

Chocolate Dipped Candied Orange Peel

4 large oranges, well scrubbed
boiling water
2 cups sugar
1 cup water
additional sugar for tossing
1 cup semi sweet or dark chocolate chips/disks
1 tablespoon oil (canola is good)

Directions:

Take the oranges and cut off their "heads" and "tails" and cut with a sharp knife thin slices all around the oranges vertically to help peel them (see pics above). Peel them leaving some white pith on the peel. (The oranges can be eaten up or juiced). Then cut peels into 1/4 inch strips. Place in a pot with water and boil for 15 minutes. Drain the peels and discard the liquid, cover peels with boiling water and boil again for about 10 minutes. Again, drain in colander and discard the liquid (it's super bitter so no point saving it). Measure into your pot the sugar and a fresh cup of water and bring to boil. Add the peels and cook till the liquid is syrup and the peels start to look coated. This can take about 20-30 minutes or so, the liquid should reduce to about half or more.

Prepare a bowl with granulated (regular) sugar and using a slotted spoon, lift out the peels (let excess liquid drip back into pot) and plunk into the sugar. Toss, toss, toss immediately till peels get coated with sugar and "encrusted" looking. Lay to dry on parchment paper lined baking sheets. If you at this point want only candied peels, leave to dry for a day or two till firm. If you wish to coat them with the chocolate, let dry for one hour.

Put chocolate and oil in a bowl and microwave at 30 second intervals, stirring each time till melted (usually takes me 1 1/2 minutes all told). When melted, but not hot, take a few peels at a time and dunk into chocolate using a fork to fish them out and letting excess chocolate drip back into bowl. Lay to dry on parchment lined baking sheet and you can speed up the drying process by placing in the fridge for 30 minutes. Bam you're done. Try not to eat them all on your own!

A note, don't ignore the chocolate, do it right away since after about 5 minutes, it'll start to harden and you'll have to melt more and it's annoying.

Another note, don't discard the orange syrupy liquid left over from the peels. They make a fabulous addition to tea, water, soda water or in place of liquid in a cake batter.