

Pass Me an Orange



A full two-thirds of Americans start off their day with a glass of orange juice. They think that's healthy behavior.

I rarely ate breakfast, so I used to get my orange juice a different way. If I was in a restaurant, I'd order a drink that was half orange juice and half soda water. I was counting my calories so I thought this way I got my healthy orange juice and kept down the calorie count.

Interestingly I was only half right. I had the other half wrong. I thought the orange juice was healthy. Turns out I would have been better off having a full glass of soda water.

It's not the orange that's unhealthy. Eating an orange is good for you, but drinking large amounts of juice will cause you trouble. The average glass of orange juice contains the juice of several oranges. That's a lot of fructose and your body can't handle all that sugar without turning it straight into fat.

I won't bore you with the scientific details, but 60 Minutes had a segment where it was explained in detail that when you take out the fructose from orange juice that it will convert very efficiently to fat. (You can Google that if you're interested in the detail.)

What I am offering up here is an explanation of why you want to eat an orange rather than drink a glass of orange juice.

Now that you've watched that informal, little movie, I am going to progress to the even more sinister part of the subject of orange juice. Now we get to the stuff in the carton in the refrigerated section of our grocery store.

When "big food" runs commercials for orange juice they make it look really enticing. They bombard us with beautiful packaging. They give us images of an orange with a straw sticking out so we think what we are drinking is coming right off the tree and into the carton. *Oh contraire.* That's not how it's done. Watch this to get a mouthful on how processed our the orange juice in the grocery store really is.

So do I want to drink a large glass of something that my body will process efficiently into fat? Do I want to drink something from a carton that's had the life sucked out of it and then put back in a new chemical format? Or do I just want to eat an orange?

I think I'll quit my old complaining about how long it takes to peel an orange, and the fact that I like to take even more time to peel off all the pith. Please, pass me an orange.

You should also check out today's recipe for Cinnamon Tangerines.

These are a juicy, fun dessert. I highly recommend serving these after a Mexican-themed meal. The cinnamon goes great after hot food. But you can eat them anytime! I bet these would be great slightly frozen on a hot day too!

Cheers,