

Tapioca and Bubble Tea

Here is a refreshing dessert made with tapioca.

Orange Tapioca Dessert

- ½ cup granulated tapioca
- 1 quart cold water
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 6 oz. can frozen orange juice

In a saucepan, mix together water, sugar and tapioca. Slowly bring the mixture to the boiling point, stirring often. Remove mixture from the heat and add the salt and orange juice, stirring till well blended. Cool. Before serving, add peaches, mandarin oranges and bananas or fruits of your choice.

Tapioca is a root starch derived from the cassava, or yucca plant. The cassava plant is native to South America and the West Indies and was probably first harvested by the Mayan Indians.

Tapioca is considered a carbohydrate that is low in saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium. It is also gluten free. Tapioca contains vitamin B9, iron and calcium as well as omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids and dietary fiber.

Tapioca starch is commercially processed into several forms. The most common forms are powder, granular, and pearls. Pearls are most often soaked well before cooking to rehydrate them. In all its forms, tapioca is opaque before cooking and translucent when cooked. Powdered tapioca, known as tapioca starch, is most often used as a thickening agent.

Now, for Bubble Tea. What's that?, you ask. Bubble tea is now becoming a trend, especially in Asian populations. It originated in Taiwan in the 1980's at a tea stand. The unique ingredient of bubble tea is pearl tapioca. The drink is usually a mix of black tea, milk, sugar, and giant tapioca pearls. The name "bubble tea" came about when the tapioca pearls were added to the tea and then the tea was shaken (not stirred) to create foam on top, making the tea look like it had bubbles in it.

Here's the recipe for Bubble Tea from www.whatscookingamerica.net.

Ingredients:

1/2 cup chilled, cooked large tapioca pearls
(if substituting smaller tapioca, use 1/3 cup)
1 cup crushed ice
1 cup very strong chilled black tea (or orange pekoe tea or Lichee tea)
1 cup milk (or to taste)
Honey or granulated sugar, to taste

Preparation:

Place the pearls in a large parfait glass. Combine all remaining ingredients in a cocktail shaker and shake vigorously until the mixture is frothy. Pour into the glass, and serve with extra-thick straws. Yields one (16-ounce) drink.

How To Cook Tapioca Pearls:

6 to 8 cups water (the ration is a minimum 7:1 water to tapioca pearls)
1 cup tapioca pearls

Preparation: In a large pot (Make sure the pot is big enough so boiling tapioca water will not spill over) over high heat, add water and bring to a boil.

Slowly stir in the tapioca pearls so that they do not stick together (after 1 minute, the tapioca pearls should float). Reduce heat to medium and let boil, covered, for approximately 15 minutes; turn the heat off and let the tapioca pearls sit, covered, for an additional 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, remove from heat, rinse the tapioca pearls in cold water, and drain.

NOTE: The cooking time above is a general guideline. If you shorten the cooking time, you will get chewier tapioca balls. Cook longer and you will get less elastic tapioca balls.

At Grandma's Pantry, we have a selection of tapiocas including granulated, large pearl, and seed pearl tapioca as well as tapioca starch. We also carry a tapioca pudding mix. Many of our customers request tapioca for their favorite fruit pies as the thickening agent. A delicious bowl of tapioca pudding is also a popular dessert that can be made with the instant pudding or starting from scratch with any of the seed pearl or granulated tapioca. Why not give tapioca a try. Check it out at Grandmas Pantry or at www.GrandmasPantryVa.com.

***"So, whatever you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31)***