



Preserve It Fresh, Preserve It Safe

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Candied fruit for the holidays

Candied or crystallized fruit—including citrus peels—makes a wonderfully colorful, sweet treat for the holiday season. Enjoy the candied fruit on its own, or mix it into your favorite baked goods.

Candied fruit is different from dehydrated fruit. When dehydrating fruit, it may be blanched in syrup as a pre-drying treatment step to help it retain its color. Refer to the National Center for Home Food Preservation for [drying tips](https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/dry/). (nchfp.uga.edu/how/dry)

How to Make Candied Fruit

1. Prepare your fruit: Rinse the fruit under cool running water. Cut it into bite-sized $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch slices or cubes.
2. Blanch citrus peels: Place them in a pot of cool water, bring to a boil, and drain right away. Repeat two to three times for sweet-skinned citrus like oranges or Meyer lemons (or up to eight times for grapefruit) until they are tooth-tender. Other fruits do not need to be blanched.
3. Prepare the simple syrup: Mix equal parts water and sugar, gently heating until the sugar fully dissolves. Bring the syrup to a low simmer (not boiling).

4. Candy the fruit: Add your prepared fruit, small berries, or peels to the syrup and simmer for 15 to 30 minutes.
5. Cool. Gently remove the fruit with a slotted spoon and let it rest on a wire drying rack.
6. Add some sparkle: For an extra-festive touch, roll the fruit pieces in coarse sugar once they are almost dry.
7. Let dry completely: Allow the pieces to dry fully before storing or gifting.

Storage Tips

Because candied fruit retains a bit of moisture, store it in an airtight container in the refrigerator to prevent mold, and use it within a week. Try using a food dehydrator after candying to dry the fruit out completely, and then store in a cool, dark place.

Don't Waste That Syrup!

Store it in a jar in the fridge to sweeten hot teas, mix into festive cocktails, or drizzle over pancakes and cake layers for extra flavor.

Source: Candied fruit process adapted from [AllRecipes](https://allrecipes.com/article/how-to-candy-fruits/) (allrecipes.com/article/how-to-candy-fruits).



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North Central Food Safety Extension Network



Make your family and friends smile with food gifts

What gift can you give to someone who seems to have everything? How about a gift of food? Here are a few ideas.

- Prepare homemade cranberry jam with crackers. The National Center for Home Food Preservation has a [Cranberry Marmalade](http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/make-jam-jelly/marmalades/cranberry-marmalade) (nchfp.uga.edu/how/make-jam-jelly/marmalades/cranberry-marmalade) and a [Cranberry Conserve](http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/make-jam-jelly/conserves/cranberry- conserve) (nchfp.uga.edu/how/make-jam-jelly/conserves/cranberry- conserve) recipe.
- Make mixes in a jar such as friendship soup, cornbread, cranberry-oatmeal cookies or hot cocoa in a Mason jar with fabric, ribbon and a recipe card attached. North Dakota State University Extension has several collections of [quick mixes](http://ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/extension-topics/food-and-nutrition/food-preparation/cooking-basics/quick-mixes) (ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/extension-topics/food-and-nutrition/food-preparation/cooking-basics/quick-mixes) to try.



- Fill a large popcorn bowl with packaged movie night snacks and drink mix packets to invite a cozy time at home with family and friends.
- Prepare homemade baked goods such as muffins, scones or cookies inside a reusable tin.
- Create a warm beverage basket including festive mugs with assorted tea bags and coffee selections.
- Making a homemade charcuterie board delivered to a holiday party is sure to bring smiles to guests. See [7 Steps to Creating a Charcuterie Board](http://ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/publications/pinchin-pennie-kitchen-7-steps-creating-charcuterie-board) (ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/publications/pinchin-pennie-kitchen-7-steps-creating-charcuterie-board) for details.



Mailing food gifts

If you need to mail gifts, such as the recipient's favorite cookies, go for dense baked goods such as gingersnaps. Otherwise, the cookies can be crumbs by the time of delivery. Depending on how far the gift is shipped, pumpkin bread could become moldy. Dried fruits and nuts travel well. Be sure to mail in a box designed for shipping. Place the address both inside the box and on the outside of the box.