

The many ways to preserve (and use) peperoncini

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Candied Peperoncini

- One of oldest forms of preservation - the ancient Egyptians preserved nuts and fruits with honey.
- Like spice, candied fruit like wild oranges, melons and apricots, were brought to Europe by traders from the Middle East and China in the Early Middle Ages.



Candied mandarini and
ananas in Biarritz, France

Selection of candied peperoncini



Candied Peperoncini

- How it works: By placing fruits in syrup with gradually increased sugar content, their cell liquid is getting replaced by sugar. This migration through semi-permeable cell walls is called “osmosis”.
- Typically, 70 to 75 percent of the extracted cell liquid, mostly water, will be replaced by sugar, while shape, color and a good portion of the flavor will be preserved.
- Candied fruit will keep almost indefinitely (if stored cool, dark and dry).

Candying Peppers: Required Equipment

- Medium sized saucepan
- Wooden spoon
- Mason Jar (1 quart/1 liter) or similar glass container with lid
- Small glass bowl that just fits into the opening of the jar, to hold down the peppers in the liquid
- one or two clean marmalade jars, lids
- Heat resistant strainer
- 1/2 liter glass containers (for example marmalade jars) to keep excess syrup
- Cookie cooling rack
- Baking oven or electric dehydrator
- Old newspapers to put under pots and jars

Candying Peppers: Ingredients

- About 1/2 to 3/4 lb. (250 to 340 grams) of super fresh, spotless peperoncini, rinsed and cut in half or strips
- 1,2 kg) regular white sugar
- 1 liter) water



Candying Peppers: Day 1

- **Day #1, Step 1: Prepare the peperoncini**

To ease syrup penetration, it is recommended to cut the peppers in half. You should also deseed them. Cut fleshier varieties like *Jalapeño* are into strips.

- **Step 2: Cooking the Syrup**

In a large pot, combine 1 liter water and 1 kg sugar. Using the wooden spoon, mix well, then bring to a rolling boil. Keep boiling and stirring until the mixture takes on a syrupy consistency, but still stays clear and colorless (takes about 30 minutes).

Candying Peppers: Day 1 cont.

- **Step 3: Put peppers and hot syrup into big glass jar**

Put the cut chiles into the glass container, pour with boiling-hot syrup (caution - don't burn yourself!)

Important: Leave enough room to put a small bowl as a weight on top to keep the peppers down, all covered within the liquid. Close the container, keep remaining syrup in marmalade jar.



Candying Peppers: Day 2

- **Day #2: Drain chiles through a strainer,** letting the syrup flow into your pot. Put peppers back into the glass container.
- **Bring the syrup to a boil and stir in an additional 50 g of sugar.**

Add also the syrup you saved in marmalade jars, keep boiling and stirring with your wooden spoon for about 10 minutes at high heat. Pour the hot syrup over the peperoncini again, put on the weight to keep them all covered in liquid. Also, save the remaining syrup again, let peperoncini sit in their closed container for another 24 hours.



Candying Peppers: Days 3 to 5

- **Day #3 to Day #5:**
Repeat the Day #2 procedure,

including the addition of 50 g (1.75 oz.) more sugar every day. Both the sugar addition and the reduction by cooking will cause the syrup to become thicker and thicker. And it is getting “piu piccante”, too!
- **After Day #5, let sit for 48 hours**
and have a rest on Day #6. 😊



Candying Peppers: Day 7

- **Day #7: Pour syrup and peperoncini into pot and bring to a brief boil**, for just one minute, then take off the heat.
- **Drain peperoncini through strainer**, save the syrup in jars - we have great uses for spicy syrup as well!
- Arrange peperoncini on a cookie cooling grid or a grid from your baking oven. Be sure to put paper underneath, as we want the peperoncini to drip off excess syrup.

Candying Peppers: Day 7 cont.



Candying Peppers: Day 7 cont.

- As the peperoncino pieces will still be quite sticky, we finish them off in the baking oven (100-150°C) or in a dehydrator (disidratatore).

Check every 15 min.



Candying Peppers: Day 7 cont.

- Let the peperoncini cool to room temperature, then store them in an airtight container.

Must be nice and dry (and kept dry) to last long!



Candying Peppers: Usage ideas

- Spice up fruitcake, muffins and other cakes, like our *Bold Banana Bread* (see Web link for recipe)
- Habanero cheese cake with bits in the filling, and matching decoration on top!
- Decorate cakes, ice cream and other desserts
- Create chocolate like de Bondt's wonderful "Habanero Candito"

