

DRIED WHOLE PERSIMMONS (*HOSHI KAKI*)



Dried whole persimmons or *Hoshi Kaki* is a very special Japanese treat. Traditionally, for New Year celebrations, *hoshi kaki* is used ceremonially and as a special treat. Today, drying whole persimmons is an excellent use of our abundant Hachiya persimmons when they are ripe but still hard. You can find prepared *hoshi kaki* in Japanese markets and farmer's markets usually starting in November.

Materials:

Hachiya (astringent) Persimmons, orange and firm
Toothbrush
Vegetable Peeler
Paring Knife (optional)
Bamboo Skewers
Jute or Twine

Instructions:

1. Wash Hachiya persimmons, using a toothbrush to clean around green calyx and stem.
2. Peel persimmons, leaving the calyx intact. A paring knife is useful to remove skin from under the calyx.

Oven Drying:

3. Place peeled persimmons on racks in oven preheated to ~130-150°F. If using a gas oven, this may be achieved with just a pilot light. Watch for scorching on lowest rack. If scorching occurs, place persimmons on higher racks only.
4. Persimmons develop a "skin" after 36 hours. At any time after this point they may be removed from the oven to air dry. See instructions below.
5. After 48 hours, persimmons are sweet and edible. You can begin to snack on them at this point and keep them in the freezer. For a shelf stable dried persimmon, continue to dry further.
6. After about 4 days persimmons are done! Persimmons are hard on the outside but still squeezable and will have sugar syrup droplets on the outside. Store in dry area or air tight package. They may form a partial white sugar coating after several weeks.

Air Drying:

Do steps 1-3 as for oven drying.

5. Energy Saving Alternative: Remove half dried persimmons from oven. At this point, they should be at least a third of their original weight, and have developed a leathery "skin" around a moist interior. Lay on racks to dry or continue with Step 6.
Faster Alternative: Reduce oven temperature to 100-130°F. Allow to dry in oven for additional 3 -6 days. Remove persimmons when tender all the way through and before they begin to get tough. Lay on racks to dry or continue with Step 6.

6. Pierce persimmons with bamboo skewers at the shoulders of the fruit.
7. Start placing overhand knots at one end of the jute every 3-4 inches. Tie one knot for each skewer. Skip about 8-12" then tie another set of knots.
8. Fold jute in half and align knots. Place bamboo skewer ends between ply's above the knots. This should make a ladder arrangement when done. Tie ends at bottom.
9. Use small pieces of jute to tie between ladder "rungs" in order to keep the jute from separating.
10. Hang in a dry, well ventilated area and let dry for ~4 weeks. When done, persimmons develop a complete white sugar coating.

Note: How to distinguish between white sugar coating versus mold developing on your drying persimmons? White mold will develop as points or dots. Sugar will begin developing as tiny white streaks. If mold develops, toss infected persimmons immediately to prevent spreading. Move remaining persimmons to a drier area away from sources of contaminants.

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