Three-Color Gelatin Mosaic Ring

One three-color mosaic ring, about 5 cups (1.2 liters); 8 dessert portions · Active 1 hr 5 min · Total 16 hr

Ingredients

- Unflavored powdered gelatin, 22 g total, divided 4 g per colored gel and 10 g for ivory binder, of specified setting strength
- 10 tablespoons cold drinking water (150 ml), divided 30 ml per colored gel and 60 ml binder
- ¾ cup pasteurized cranberry juice cocktail (180 ml), for red gel
- ¾ cup strained pasteurized orange juice (180 ml), for orange gel
- ¾ cup pasteurized white grape juice (180 ml), for green gel
- 1 drop liquid green food coloring, label-checked
- 1 cup pasteurized whole milk (240 ml), divided
- ⅓ cup sweetened condensed milk (100 g), not evaporated milk
- ½ cup pasteurized heavy cream (120 ml), kept cold
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract (2.5 ml)
- ¼ teaspoon neutral oil (1.25 ml), for wiping ring

Set out

3 shallow refrigerator-safe dishes of at least 300 ml capacity each, 3 small bloom bowls, Small saucepan washed between colors/binder, Knife and board, Large mixing bowl and spatula, Food scale reading 0.1 g for gelatin and measuring jug, Metal ring mold of at least 2-liter capacity, Paper towel, Food thermometer, Cold platter, Refrigerator

Allergens

Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. For each colored gel separately, bloom 4 g gelatin over 30 ml cold water 5–10 minutes. Warm 90 ml of that color’s juice to 140–150°F (60–65°C), remove from heat and dissolve bloomed gelatin in it. Add remaining 90 ml juice; add 1 drop green coloring only to white grape batch. Pour each into its own shallow dish, cover and refrigerate at 40°F (4°C) or below at least 4 hours until firmly set.

2. Cut firm colored gels into about ½-inch (1 cm) cubes. Keep covered in refrigerator. Check ring capacity, dry and oil lightly. Bloom 10 g binder gelatin over 60 ml cold water in clean saucepan 5–10 minutes. Add 120 ml milk and warm gently, stirring, until dissolved, about 120–140°F (50–60°C); remove before boiling.

3. Whisk remaining 120 ml cold milk, condensed milk, cream and vanilla in large bowl. Whisk 3 tablespoons of the cold dairy mixture gradually INTO the warm dissolved gelatin until smooth and lukewarm. Then gradually whisk that tempered mixture into the remaining cold dairy base. Refrigerate briefly, stirring every few minutes, until no warmer than 80°F (27°C), cool and pourable but not lumpy, usually 10–20 minutes.

4. Fold in cold colored cubes gently and spoon promptly into ring, distributing colors without crushing. Leave at least ½ inch (1.25 cm) headroom and refrigerate excess separately. Cover and refrigerate at 40°F (4°C) or below at least 8 hours after assembly until firm. Allow 16 hours total for both sets and preparation.

5. For unmolding, set a cold plate beside the refrigerator. Dip only the outside of the metal mold in warm, not hot, water, about 100°F (38°C), for 5–8 seconds without letting water touch food. Dry the outside, loosen just the upper edge with a clean fingertip and invert onto the plate. If stuck, repeat a brief dip rather than shaking violently. Refrigerate again immediately if not serving now. Cut 8 dessert portions with clean knife.

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Gelatin starting strength

Use food-grade unflavored powdered gelatin with a manufacturer benchmark of 7 g for about 2 cups (500 ml) plain liquid. Weigh the stated grams: envelope sizes and powder density vary. A flavored dessert packet, collagen peptides, sheet gelatin or agar is not an equal substitute.

Cold service

This is an original retro-inspired recipe, not a recovered 1960s formula. Gelatin is animal-derived; the vegetable ingredients do not make the dish vegetarian. A reliable refrigerator and the stated earlier ingredient deadlines are essential.

Ingredient labels

Read juice cocktail, food coloring, condensed milk, cream, vanilla and gelatin labels. Gelatin is animal-derived.

A useful detail

Each color is 210 ml liquid with 4 g gelatin, giving about 630 ml total cubes. Binder uses 10 g gelatin with 60 ml water + 240 ml milk + 120 ml cream, 100 g condensed milk and vanilla, roughly 520 ml. Estimated filled volume 1.2 liters fits a 2-liter ring with space for irregular cubes.

Keep it well

Keep covered at 40°F (4°C) or below. Use within 2 days of assembly or the earliest ingredient deadline, whichever comes first. Include the overnight setting period in that limit. Keep total unrefrigerated preparation and serving below 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C). Chill slices promptly after service; discard food exceeding those limits. Do not freeze; freezing damages the gel and releases water. Count the colored gels' first setting period when judging their original ingredient deadlines.