Rainbow Ribbon Celebration Mold

One six-band rainbow loaf, about 4 cups (950 ml); 8 dessert slices · Active 1 hr 30 min · Total 16 hr

Ingredients

- Unflavored powdered gelatin, 18 g total, divided into 6 portions of 3 g, of specified setting strength
- ¾ cup cold drinking water (180 ml), divided into 6 portions of 30 ml
- ½ cup pasteurized cranberry juice cocktail (120 ml), red layer
- ½ cup strained pasteurized orange juice (120 ml), orange layer
- 1½ cups pasteurized white grape juice (360 ml), divided 120 ml each for yellow, green and blue layers
- ½ cup pasteurized purple grape juice (120 ml), purple layer
- ¼ cup plus 2 teaspoons granulated sugar (60 g), divided 10 g per layer
- 1 drop liquid yellow food coloring, 1 drop liquid green and 1 drop liquid blue, label-checked; not concentrated gel colors
- ¼ teaspoon neutral oil (1.25 ml), for wiping mold

Set out

Metal loaf mold of at least 1¼-liter capacity, Food scale reading 0.1 g for gelatin, 6 small labeled dry bowls for gelatin portions, Small saucepan washed between colors, Mixing bowls and spoon, Measuring jug, Paper towel, Food thermometer, Cold platter, Refrigerator

Allergens

No major US allergen identified in the base ingredients. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Check mold capacity, dry and oil lightly. Weigh gelatin into 6 separate 3 g portions and sugar into 6 separate 10 g portions. Keep juices cold until their stage. Make only one color at a time in order red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple.

2. For first red layer, bloom 3 g gelatin over 30 ml cold water 5–10 minutes. Warm 60 ml cranberry cocktail with 10 g sugar to 140–150°F (60–65°C), remove from heat and dissolve bloomed gelatin in it. Add remaining 60 ml cocktail. Cool to lukewarm, still fluid, pour into mold and refrigerate 30–45 minutes until softly firm and tacky, able to support a spoonful.

3. For each next layer repeat the same method freshly with its 3 g gelatin, 30 ml bloom water, 120 ml juice and 10 g sugar. Use orange juice second. Use white grape juice third with 1 drop yellow, fourth with 1 drop green and fifth with 1 drop blue. Use purple grape juice sixth. Cool every new mixture to lukewarm before spooning gently over back of spoon onto previous softly firm layer. Refrigerate 30–45 minutes between the first five layers; do not make later pans in advance or pour hot liquid onto gel.

4. After final purple band, keep at least ½ inch (1.25 cm) headroom; refrigerate excess separately. Cover and refrigerate at 40°F (4°C) or below at least 8 hours after final layer until firm throughout. Allow 16 hours total for all six stages and final setting.

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. Final top-to-bottom order is red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple. Cut 8 dessert slices with clean thin knife, wiping between cuts.

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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 every juice, coloring and gelatin label. Gelatin is animal-derived.

A useful detail

Six layers each contain 3 g gelatin with 150 ml liquid and 10 g sugar. Total is 18 g gelatin, 900 ml liquid and 60 g sugar, roughly 950 ml finished. A 1¼-liter loaf gives headroom. Yellow/green/blue coloring is explicit; no hidden white or dairy bands are included.

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. Include first-layer preparation when checking original juice deadlines; later layers do not reset that clock.