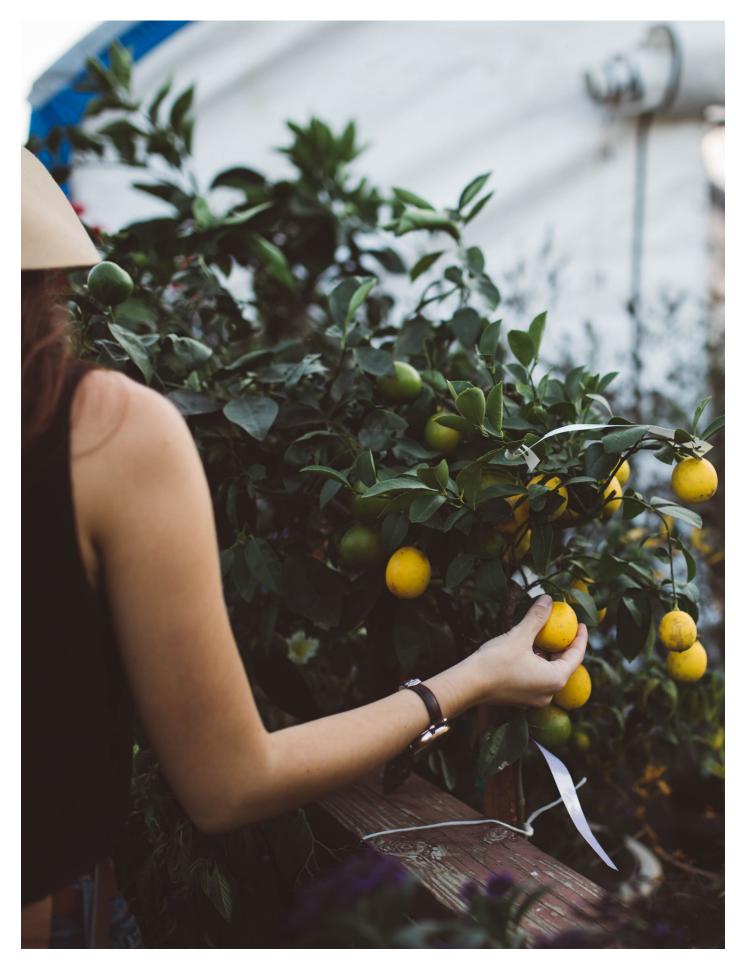






2 JUICED • MAY 2020



And while that might sound exotic, you've probably got some in your fridge right now and don't even know it. Allow us to explain.

Lemon oil is the aromatic stuff that lives in the peel (or "zest") of a lemon. Ever seen a bartender twist a citrus peel above a cocktail? That's because they're trying to release the oils—and if you look closely, you can even see the tiny droplets of oil fly through the air. The flavor you get from that lemon oil is intensely, complexly lemony, but doesn't have the same brash tartness that the juice of the fruit has. The best part? If you're already buying lemons to use for juice, all the gloriously fragrant lemon oil trapped in those peels is a freebie—you just have to figure out how to access it, and then use it to its full potential. And if there's one no-brainer way to do that, it's to make lemon sugar, and use that lemon sugar in just about any baked good

The basic maneuver is to zest lemons—ideally with a Micro-

you

can think of.

Here's how.

plane or other sharp, finetoothed grater—add the zest to sugar, and massage the sugar. That's it. Two ingredients. Minimal work.

As a general rule, we'll keep the ratio of lemon zest to sugar at 1 Tbsp. lemon zest to every 1 cup sugar. You don't want the lemon to overpower the sugar or change the texture too drastically. (That said, even a small amount of zest is worth using.) Once you zest about two lemons to get 2 Tbsp., dump it into 2 cups of sugar (these amounts can change based on whatever your recipe calls for or you want to have leftovers) and use your hands (washed and dried, of course) to massage the sugar and zest for a minute or so. This is where the oils really get released. Macerating the zest into the sugar draws all of those delicious oils out so that they are absorbed into the sugar, and the texture of the sugar will change, moving from sand-like to wet-sand-like. And there you have it folks: sweet, fragrant lemon sugar.

So what can you use it in?
Short answer: basically everything. Longer, more useful answer: basically everything that makes

sense with lemon. You can use this infused lemon sugar as a sub for regular sugar in whatever you're baking, just as long as a bit if bright citrus goes well with the other flavors. If the cake, cookie, muffin, scone, or pastry you're making involves fruit, you're in the clear.

Remember: This stuff is essentially free, and not exclusive to lemons,

either. You can

try this with everything

from lime to grapefruit and get cool results, though
the ratio of zest to sugar may
vary from citrus to citrus. Every
piece of citrus comes with oil,
and since you're already paying
for it, you may as well use it—
just a little bonus that someone
at the citrus factory threw in
there for you. How nice.

you. How nice.

Make sure
to write that
nameless hero
a letter. Or send
a gift basket.
Probably one
without citrus in
it—they've got that
on lock.

