



Orangettes

I started making chocolate-dipped candied orange peel for dinner parties in the 1980s without realizing they had a connection to Provence. Candied citrus rind isn't a new thing and I'm sure many people have had the idea of taking it to the next level with a chocolate coating. In France, it's associated with Provence and is often one of the 13 sweets traditionally presented on the Christmas Eve table. Chocolatier Guy Perault is widely acclaimed as making the best orangettes in Paris (perhaps in France) in his 8th arrondissement shop Orangette and Co. He candies the orange rind for up to 10 days to concentrate the flavour (my method's much quicker) then gives it a thin coating of dark chocolate from a specialty chocolatier in Avignon, Provence. Grapefruit, lemon or any thick citrus rind can be prepared in the same way.

Makes about 12 pieces

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large thick-skinned orange
- ½ cup castor sugar
- ½ cup water
- 60g dark couverture chocolate



METHOD

1. Cut orange into quarters then cut off the peel, reserving the fruit for another purpose.
2. Place the peel on a chopping board, skin side down, flatten it out and run a sharp knife along it to remove the white pith; do this several times to remove as much as possible.
3. Cut peel into 1–2cm-thick strips.
4. Bring a saucepan of water to the boil.
5. Add orange peel, boil for about 15 seconds then drain.
6. Repeat twice.
7. Combine sugar and the ½ cup water in a small saucepan, stirring over a medium heat until sugar dissolves.
8. Add orange peel, increase heat and bring to the boil.
9. Reduce heat to medium and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally if the peel isn't fully submerged.
10. Remove from heat and transfer peel to a wire rack, separating each strip. Set aside in a cool place overnight.
11. Melt chocolate and dip peel into it, leaving the bit that you hold onto uncoated; I find it easiest to 'paint' the chocolate on using the fork I stirred the melting chocolate with.
12. Refrigerate on a baking paper-lined plate to set then store in the fridge in an airtight container until needed.