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"Preserve today, Relish tomorrow"

Dehydrated melon is really delicious, and it's even more so when it's been dipped in a honey solution before drying. Dried melon is a great snack for both kids and adults that can be eaten just as is – simply grab a small handful (or two). The dried strips can be cut into smaller pieces to stir into yogurt, oatmeal, granola, or cereal, or snipped into slivers to sprinkle on fruit salads. And honey-dipped melon can be an interesting addition to a cheese or charcuterie board.

Honey-Dipped Dried Melon

Select high-quality ripe, but not over-ripe, melons for dehydrating. Wash the melons under cool running water, using a vegetable brush to scrub the rinds.

Make the honey dip: Dissolve $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar in $1 \frac{1}{2}$ cups boiling water. Cool to lukewarm. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup honey and mix well.

Prepare the melon slices: Cut the melons in half lengthwise. Scoop out the seeds and any loose flesh. If the melons are large, cut the halves into 2 or 3 wedges. Remove the outer rind and cut each wedge into slices about $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick.

Dip the melon: Add the melon slices to the honey dip and let soak for 3-5 minutes. Remove with a slotted utensil and allow to drain.

Dehydrate: Arrange the slices on mesh drying trays and dehydrate at 130°F until the slices are dry and leathery but still flexible. There should be no visible signs of moisture and you should not be able to squeeze any moisture out of the fruit. Cantaloupe will take about 12-14 hours; honeydew will take about 16-18 hours. After drying, allow melon to cool for about 30 minutes or so before jarring.

Condition and store: Loosely pack the melon slices in jars to about $\frac{2}{3}$ full and cap the jars. Shake the jars daily for 7 days or so to distribute any residual moisture. If signs of condensation appear in the jar, the fruit should be returned to the dehydrator for further drying. Pack the finished melon slices in small portions in clean, tightly sealed containers (jars, freezer containers, plastic freezer bags, or in vacuum sealed bags) and store in a cool, dry, dark place.

Source: Adapted from National Center for Home Food Preservation

