

Red Bean Soup with Tangerine Peel

This is a classic Chinese dessert – mildly sweet. Tangerine peel aids digestion and moves qi, so dishes with tangerine peel are typically served after a heavy meal.

5 pieces dried tangerine peel (available at Chinese markets)
½ cup boiled water
½ - ¾ cup sugar
1 cup Chinese red beans
water to cover
4-6 Tbsp. vegetable oil

Soak the tangerine peel in ½ cup boiled water. When it is tender, shred it finely.

Place beans and shredded tangerine peel in a saucepan. Add enough water to cover the beans. Bring to a boil and simmer, covered, until soft. (about 1 hour).

Transfer beans and their cooking liquid to a blender and blend at high speed. Strain through a strainer lined with 2 layers of cheese cloth, and squeeze out as much liquid as possible. Discard the liquid.

Bring sugar and 1/2 cup water to a boil. Cook, stirring constantly, over medium heat until the mixture spins a thin thread when a small amount is dropped from the tip of a spoon (3-4 minutes).

Stir in bean mash and vegetable oil. Be careful - the sugar mixture is likely to splatter when the beans are added. Cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture is thick and pudding-like. Add enough water to make a soup the texture of a rich cream soup (about 1 cup). Taste for sweetness and salt, adding salt and/or sugar to taste. Allow to cool to room temperature, and serve in small bowls.

Makes about 8-10 dessert sized servings.