

# Let's Cook and Eat the Tastes of the Season!

# 食べよう！ 作ろう！ 旬の味

## — Tangerine Jelly —

Do you know the Japanese heating appliance called a “kotatsu”? It is a heater-equipped table covered with a thick comforter (kotatsu futon) to keep the legs and feet of people sitting at the table warm. It is a seasonal tradition to sit at the kotatsu and enjoy a cozy time together with friends and family, but you need to be careful of this comfortable warmth. That’s because you are certain to feel reluctant to step even a foot out from under the kotatsu futon. To top it off, if a basket full of tangerines is placed on the kotatsu, you will find yourself eating one tangerine after another without any thought whatsoever of doing anything else. Tangerines, called *mikan* in Japanese, are a representative fruit of winter, and there is even a term, “kotatsu mikan,” to express the unique coziness of sitting at the kotatsu.

Mikan is actually a general term for citrus fruits, but it is used more commonly in reference to the Unshu mikan, which is convenient to eat, as it peels easily and has no seeds. In the past, there used to be a carton full of mikan in every home, to be eaten every day during the winter, but these days, the types of fruits eaten in households have diversified, and the production of mikan is said to be declining.

Are any of you spending your winter in Japan with a kotatsu and mikan? If you are, you will probably enjoy a relaxing New Year in a state of “kotatsu mikan.” If you have so many mikan that you become slightly tired of eating them as they are, you might want to use them to make tangerine jelly. Eating cool tangerine jelly in a warm, heated room is also a delight.

### [Ingredients (4 servings)]

Approx. 8 tangerines  
4g powdered gelatin or powdered agar  
50g sugar  
100ml water

### [Preparation]

1. Peel the tangerines. If using the peels later as containers, slice away the top portion and scoop out the fruit.
2. Squeeze the peeled tangerines or blend them in a blender, if available, and strain them to make about 300ml of tangerine juice. If there isn't enough juice, add water or orange juice.
3. Pour water into a pot, add powdered gelatin (or powdered agar) and sugar, mix well, and heat the mixture. When the gelatin and sugar dissolve, mix in the tangerine juice and turn off the heat.
4. When the above juice mixture cools slightly, portion it out into small cups or into peels prepared as containers, and let them cool in the refrigerator until they harden into jelly.

## — みかんゼリー —

「こたつ」という日本独特の暖房器具をご存知ですか。暖房器具付きの座卓のことで、これを厚い掛布（「こたつぶとん」）で覆い、中に足を入れて暖まります。こたつを囲んでの団欒は日本の冬の楽しみとも言えますが、この心地よい暖かさには注意が必要です。何故ならこたつぶとんから一歩も出たなくなってしまうからです。まして、冬を代表する果物「みかん」がかごに盛られてこたつの上に置かれていたら、みかんをいくつも剥いては食べ、ついつい不精になってしまいます。「こたつみかん」という言葉もあるほど、こんな状態もまた日本の冬の風物詩と言えるのですが。

日本語の「みかん」は柑橘類の総称でもありますが、普通は簡単に皮が剥けて種も無く食べやすい「ウンシュウミカン」のことを指します。以前は段ボール箱一杯のみかんがどこの家にもあって、それを冬の間毎日のように食べたものでしたが、最近はいくつかの理由でその数を減らしてしまっています。食卓に上る果物の種類も多様化し、みかんの生産も減少傾向だそうです。

さて皆さんの日本での冬の暮らしにこたつやみかんはありますか？ もしあれば、お正月ぐらいノンビリ「こたつみかん」で過ごすのもいいかもしれません。また、もしみかんがたくさんあって少々食べ飽きた場合はゼリーにしてみましょ。暖かい部屋で食べるひんやりしたみかんゼリーもまたいいものです。

### [材料 (4人分)]

みかん…8個程 粉ゼラチン、または粉寒天…4g 砂糖…50g  
水…100ml

### [作り方]

1. みかんの皮を剥く。後で皮を器にする場合は上部を切り取り、中身をくり抜く。
2. 1で剥いたみかんは絞るか、あればミキサーをかけてから濾して、みかんジュースを300ml程作る。ジュースが足りない場合は水かオレンジジュースを足す。
3. 鍋に水を入れ、粉ゼラチン（または粉寒天）と砂糖を入れよくかき混ぜてから火に掛ける。ゼラチンと砂糖が溶けたら2を入れて混ぜ合わせ、火を止める。
4. 3が少し冷めたらカップや1で剥いた皮の器に注ぎ、冷蔵庫で冷やして固まればできあがり。