

Mango

Sweet, tropical flavor in a world of dishes

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What

Reputed to be the most widely consumed fresh fruit in the world, this distant relative of cashews, pistachios, and poison ivy has been cultivated in its native India for more than 4,000 years. From there, mangoes traveled the globe—with Buddhist monks to Malaysia and eastern Asia, with Persian traders to the Middle East and East Africa, and with Portuguese explorers to West Africa, the Americas, and the Philippines. These days, there are more than 1,000 varieties in India alone, and the fruit is a dietary staple in more than half of the world's countries.

Why Try

For that great tropical flavor—like a cross between a peach and an apricot, but with pineapple undertones. This exotic sweetness works just as well in savory dishes as it does in desserts (where it's a good substitute for peaches). Mangoes have an enzyme that tenderizes meat, and the fruit provides a cool contrast to spicy curries and other strong flavors. Plus, now through September, these fruits are at their very best.

How to Buy

Mangoes are available year-round in most supermarkets. Unfortunately, many stores carry only the Tommy Atkins variety, which has a vibrant bright green, yellow, and red skin, but isn't the most flavorful mango. Tastier varieties, such as the very sweet Ataulfo (or Champagne) mangoes or the very tart green ones from Thailand, can be found at farmers' markets, Asian markets, and online at melissas.com. To choose a mango, smell it near the stem. There should be a hint of pine and peaches—no fragrance usually means the mango will have no flavor. Ripen it in a paper bag at room temperature; it's ready to eat when the flesh yields to gentle pressure. ➤ page 102



A few good mangoes (from left): Golden Globe, Keltt, Tommy Atkins, and Thai green mango.

HEALTH MATTERS

It has been said that a couple of mangoes plus a glass of milk equals a full day's worth of nutrients. The low-cal, high-fiber fruit is rich in vitamins A and C, potassium, and antioxidants.

At the Market Mango

Grilled Tandoori-Style Chicken and Mangoes with Mango Jasmine Rice

Mangoes are used two ways in this Indian dish—grilled with the chicken and tossed into rice.

8 SERVINGS

- 1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon sweet paprika
- 1 tablespoon coarse kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 cup plain whole-milk yogurt
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 2 1/2-pound chickens, quartered
- 2 large ripe mangoes, peeled; 1 cut into 1/2-inch-thick slices, 1 cut into 1/2-inch cubes (see "Cut Like a Pro")
- 2 cups jasmine rice
- 5 cups water
- 1/2 cup pine nuts, toasted
- 6 fresh cilantro sprigs

Puree first 7 ingredients in processor. With machine running, gradually add oil through feed tube and process until blended. Transfer 1/4 cup herb mixture to small bowl; reserve. Add yogurt and lemon juice to remaining mixture in processor and blend.

Place chicken in 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Pour yogurt mixture over chicken; turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour.

Prepare barbecue (medium heat). Place chicken, skin side down, on grill. Cover and grill until chicken is cooked through, turning every 5 minutes, about 50 minutes total. Grill mango slices 2 minutes per side; set aside.

Meanwhile, combine rice, 3 cups water, and reserved 1/4 cup herb mixture. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer until tender, about 15 minutes. Remove from heat; let stand, covered, 5 minutes. Fold in mango cubes and pine nuts.

Arrange chicken on large platter; garnish with grilled mango slices and cilantro sprigs. Serve mango jasmine rice alongside.

Cut Like a Pro

To dice a mango, slice off sides of fruit (start each cut about a half-inch to the side of the stem to avoid the pit). Cut a grid through the flesh of each half down to the peel. Push up on peel side so that the cubes stick out. Slice off the cubes at their base.



Mango and Avocado Salad with Peanut Dressing

Here's a very simple salad that's loaded with Southeast Asian flavor.

4 SERVINGS

- 2 tablespoons unsweetened coconut milk*
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce (such as nam pla or nuoc nam)**
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 teaspoon minced jalapeño chile
- 1 teaspoon golden brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 small shallot, minced
- 1 cup (packed) arugula
- 1 large ripe mango, peeled, pitted, cut into thin slices
- 2 medium avocados, halved, pitted, peeled, cut into thin slices
- 2 tablespoons toasted chopped peanuts

Whisk first 7 ingredients in medium bowl to blend. Stir in cilantro and shallot.

Divide arugula among 4 plates. Fan mango and avocado slices over. Drizzle with peanut dressing. Sprinkle with chopped peanuts and serve.

*Available at many supermarkets and at Indian, Southeast Asian, and Latin markets.

**Available in the Asian foods section of most supermarkets, at some specialty foods stores, and at Asian markets. ➤



