

Honeydew and Midori Granita

Ice, ice, baby. Say you and the fam are visiting Rome. In the summer. And it's hot. Really hot. You're thinking, how will we survive? Granita! It's a the go-to summer pick-me-up at the coffee shop instead of a coffee. While granita di caffe reigns, there is also the brightly colored granita di frutta, made with fruit juice and sugar. We're mad for melons in the summer, and the retro drink Midori Melonball (c'mon, admit you've had one — or more) gave us our inspiration. Instant chill.

See Cook's Note on substitutions for superfine sugar.

Ingredients

2½ pounds honeydew, peeled and seeded
1/2 to 3/4 cup superfine sugar
Pinch kosher salt
1 cup cold water
6 tablespoons Midori melon liqueur
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
Fresh mint sprigs, for garnish (optional)

special equipment

blender
9-by-13-inch or other shallow, nonreactive metal baking pan
fine mesh strainer

Directions

Cut the honeydew into 1-inch chunks (about 4 cups). Working in batches if necessary, puree the honeydew, 1/2 cup of sugar, salt and water in a blender until smooth. Strain the puree through a fine mesh sieve, discarding solids. Skim off the foam. Whisk in the Midori and lime juice. Depending on how sweet your melon is, you may want to add more sugar. Since the sweetness dulls when the granita freezes, make sure it's a touch sweeter than you think you would like. Pour the mixture into a 9-by-13-inch or other shallow, nonreactive baking pan and put it in the freezer until frozen, 4 to 6 hours or up to overnight.

Scrape the icy mixture with the tines of a fork into large flakes, crushing any lumps. If the granita starts melting and turning slushy by the time you're done scraping it, freeze again for 30 to 60 minutes. Just before serving, scrape once more into large flakes.

Serve granita in chilled bowls or cups or glasses, garnished with mint if desired.

Cook's Notes

Superfine sugar is also known as bar sugar or caster sugar. It's great for easily dissolving into cold liquids. If you only have granulated sugar on hand, you can use a blender or coffee grinder to pulse the sugar into finer crystals — but not into a powder. Do NOT substitute with confectioners' sugar. Alternatively, make a simple syrup by boiling the water and granulated sugar in a small saucepan until the sugar is dissolved. Let it cool before adding it to the rest of the mixture.

total time: 25 minutes plus freezing time

active prep: 25 minutes

serves: 6

difficulty: *easy*