

Fruit of the Month

EXOTIC WINTER FRUIT!



Exotic fruits are becoming more available throughout the year in the United States. Many of the fruits described below are grown in the Southern Hemisphere, where our winter is their summer. Importing fruits from countries such as New Zealand allows Americans the opportunity to try new fruits all year round.

Tamarillo

The tamarillo is egg-shaped and is pointed at both ends with a green stem. The skin is tough and bitter and may be red, purple, amber, or golden yellow in color. The outer layer of apricot-colored flesh is slightly firm and the inside is filled with dark edible seeds that are slightly harder than those of a tomato. The flesh is tangy and tart, but flavorful. Tamarillos are native to South America, but most tamarillos sold in the United States are imported from New Zealand. This fruit is popular in South and Central America, the Caribbean, parts of Asia, and Australia. It is also commonly called a tree tomato.



Selection

Select fruit that is firm, unblemished and is heavy for its size. When ripe, tamarillos should be fragrant and should yield slightly to gentle pressure. Tamarillos are available from May to October in specialty stores and some supermarkets. They can occasionally be found out of season.

Storage

Tamarillos may be ripened at room temperature, then stored in the refrigerator or eaten once they are ripe. They last up to ten days in the refrigerator if wrapped in a plastic. Tamarillos may also be frozen if they are peeled and wrapped individually.

Preparation

Tamarillos should be peeled before eating or cooking. Blanching in boiling water for 2 to 3 minutes is often the easiest way to remove the skin if the fruit is not ripe. They are often eaten raw, when ripe. Dip in frozen orange juice concentrate to sweeten the fruit and add to fruit or vegetable salads. Tamarillos are also often made into jams, chutneys and relishes.



Feijoa

The feijoa is also an egg-shaped fruit with a thin lime-green skin. The flesh inside is cream-colored and encases a jelly-like center. The texture is gritty, close to that of a pear. The flesh tastes like a combination of several other fruits, usually described as pineapple, guava, and strawberry. Some

people report a taste similar to that of a quince or lemon. Feijoa is native to South America, but is now commercially grown in New Zealand and California. It is also commonly called a pineapple guava.

Selection

Select fruit that is fragrant and gives slightly to gentle pressure. Ripe feijoas are delicate, so take caution not to bruise the fruit. Imported feijoas are available from late March to June; while domestic ones reach the market in the fall. Feijoas are gaining in popularity and are becoming easier to find in supermarkets. They are already easy to find in specialty markets and can often be ordered out-of-season through several online merchants.

Storage

Ripe feijoas may be refrigerated, but they don't have to be. Ripen feijoas in a paper bag at room temperature; to ripen quicker add an apple to the bag. Ripe feijoas normally last about 3 to 5 days. Feijoas may be frozen, but only if peeled and cooked into a puree.

Preparation

Feijoas are most often eaten raw. The fruit is ripe when it is slightly soft and the jellied inner section is clear. The fruit is unripe when the jelly is white and is spoiled when the jelly is brown. Unfortunately, this test of ripeness may only be determined once the fruit is opened. Peel the fruit before preparing, as the skin is bitter.

Red Banana

Red bananas are smaller in size than a common banana and the peel is a deep red or purple. It has a creamy white to pink flesh, with a slight raspberry-banana flavor. The overall taste is similar to a common yellow banana. They are imported from Costa Rica and are a favorite in Central America.



Selection

Select firm bananas free from bruises or cracks in the peel and look for a deep purple color. This indicates the banana is ripe. If the color of the peel is lighter, the banana is not ripe. As with common yellow bananas, red bananas will ripen in a couple of days at room temperature. Red bananas are available year round at specialty markets and larger supermarkets.

Storage

Store bananas at room temperature, do not refrigerate. Turn bananas occasionally and store them in an uncovered location.

Preparation

Peel fruit prior to eating. Red bananas are used in similar ways as common yellow bananas. They are most frequently eaten whole raw or chopped and added to desserts or fruit salads. Red bananas are one of varieties commonly used for store bought dried bananas.



Kiwano Melon

Kiwano melon is an oval shaped fruit with horns on its peel. It has a bright orange and yellow skin with a pale yellow-green pulp inside. The flavor of the pulp is sweet and a bit tart with a flavor mix of bananas, lime and cucumber. Kiwano melon is native to southern and central Africa and is commonly known as an African horned melon. Most imported melons are now from New Zealand. California has began growing this melon, so a domestic product is available part of the year.

Selection

Select melons without any bruises or spots with a bright orange color. It is best to purchase a melon that has the horns intact, as damaged horns may be a sign of rough handling. Kiwano melons are available year round in specialty markets and supermarkets.

Storage

Unripe melons may be stored at room temperature for up to two weeks. Ripe melons will last about 3 to 4 days at room temperature. There is no need to refrigerate kiwano melon.

Preparation

There is no way to peel the skin off of the melon, so the fruit needs to be scooped out of the melon before using. The melon may be cut in half or into wedges to help extract the fruit pulp. The pulp may be eaten by itself, used as a topping for a sweet dessert or added to a fruit or green salad. The shell may be used as a serving dish once the pulp is removed, but the skin should not be eaten.



Guava



Guava is an oval shaped fruit that varies in size from a small egg to a medium apple. The thin skin may be yellow, red, purple or nearly black and the flesh ranges from a pale yellow to a bright red. Guava is sweet with a slight tart aftertaste. Its texture is firm; similar to an apple. Guava is native to South

America, but is now commonly grown in California, Florida and Hawaii. It is also known as a Bangkok Apple or Guayaba.

Selection

Select fruit that gives to gentle pressure and is unblemished. Fresh guavas are often only available in the region near where they are grown, but may be ordered by mail. Canned guava products are available nationwide throughout the year in larger supermarkets.

