05/02/13 - Blood Orange Marmalade

The season is almost over for Blood Oranges. I made sure to arrive at the Farmer's Market last week early to buy as many pounds as I could manage of blood oranges

they are all sold out as are other prized things like vibrant purple heads of cauliflower or Shishito peppers. I want to be able to make the Blood Orange chicken recipe I posted all year round and also my family is a big fan of blood orange sorbet. I squeezed a lot of juice with plenty of pulp and froze the fresh juice in 2 cup containers.I enjoy eating marmalade on gluten free crisps or when I indulge in gluten on half burnt English muffins or even fresh scones. I thought that the color of blood orange juice would produce spectacular marmalade. This is basically the same recipe I used for the Tangelo (Minneola) marmalade but since these oranges run small in size I used a lot more oranges.

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To make about 10 (6 ounce) jars of marmalade

8 to 10 medium Blood Oranges

1 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

6 cups water

4 pounds sugar (I use C & H pure cane)

1 square (about 12 inch) of cheesecloth

1 large stainless steel stock pot

1 candy thermometer

Wash and dry oranges. Place oranges on a large cutting board and slice off navel end with a very sharp knife. Slice orange in half lengthwise as for segments. Slice one of the halves across, into very thin slices and then, cut slices in half again. Cut second half of orange in thin slices and mince. Remove any seeds and place in center of cheesecloth. Cut out any large pieces of white pith from core and place in cheesecloth. Repeat with all oranges. See picture for clarification.

After cutting each orange scoop up slices and minced orange and place in stock pot. Gather up any juice that leaked out and place in stock pot as well. Tie cheesecloth into a bag and place seeds and pith in stock pot. Add lemon juice to stock pot, then, water. Turn on heat to medium-high, bring oranges to a boil. Boil for ten minutes, stir, and continue boiling for another 40 minutes on medium-low with the lid on, but slightly ajar for steam to escape.

After 40 minutes are up, add sugar to marmalade and continue to boil. At this stage, continue to cook oranges and sugar until they reach 223° F or threads stage on candy thermometer. This is not a quick process. At first the temperature rises rapidly and then, seems to hover forever around 219°F before creeping up to 223° F. The temperature will not rise until marmalade reaches the right texture or enough water evaporates to gel correctly. Keep an eye on marmalade while you do other things in the kitchen. You may stir very gently with a wood spoon occasionally.

When marmalade reaches correct temperature, remove stock pot from heat and place on counter. Wait a few moments; stir and and skim any scum off the top. Using a wide mouth funnel pour marmalade into prepared jars. Be careful, marmalade is very hot and molten sugar burns. If you want to actually can marmalade you will need to boil jars and sterilize lids, it is a special procedure. Since this is only a small batch, I just close my jars when cool and store in the refrigerator for several months.

Marmalade is fabulous on Challah toast or English Muffins or layered into a torte or the ultimate, with fresh scones.

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