



## The Date-ing Game MP3

**Rod Bain** [00:00:00] It's time for the Date-ing Game. That's D-A-T-E-I-N-G game, the show that sees how much the contestants know about their dates. Those exotic fruits from all over the world. And today's contestant knows a thing or two about dates. A USDA VegU-cator.

**Chantel Oyi** [00:00:19] Hi, my name is Chantel Oyi, Chantel C-H-A-N-T-E-L, Oyi O-Y-I.

**Rod Bain** [00:00:26] Glad you could join us, Chantel. Now the rules are simple. I ask a question, you give your best response. With that, let's play the date-ing game. First question, Chantel, where's the best place to find a date in either our country or around the world?

**Chantel Oyi** [00:00:44] So if I was looking for a date in the U.S, I would definitely look in California. And if I was looking for a date outside the U.S., the Middle East or North Africa.

**Rod Bain** [00:00:54] Oh, really? So, dates are worldly sorts then?

**Chantel Oyi** [00:00:56] Definitely. They originated in Spain, traveled to North Africa and then from there traveled through Spanish North Africa colonization to Cuba, was then brought to California.

**Rod Bain** [00:01:07] OK, then let's find out what are the best qualities that a date should have, Chantelle?

**Chantel Oyi** [00:01:13] You want to look for one that is ripe. They're usually harvested ripe. You also want them to be pitted. They usually have a large stone size fruit or seed in the middle. You also want to look for a date that is either not coated in sugar.

**Rod Bain** [00:01:27] So then Chantel, what is the most exotic way to enjoy a date?

**Chantel Oyi** [00:01:33] So dates are arranged in several different recipes. One may be a sparkling date juice. I don't think I've ever tried a sparkling date juice, but it's a non-alcoholic version of champagne, and it's actually used for special occasions and religious times such as Ramadan. Another exotic use of dates could be the vinegar. So, there is a vinegar that is made from dates, traditionally a product of the Middle East.

**Rod Bain** [00:02:00] Now for the final question today, Chantel. How do you think a date should present itself in the best way possible to its suitor?

**Chantel Oyi** [00:02:07] There are a variety of ways. Dates are often purchased, are consumed dry. They're stuffed with things like walnuts, pecans, lemon peels, tahini, marzipan, cream cheese. They're also chopped and then topped on other types of snack foods such as yogurt. Dates can be paired with savory dishes such as pork, beefs, different types of protein. And then also they're added to puddings and other desserts, especially around the holidays. So, for example, date nut bread.

**Rod Bain** [00:02:37] And that's all the time we have for this episode of The Date-ing Game. Hopefully you've learned more about dates, perhaps even yours. Chantel blow a kiss goodbye to the audience.

**Chantel Oyi** [00:02:47] Goodbye (Blows a kiss).

**Rod Bain** [00:02:49] Thanks Chantel and thank you for joining us. I'm Rod Bain reporting for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C.