, to provide extra moisture and sweetness. Medium simple syrup is made with equal parts of sugar and water. This is excellent for adding sweetness to mixed drinks, coffee, iced tea and to candy fruit. A syrup made of 2 parts sugar and 1 part water is used as a base for sorbet, and making rock candy.

Combine equal parts of sugar and water in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil and let the sugar dissolve. You do not need to stir the syrup, but if you do it will do no harm. You can flavor the syrup. Take the syrup off the heat and cool slightly. Stir in 1 or 2 tsp. Of vanilla for a basic vanilla syrup. This syrup can be kept in a lidded jar in the refrigerator for up to a month.

Remove the bottom and top of an orange. Set the flat end of the orange on a cutting board. With a sharp paring knife, slice the peel off in strips, starting at the top and slicing downward, following the curve as much as possible. Don't worry about cutting off the white pith of the peel. Although it is usually bitter, blanching it will make it translucent and the syrup will sweeten it.

You can candy the peel as it is, or cut into strips that are 1/4 inch wide, to use in cake decorating and garnishes. You can also dip it in chocolate and use it for a snack. Larger peels, like grapefruit should be cut into strips for even

cooking.

Place the peel in a pot of cool water. Bring water to a rolling boil, remove from heat and transfer the peel into a colander to drain. Repeat the process twice more. For grapefruit or a more tart flavored fruit, you will need to blanch them seven or eight times. Cherry and pineapple do not need blanching and can be placed directly into the syrup. Between blanching taste the peel, if it is tender it has been blanched enough. Place the peel into the pot of syrup and bring to a low simmer. Let simmer for 15 to 30 minutes or until the orange rind becomes translucent and the peel tastes sweet and tender

Remove the pot from heat and let it cool. The orange rind can be stored in it's own syrup for weeks in the refrigerator. You may choose to drain them and roll them in sugar. Sugared rinds tend to dry out quite fast and should be eaten within a couple of days. You can dry the peel and dip it in tempered chocolate to make it last a bit longer.

You can use the orange flavored syrup in other drinks or dishes. Nothing really goes to waste!