A TASTEFUL PLACE
AT THE DALLAS ARBORETUM

Agua de Jamaica with Popping Boba

Ingredients

- 200 ml fruit juice or preferred favorite liquid
- 1-3 g sodium alginate powder*
- 946 ml water
- 10 g calcium lactate*
- 1 c flor de Jamaica (dried hibiscus flower)
- 4 c water
- ½ c piloncillo
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 cloves
- 1 star anise
- 1 tsp orange peel
- Lime juice, optional

Directions

In a blender, blend your fruit juice or preferred liquid of joice with 2-3 g of sodium alginate powder. And set to the side. In a large bowl, whisk together your water and calcium lactate until fully dissolved. Using a pipette or syringe, drop into your calcium lactate mixture, then spoon out your spheres. Rinse the spheres to remove any excess calcium and store in a clean container in the fridge.

In a large pot, add your water, piloncillo, cinnamon stick, cloves, and orange peel and bring to a boil while stirring occasionally. Lower the heat to a simmer and add your hibiscus tea leaves and let it infuse for 10 minutes. Strain the hibiscus tea and adjust with water for strength and sugar for sweetness. Add lime juice if wanted.

*The amount of sodium alginate and calcium lactate that you add is dependent on a percentage range we shoot for when using these chemicals.

Sodium Alginate –

It's a chemical compound that's derived from brown algae. In the kitchen, we use it as a gelling agent usually, but for popping boba we use it as a reactive agent which helps create the 'egg box' cavity that seals the liquid which we call spherification in the kitchen.

I usually use as around 0.5% - 1.5% dependent on the weight of the juice I choose. The less sodium alginate you add, the liquid inside the encasing will be thinner and have more of a popping effect. The more you add the more gelatinous the interior will be and will almost have a jelly feel to it.

Calcium Lactate –

It’s a chemical made from lactic acid and calcium carbonate and is used as a food additive for various reasons like: enhancing shelf life and stability of foods, baking as a rising agent, creating gels and spheres for molecular gastronomy, and for maintaining fruit and vegetables during processing to inhibit browning and softening.

I’ll use about 1% of calcium lactate based on the ml amount of water I set aside to create my calcium lactate bath.