

Handmade
holidays

Taste of sunshine

These homemade citrus gifts capture the West in every bold, bright bite.

RECIPES BY ELIZABETH COLLING | PHOTOGRAPHS BY YUNHEE KIM

FRUIT JELLIES

As joyful as the candies from childhood, this version explodes with fresh-from-the-tree flavor.

FOOD STYLING: ROBYN VALARIK; PACKAGING: KELLI RONCE

FROM YOUR KITCHEN



ORANGE BITTERS

It's the holiday season, in a bottle: This sweet, spicy cocktail ingredient of the moment is as fun to make as it is to drink.



LEMON AND LIME SALT

Two ingredients—and about 15 minutes of your time—are all you need to make this zesty gift for your favorite cooks.

CANDIED CITRUS PEELS

Recipients can use these peels in all kinds of ways—in baked goods, on cheese plates—but odds are, they'll eat them straight from the box.



INFUSED VODKA, GIN, AND TEQUILA

It's almost too easy, given how good it tastes: Add zest to alcohol. Wait a week. Give. >78



DOWNLOAD GIFT LABELS TO PRINT AT HOME:
sunset.com/citruslabels

FROM YOUR KITCHEN

Fruit jellies

ABOUT 64 CANDIES
30 MINUTES, PLUS 1½ HOURS
TO COOL

To ensure that the colors are bright, we've used store-bought, pasteurized juice instead of fresh-squeezed in some cases. Note that the lime jellies turn pale orange as they cook.

Cooking-oil spray

1½ cups citrus juice (pasteurized orange or pink grapefruit; or fresh blood orange, lime, or lemon), strained

3 cups granulated sugar

6 oz. liquid pectin, such as Certo (you'll need two 3-oz. packs)

2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

Coarse sugar (such as Hain Organic); or use granulated

1. Line an 8-in. square baking pan with microwave-safe plastic wrap, pressing it up sides and leaving a 1-in. overhang. Spray plastic wrap with cooking spray.

2. Pour citrus juice and granulated sugar into a 6-qt. pot and stir to combine. Clip a candy thermometer to inside of pan.

3. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly and slowly, until mixture registers 238° (just before the soft-ball stage, when it will harden), about 20 minutes. Add pectin and cook 1 minute more, stirring constantly.

4. Remove from heat, stir in lemon juice, and immediately pour into prepared pan. Let set until cool and firm, about 1½ hours.

5. Lift from pan using plastic wrap and cut into 1-in. squares, circles, ¾- by 1¼-in. rectangles, or ¾- by 2-in. half-moons. Dip in coarse sugar. Store in an airtight container up to 1 week, dipping again right before wrapping if necessary (particularly with the more acidic flavors like lime, lemon, and grapefruit, which tend to get a little weepy).

Box it: Crystal clear boxes, from \$6.25/25; clearbags.com

PER CANDY 39 CAL., 0% (0.1 CAL.) FROM FAT; 0 G PROTEIN; 0 G FAT; 10 G CARBO (0.1 G FIBER); 0.2 MG SODIUM; 0 MG CHOL.

Citrus salt

MAKES 1¼ CUPS | 15 MINUTES,
PLUS 8 HOURS TO DRY

Whether you use lemon, lime, or even blood orange, this finishing salt is delicious on cooked fish or salads with a drizzle of olive oil.

1 cup flake salt, such as Maldon, or coarse salt

3 tbsp. citrus zest (any kind)

Mix salt and zest in a bowl; work zest into salt with your fingers to release oils and flavor. Spread on a baking tray. Air-dry until dried completely, 8 hours to overnight. Note: Zest's color will fade over time, but this won't affect taste.

Make ahead: 2 months, kept airtight at room temperature.

Bottle it: 4-oz. jam glass jar, \$0.57; specialtybottle.com; BambooImportsMN 3.5-in. oval bamboo spice/salt spoons, \$9.88/10; amazon.com

PER ¼ TSP. 0 CAL., 0% FROM FAT; 0 G PROTEIN; 0 G FAT; 0 G CARBO; 384 MG SODIUM; 0 MG CHOL. >80



CITRUS COUNTRY

The West's legendary bounty extends way beyond navel oranges (though they're pretty amazing here too). These are our favorite varieties to use in these recipes.

- 1 | **MEYER LEMON** Thin-skinned, fragrant, and sweeter than a regular lemon. **Great for:** fruit jellies, citrus salt, infused vodka.
- 2 | **AUSTRALIAN FINGER LIME** This fruit has clear caviar-like beads inside and an extra-zingy flavor. **Great for:** adding to cocktails made with infused tequila.
- 3 | **YUZU** This Chinese citrus—sour mandarin hybrid tastes like a wild version of Meyer lemon, with a hint of lime and pine. **Great for:** citrus salt, infused vodka.
- 4 | **VARIEGATED KUMQUAT** Display the green- and yellow-striped fruit in a bowl! (stripes fade as it ripens) before putting its tart yellow juice to use. **Great for:** fruit jellies.

- 5 | **KAFFIR LIME** The extremely aromatic, almost resinous zest and juice add an exotic note to butter cookies and simple icings. Just use a light hand. **Great for:** citrus salt.
- 6 | **EUREKA LEMON** Don't overlook the grocery store lemon for big flavor. **Great for:** fruit jellies, citrus salt, infused vodka, candied peel.
- 7 | **MANDARIN** Bright-flavored mandarins are often sold by variety name (this one is Ellendale). **Great for:** citrus salt, bitters, infused gin.
- 8 | **NAVEL ORANGE** Winter's classic citrus (this one is Cara Cara). **Great for:** citrus salt, bitters, candied peel.
- 9 | **BLOOD ORANGE** Burgundy juice with a cherry-raspberry flavor. **Great for:** fruit jellies. —ELAINE JOHNSON