

Candied, Caramelized Mandarinquats

Citrusy and with a face-contorting tartness, mandarinquats are great to eat alone or to pair with ice cream. If you leave them at room temperature, the caramel will harden into candy. If you refrigerate them, the caramel will liquify. Both ways taste unique and delicious. And yes, you can certainly use kumquats instead.

Serves about 4

6-8 mandarinquats or kumquats, sliced, seeded

3/4 cup sugar

1/2 cup water

Vanilla ice cream and shaved dark chocolate for serving, if desired

Place the sliced fruit and any residual juice in a bowl. Place a silpat on a rimmed baking sheet. Set both aside.

In a small saucepan, preferably enameled cast iron and certainly heavy and sturdy, combine the sugar and water. Swirl lightly to combine, then set over medium high heat. Cook, without stirring, for about 15 minutes, or until the mixture turns deep amber and begins to smell like caramel.

(Note that the time it takes for sugar to caramelize varies widely and depends on your stove and your cookware. Just don't walk away or answer the phone or you risk having a burnt mess on your hands. Also be very, very careful as caramel burns are no laughing matter.)

As soon as sugar caramelizes, remove the pot from the heat and carefully add the fruit and juice. Give a quick stir with a heatproof spatula and turn out onto the lined baking sheet. The mixture will immediately begin to harden in spots.

Allow to continue hardening, or scrape into a bowl once cooled and store in the fridge. Serve, if desired, with vanilla ice cream and shaved chocolate, or eat straight up.