

CITRUS VARIETIES
Ottillia J. Bier
University of California Riverside
Citrus Variety Collection

IF I COULD ONLY PLANT A FEW!

Oranges

Must have a navel orange for winter into spring. Choose good old Washington navel orange (still the gold standard) or for novelty, try Cara Cara navel orange, a mutated Washington navel orange that produces pink-fleshed fruit

Valencia for summer harvest and juice. May not have a choice of variety, but Midnight and Delta are seedless selections that are becoming very popular.

Blood orange for novelty. Red flesh and juice. Moro is the most common variety and most highly colored, but Tarocco has the best flavor.

Mandarins (Tangerines)

Seedless kishu for early season harvest. Golf ball size seedless fruit, tender, sweet and juicy. Very easy to peel.

Gold Nugget is my personal favorite. Matures in March and holds on the tree through the summer, if you can resist eating them all right away. Seedless, easy to peel, with a rich flavor.

Grapefruit, Pummelos & Hybrids

Oroblanco is a grapefruit-pummelo hybrid. White-fleshed, seedless, mild and sweet. No sugar needed. This is the grapefruit for people who don't like grapefruit.

Star Ruby grapefruit is the reddest of the red grapefruit if you insist on a red grapefruit, but its flavor is nowhere near as sweet as Oroblanco.

Cocktail "Grapefruit" is not a grapefruit at all; it is a hybrid of Siamese Sweet pummelo and Frua mandarin. The large yellow fruits are wonderfully sweet and very juicy. Cocktail has lots of seeds, but it is my first choice for juice

Lemons and Limes

If you must have a lemon, choose the Variegated pink-fleshed Eureka lemon, sometimes sold under the name "Pink Lemonade". It is pretty with its marbled leaves, striped fruit, and pink flesh. No it won't make pink lemonade, but it is a perfectly fine lemon.

If your taste runs more to the exotics, perhaps the Meyer lemon is for you. Meyer lemon is really a hybrid of lemon and orange. The tree tends to be small and quite attractive in the garden. The fruit has a smooth, yellow-orange rind and a distinctive aroma. It is not a perfect substitute for a lemon, but many people prefer it's milder, less acidic juice.

Bearss lime is the conventional lime you find in the supermarket. Seedless and a little more cold hardy than the Mexican (Key) lime. If you must have the Mexican lime, which is smaller, seedy, and more pungent in flavor, select the thornless Mexican lime. You won't be sorry, lime thorns are nasty.