

# Spring is Almost Here; it's Time to Break out the Sweet Navel Oranges

by John Rizzo

**A**s Spring approaches, we begin to look for more variety and better quality fruit at the grocery store. Still a little early for good quality and inexpensive stone fruit, such as plums, peaches and nectarines; melons aren't quite there yet either, but this is the ideal time for California navel oranges. Sweet, and easy to peel, and virtually seedless, this fruit packaged in its own shell, is at its very best this time of year.

The orange, technically a hesperidium or form of berry, appears to have originated in Asia and found its way to the United States in the early 1800s. Florida, who produces about 70% of the oranges in the United States, grows the majority of its oranges for juicing. Arizona, California and Texas oranges are much better for eating. The navel, with its thick skin, seedless segments, and sweet flavor, is the world's most popular eating orange.

Nearly everyone knows that the orange is abundant with Vitamin C; in fact eating one orange provides enough vitamin C to satisfy the daily recommended allowance. But what you may not know is that oranges are also a good source of potassium and additionally contain folacin, calcium, thiamin, niacin and magnesium.

Store your oranges at room temperature or up to a couple of weeks in the refrigerator. I don't recommend leaving them in plastic. Once an orange is picked; it will not ripen any further, but it may rot.

The following recipe, Asian orange chicken, can be enhanced by adding any combination of vegetables, such as broccoli, cabbage, carrots, peppers, zucchini, etc.

## Asian Orange Chicken

Yield: 6

Boneless Chix Breast	2 lbs.	Sugar	1.5 TBL
Vegetable Oil	1/4 Cup	Orange Juice	1/4 Cup
Flour	1/4 Cup	Eggs	2
Corn Starch	1/4 Cup	Chicken Stock	3/4 Cup
Garlic, Minced	1/4 tsp.	Tobasco Sauce	1 dash
Onion, Diced	1 Large	Vinegar	1 tsp.
Soy Sauce	2 TBL		

### Procedure:

Cut the Chicken Breasts into 3 oz pieces (approximately 10 pieces). Place them on a cutting board and cover with clear film or wax paper. With a meat mallet or any heavy flat object, pound the chicken to about 1/8 inch thick. Whip the eggs into a mixing bowl and set aside. Combine the flour and cornstarch. Dip each piece of chicken in the egg and then the cornstarch mixture. Heat the oil in a large skillet; sauté the chicken on both sides until it reaches a golden brown color. Remove from the skillet and let drain on paper towels. Discard any remaining oil and wipe the inside of the skillet. Add another tablespoon of oil and sauté the onions until clear, add the garlic, soy sauce, sugar, orange juice and chicken stock. Bring to a boil and place the chicken back into the mixture. Cover the skillet, turn the heat down to low and let the chicken simmer for 15 minutes. The liquid will thicken from the flour and cornstarch. If it becomes too thick, add a little water to reach the desired consistency. Add the tobacco and vinegar; let simmer for one additional minute and remove from the heat. Serve with rice.