

Florida Food Fare

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Grapefruit

Description: Originally called the "Forbidden Fruit", grapefruit is thought to have originated in the West Indies. Grapefruit was introduced into Florida, specifically, the Tampa Bay area in the early 1800's. The first grove was planted in 1823. By 1885 shipments were being sent to New York and Philadelphia and thus began the commercial grapefruit industry. Although this tropical fruit is also grown in Europe, Japan, Arizona, Texas and California, Florida is the world leader in grapefruit production accounting for more than half of all the grapefruits grown in the world. They are widely grown throughout central and south Florida.

Grapefruit, so named because the fruit grows in clusters like grapes, are divided into two basic groups by flesh color; white, which has a yellowish white flesh and pink or red, which can range from pale yellow-pink to brilliant ruby red. They are also divided into seeded and seedless categories. The skins of all varieties are yellow, some with a pink blush. Grapefruits usually range in size from about 3 1/2 to 4 1/2 inches in diameter and are either round or flattened at each end. Common varieties grown in Florida are Duncan, Marsh Seedless, Pink Seedless and Ruby Red Seedless.

Availability: Grapefruit from Arizona and California are in the market from about January to August. Florida and Texas grapefruits usually arrive around October and last through June. Canned and frozen segments and juice are available also.

Nutritional Value: Grapefruit contains no fat, sodium or cholesterol and is low in calories. 1/2 of a small grapefruit, approximately 100 g. has 32 calories, 1.1 g

dietary fiber, 12 mg calcium, 34.4 mg vitamin C, 139 mg potassium and 124 IU vitamin A.

Selection and Care: Grapefruit is picked tree ripe and is ready to eat on purchase. Look for firm, thin skinned, well shaped fruit. The heavier they are for their size, the juicier they will be. They should be firm, yet resilient. Also choose grapefruit that have a shiny skin as opposed to a rough skin. Rough skin indicates a dry fruit. Avoid grapefruit with signs of decay as soft and discolored areas on the peel at the stem end, water soaked areas, loss of bright color and soft peel that breaks with finger pressure. Do not store grapefruit at room temperature for more than a day or two. They keep up to two weeks when wrapped in a plastic bag and placed in the vegetable drawer of the refrigerator.

Preparation and Use: Grapefruit is usually eaten fresh, halved or segmented or in salads. It can also be used to make a refreshing vinaigrette, a delightful stir-fry or broiled for a delicious breakfast treat. Grapefruit is used in pies, cakes, marmalades and jellies. The peel can be candied for a sweet citrus treat.

Recipes:

Candied Citrus Peel

Peel of 2 or 3 medium grapefruit
Water

3 cups sugar
food coloring

Cover peel with cold water. Bring to boil and cook until tender, pouring off water and adding fresh cold water several times. Drain. With spoon, remove white inner portion of peel. With sharp knife or scissors cut peel into thin strips. Make syrup by boiling 2 cups sugar with 1-cup water. Add a little food coloring, a drop or two of yellow coloring with red improves the finished color. Add peel; cook over low heat until peel has a clear, candied appearance. Remove peel, 2 or 3 pieces at a time, allowing excess syrup to drain back into saucepan. Roll strips separately into remaining 1-cup sugar until well coated. Place on rack to cool. Store in tightly covered container in cool dry place. Keeps at least a month.

Golden Glow Marmalade

(blender recipe)

1 grapefruit	2 cups water
1 lemon	1/8 teaspoon salt
1 orange	sugar (to equal fruit)

Peel fruit. Remove most of white portion of peel. Cut remaining peel into pieces. Place fruit peel in blender with 2 cups water and blender chop until fine.

Bring chopped rind to boil and allow to simmer for 20 minutes. Place fruit pulp in blender and puree. Add cooked rind. Mix and allow to stand overnight in order to draw out the pectin. Measure prepared fruit and mix together with equal amounts of sugar. Add salt. Using a pan with a heavy bottom, bring mixture to a boil quickly and boil about 20 minutes (or to 220 degrees F.). Stir to prevent burning. Let cool to 190 degrees F. and stir to redistribute fruit. Pour into clean, hot jars, leaving 1/2" headspace. Wipe jars and adjust lids. Process in boiling water bath for 10 minutes.

Chicken with Ginger, Broccoli and Grapefruit

1 tablespoon canola oil	1/2 cup low sodium chicken broth
1 piece (2x1") fresh ginger pared and cut into match-stick strips	1/4 cup grapefruit juice
1 pound boneless chicken breasts cut crosswise into 1/2" strips	3 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
2 cups broccoli florets	1 teaspoon cornstarch
	1 cup grapefruit sections

In 10-inch skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Cook ginger, stirring occasionally until golden brown, 2-3 minutes. With slotted spoon, remove ginger, set aside. Increase heat to medium high and add chicken. Stir constantly, cooking until no longer pink. Remove and set aside. Add broccoli with 1/4 cup water. Cook until tender crisp. Return chicken to skillet, add broth, grapefruit juice and soy sauce. In small cup, combine cornstarch with 1 tablespoon cold water until cornstarch is dissolved. Add cornstarch mixture to skillet. Cook stirring frequently until mixture boils and thickens slightly. Add grapefruit sections, and ginger and heat through. Serves 4.

Spinach and Grapefruit Salad

2 teaspoons poppy seeds	1/2 teaspoon honey
3 grapefruit	Pepper to taste
6 cloves garlic, peeled	3/4 pound fresh spinach, washed and torn
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar	1/2 small jicama, peeled and cut into matchsticks
2 tablespoons olive oil	
1 tablespoon coarse grain mustard	1/2 red onion, thinly sliced

Heat a small skillet over medium heat. Add poppy seeds and toast, stirring constantly, until aromatic, 1-2 minutes. Set aside. Remove skin and white pith from grapefruit working over a small bowl to catch the juice, also cut the grapefruit segments from their surrounding membranes. Measure 1/3 cup of the

juice and set aside. Put garlic cloves in a small saucepan with a small amount of water. Bring to a simmer and cook about 3 minutes or until tender. Drain. In a blender, combine vinegar, oil mustard, honey, cooked garlic and reserved grapefruit juice. Blend until creamy. Season with pepper. In a salad bowl, combine spinach, jicama, onions and grapefruit sections. Drizzle with the dressing and toss. Sprinkle with poppy seeds. Serves 6.