



By Peggy Crum, MA, RD, Health4U Nutritionist

Lemons are nearly as fundamental in the kitchen as onions and garlic. So it's hard to understand why a defective product is called a lemon. Maybe because lemons look and smell so pretty yet taste so sour. As citrus fruits go, lemons rate the highest in pucker power.

Pale yellow, acidic, and many-seeded, lemons are the fruit of small thorny citrus trees that grow in warm climates. California is the top U.S. producer providing us with lemons year-round.

Choose lemons that give a little when you squeeze them. At home, they may look pretty in a bowl on the counter but that's not a good idea unless you use them in a day or two. The best way to store lemons, according to America's Test Kitchen, is sealed in a zipper bag placed in the refrigerator. They'll keep their moisture and quality for at least 4 weeks.

To get the most out of your lemons, a citrus juicer is well worth the investment. Not only will it squeeze out every drop of juice, but it will strain out the seeds and pulp with way less mess. Cut your lemon in half around the middle, place the cut side down in the well (this is counter-intuitive!), close the contraption, and squeeze. Hold the juicer over a bowl while the juice pours out.

Lemon zest is made by scraping the very top layer of the rind. Use a kitchen rasp (you may have one that you use for cheese) to make just one or two passes over the fruit before rotating being careful not to over-zest—the pith (white part) is bitter!

This versatile little fruit really does live up to the old-saying slightly modified: *When life hands you lemons, make something delicious.*

Lemons add tanginess to brighten most any dish. They're the star attraction in many desserts. Lemon juice combined with olive oil, salt, and pepper makes a super simple vinaigrette.

RECIPE for health

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featured food:
LEMONS

Lemon Posset

By Corporate Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski, Residential Dining Services
Serves 6

- 2 1/4 c. heavy whipping cream
- 3/4 c. sugar
- 6 T. lemon juice
- Zest of 2 lemons

Stir sugar into the cream in a medium saucepan. Lightly warm for 5-7 minutes on low heat. Bring cream to a simmer and let reduce down to 2 1/4 c. of liquid. Measure periodically to be sure the mixture is adequately reduced.

Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice and zest. Let stand for 20-25 minutes.

Strain liquid through a fine-mesh strainer or chinois. Discard zest and clumps that accumulate in strainer. Pour into 6 ramekins or small glass cups. Refrigerate uncovered. The posset should set up in about 3 hours.

Serve plain or garnished with fresh lemon zest or berries. If serving later, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for up to 2 days.

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