

HOMEMADE CITRUS POWDER

A Working Larder Ingredient

I don't teach here. I share.

WHAT CITRUS POWDER IS (AND WHY IT'S USEFUL)

Citrus powder is a way to preserve seasonal citrus flavor in a dry, shelf-stable form that is ready when you need it. This is not a novelty ingredient — it is a practical tool meant to be used regularly in a working kitchen.

Because citrus powder contains no added moisture, it delivers bright citrus flavor without altering texture. This makes it especially useful for baking, freezer cooking, and winter meals when fresh citrus may be expensive or unavailable.

There are two useful ways to make citrus powder:

1. From the peels (skin only)
2. From the whole fruit (sliced)

Both methods belong in a working larder. Which one you choose depends on how you plan to use the finished powder.

CITRUS VARIETIES

You can use:

- Lemons
- Limes

- Oranges (navel, mandarin, etc.)

Note: Blood oranges were planned for this batch, but they were unavailable when ordered. This method works the same when blood oranges are in season.

METHOD 1 — PEEL (SKIN ONLY)

This method produces a clean, concentrated citrus powder. It is especially well suited for baking, sweet doughs, blends, and finishing dishes.

Step 1: Peel the Citrus

- Peel citrus before juicing
- Remove thick white pith where possible (a small amount is fine)
- Lay peels flat in a single layer

SAVING & FREEZING THE JUICE

(Nothing wasted)

When using the peel-only method, you will have fresh citrus juice left behind. That juice is valuable and should be saved.

How to Save the Juice

- Juice the peeled citrus
- Strain out seeds if desired
- Pour juice into silicone ice cube trays (with or without lids)

Freezing

- Freeze until solid
- Transfer frozen cubes to a labeled freezer bag or container

Label with:

- Citrus type
- Date

How to Use Frozen Citrus Juice

- Cooking and baking
- Salad dressings and marinades
- Soups and sauces
- Tea or beverages

Your freezer is an extension of the larder.

Step 2: Freeze the Peels (Optional but Helpful)

- Freeze peels in a single layer
- Freezing breaks down the structure of the peel and helps speed drying

Step 3: Dry the Peels

Dry peels until completely brittle.

If a peel bends, it is not dry.

Dehydrator

- 110–125°F
- Dry until peels snap cleanly

Oven

- Use the lowest temperature setting
- Arrange peels in a single layer on lined trays

Temperature Control Tip:

If your oven runs hot, prop the oven door open slightly to hold the temperature down and prevent browning. Citrus should dry slowly — not cook.

Air Dry

- Suitable only in very dry environments
- Takes longer and requires patience

Step 4: Grind

- Grind dried peels in a spice grinder or high-speed blender
- Sift if desired
- Regrind any coarse pieces

METHOD 2 — WHOLE FRUIT (SLICED)

This method uses the entire fruit — peel, pith, and flesh — and produces a more rounded, complex citrus flavor. It is especially useful for savory cooking and blends.

Step 1: Slice the Fruit

- Slice citrus thinly ($\frac{1}{8}$ – $\frac{1}{4}$ inch)
- Remove seeds
- Leave peel, flesh, and pith intact

Step 2: Freeze

- Lay slices flat in silicone trays or on a lined baking sheet
- Freeze solid

Freezing helps prevent case-hardening and improves drying.

Step 3: Dry Completely

This method takes longer than peel-only drying due to the natural sugars in the fruit.

Dehydrator

- 110–125°F
- Dry until slices are fully brittle

Oven

- Lowest temperature setting
- Single layer on lined trays

Temperature Control Tip:

If the oven runs hot, prop the door open slightly to prevent browning.

Slices should have no soft or tacky centers.

Step 4: Grind

- Break dried slices into pieces
- Grind thoroughly
- Sift and regrind as needed

STORAGE

- Store citrus powder in an airtight jar
- Keep in a cool, dark place
- Avoid moisture

Shelf Life

- Best flavor within 6–12 months

- Still usable beyond that if kept dry

If the powder clumps or smells dull, it's time to refresh your batch.

HOW TO USE CITRUS POWDER

Sweet & Savory Applications

Citrus powder is more concentrated than fresh zest.

General guideline:

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon citrus powder \approx zest of $\frac{1}{2}$ –1 citrus (varies by fruit)

Start small. You can always add more.

Savory Uses

- Soups and stews
- Beans and lentils
- Rice and grains
- Roasted vegetables
- Chicken, fish, and pork
- Eggs (scrambled, omelets, deviled)

Especially useful in winter cooking and freezer meals.

Sweet Uses

- Cakes and quick breads
- Muffins and scones
- Cookies and shortbread
- Sweet doughs
- Icings, glazes, and whipped cream

Citrus powder adds flavor without adding liquid, making it ideal for baking.

LARDER BLENDS

Citrus Sugar

- Mix citrus powder with granulated sugar

Use for:

- Baking
- Rolling cookies
- Finishing muffins or quick breads
- Tea and cocktails
- Simple gifts

Citrus Salt

- Mix citrus powder with fine sea salt

Use for:

- Roasted vegetables
- Eggs
- Chicken and fish
- Salad dressings
- Finishing grilled foods

WHY THIS BELONGS IN A WORKING LARDER

- Preserves seasonal abundance
- Shelf-stable and ready when needed
- No waste
- One ingredient, many uses

This is citrus flavor you can reach for without cutting, zesting, or squeezing.

HWL CLOSING NOTE

This isn't about perfection.

It's about learning to use what you have, when you have it — and building skills over time.

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