

mama eats

candied orange peels

notes: be sure to use unwaxed/organic citrus here, as of course you'll be eating the skin. Fresher is better as the oils in the peels are stronger and therefore more flavorful. You can use the same method for lemons and grapefruit peels as well, but you'll need to blanch them three times instead of twice, as their peels are much more bitter than oranges. You can use as many or as little oranges as you like, but keep in mind you will be limited by how big your wire rack is as they need the space to dry. If you don't have enough oranges at one time, you save peels in the freezer, adding to it each time you eat an orange, until you have enough.

8 medium to large oranges

4 cups // 800g sugar

2 cups // 475 ml water

extra granulated sugar, for tossing the peels in when finished

Wash oranges well. Slice off a slight disc from the top and bottom of the orange, then score the peel all the way around in 5 or 6 strips. Peel it off and place in a pot. Cover the peels with water and bring the pot just to the boil. Drain through a colander and place peels back into the pot. Cover with fresh water and repeat: bring the pot to a boil again, then drain, letting the peels rest in the colander until cool enough to handle, setting aside the empty pot (no need to wash) for later. Using a sharp paring knife, lay each peel on the cutting board and trim away some of the excess white pith and discard it. This is up to preference and if your peels are thin, you don't have to do this step. Mine had quite a lot of pith and so I trim about half the thickness of the white part away. At this point you can also cut the strips smaller, if desired.

In the empty pot, add in the sugar and water. Bring to a boil and let cook a few minutes until sugar is dissolved. Add in the orange peels and simmer, stirring occasionally, until peels are translucent, about 45 minutes to an hour depending on how thick your peels are. Remove from the heat and let sit on the counter, overnight, in the syrup.

The next morning, remove each peel from the syrup, swiping between thumb and forefinger to remove excess syrup. Lay each piece on a wire rack and let sit 1-4 days until no longer wet, but still a bit tacky to the touch. Taste one and see what the texture is like- I prefer mine more dry/hard, so I left mine 4 days. The length of time will also depend on humidity/temperature. Toss each piece in a bowl of granulated sugar to coat it well. Using your thumb and forefinger, remove any excess sugar, then place into a sealable container for the freezer. You can also keep them in a jar at room temperature in your cupboard, but once I had a whole batch go moldy, perhaps they weren't dry enough or the jar was contaminated- but I never wanted to lose all that work again, hence the freezer. They will keep well for years there.