Storage

Store ripe guavas in the refrigerator for up to a week. Green, unripe guavas should be stored at room temperature until ripe. Ripe guavas stored at room temperature will spoil quickly; normally within a couple of a days.

Preparation

The entire guava is edible. The rind and small seeds inside, along with the creamy flesh are often used in making jellies, preserves, and sauce. To be eaten raw, guava needs to be very ripe. Guava is typically sliced lengthwise into 5 or 6 slices and seeds discarded.



Make Exotic Winter Fruit Part of Your 5 A Day Plan

- Add slices of tamarillo to your favorite sandwich for a tart twist.
- Add feijoa to your favorite lowfat smoothie for a taste of the tropics.
- Top your cereal with a red banana for a colorful change.
- Top your nonfat yogurt with kiwano melon for a tangy treat.
- Add guava to fruit salad for an added taste of sweetness.

Recipes

Melon With Kiwano Melon Sauce

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals two 5 A Day servings

1 cup honeydew, cut into chunks
1 cup watermelon, cut into chunks
2 Kiwano melons

Sauce:

Pulp from 1 Kiwano Melon above
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cantaloupe, cut into chunks
2 tsp fresh mint, chopped
1 tsp grated orange peel
1 tsp sugar
Fresh mint sprigs (optional garnish)

In a bowl, toss together honeydew and watermelon chunks. Halve both kiwano melons lengthwise. Scoop out interior of first kiwano melon and add to melon mixture. Scoop out interior of second horned melon and reserve for making sauce. Divide melon mixture evenly among the kiwano melon shells.

For Sauce, Place reserved kiwano melon pulp in food processor or blender with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cantaloupe chunks, mint, orange peel, and sugar. Cover and process until smooth.

Pour sauce over fruit in shells; garnish with mint sprigs.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 55, Fat .3g, Calories from Fat 5%, Protein 1g, Carbohydrates 12g, Fiber 1g, Cholesterol 1mg, Sodium 7mg.

Tamarillo Pear Chutney

Makes 6 servings

Each serving equals two 5 A Day servings

1 cup apple juice

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup white wine vinegar

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup packed brown sugar

5 tamarillos, peeled and chopped

2 firm-ripe pears, peeled and chopped

1 cup chopped onion

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup raisins

1 Tbsp ginger, chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground cinnamon

In a large saucepan, stir together juice, vinegar and brown sugar. Add remaining ingredients; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer, cook, stirring occasionally, about 20 minutes, or until fruit is very soft. Drain off most of the juice. Cool; store in covered container in refrigerator.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 155, Fat .3g, Calories from Fat 2%, Protein 2g, Carbohydrates 39g, Fiber 4g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 10mg.

Feijoa-Chicken Curry

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals three 5 A Day servings

2 Tbsp olive oil

4 chicken breasts, skinned, boned, and cut into bite-sized chunks

1½ cups carrots, thinly sliced

1 cup red, yellow, or green bell pepper, cubed

1 cup onion, thinly sliced

1 clove garlic, minced

4 to 5 ripe feijoas, peeled, halved lengthwise, and cut into slices

1 Tbsp curry powder

¼ tsp allspice

1/8 tsp pepper

1 Tbsp cornstarch

One 14½-oz. can low sodium chicken broth

In a skillet, heat 2 tablespoons oil. Sauté chicken 3 minutes or until nearly done; remove from pan. Heat remaining oil in skillet; sauté carrots, bell pepper, onion, and garlic for 5 minutes or till carrots are nearly tender. Add chicken back to skillet with feijoas, curry powder, salt, allspice, and pepper. Stir cornstarch into chicken broth; pour into skillet with chicken mixture. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, 20 minutes. Serve with rice (optional, not included in the analysis).

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 300, Fat 10g, Calories from Fat 30%, Protein 31g, Carbohydrates 21g, Fiber 3g, Cholesterol 70mg, Sodium 155mg.

Red Bananas with Fruit Salsa

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals three 5 A Day servings

6 medium red bananas
3 Tbsp packed brown sugar
1 Tbsp lemon juice
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp vanilla extract
1 Tbsp crushed mint leaves

Fruit salsa:

3 large clemintines
1 large grapefruit
1 champagne mango, peeled and diced
2 Tbsp honey
3 Tbsp brewed orange tea
2 Tbsp chopped walnuts

Peel the red bananas and split in half. Place in a flat glass dish cut side up. Combine the lime juice and vanilla, brushing the bananas with the mixture. Generously spoon the brown sugar on the bananas.

Preheat broiler to high and place the sugar topped bananas under the broiler for 2-3 minutes until they are well caramelized. Remove from the broiler and cool for 1 minute before removing from the pan.

For the fruit salsa, peel the clementines and grapefruit and cut between the membranes to separate the segments and remove the seeds. Place in a bowl and add the mango. Add the honey, tea and nuts, mix well and chill. To serve, divide the fruit salsa into small bowls. Place 2 halves of banana brulee in each bowl, and garnish with fresh mint.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 293, Fat 4g, Calories from Fat 11%, Protein 3g, Carbohydrates 72g, Fiber 5g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 10mg.

Tropical Fruit Salad with Guava Sauce

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals three 5 A Day servings

2 bananas, sliced

1 ripe pear, sliced

4 kiwis, peeled and sliced

2 cups sliced strawberries

2 feijoas

2 Tbsp orange juice concentrate

1 ripe guava

Combine all of the ingredients, except for the juice and guava, in a large serving bowl. Peel and slice the guava into quarters and place in a blender with the orange juice concentrate. Puree until smooth. Pour the mixture through a sieve to remove the seeds and pour over the fruit salad.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 212, Fat 2g, Calories from Fat 6%, Protein 3g, Carbohydrates 52g, Fiber 9g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 8mg.