

Step-by-Step
Food Preparation in Pictures
Series #1 2005



How to Eat Uncommon Fruit



Victoria and Valya Boutenko

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Durian

Durian is a big, thorny fruit from South East Asia. It is considered "The King of Fruit" throughout Thailand. Durian is famous for both its delicious taste and stinky smell. The pods of a durian are filled with a sweet, creamy, custard-like, white meat. Durians taste best when eaten fresh but in most places, except where they grow, durians are available only frozen.



Put the fresh or defrosted durian on a cutting board.

When handling a durian, always use a folded towel to protect your hands from the sharp spikes



Make a long, slightly curved cut along one of the five bumpy lobes.



Cut approximately 1/2 inch deep, just through the shell.



Make another curved cut along the other side of the same lobe. These two cuts should create an oval.



Lift up the oval piece of shell.



Use a spoon to remove custard from the pod.

Each section of the durian has two or three pieces of custard meat with a seed in each one.

You don't have to eat every pod all at once. The other pods will stay fresh longer if they are left unopened. However, we don't recommend to freeze and defrost a durian more than once. A defrosted durian may be kept in the refrigerator for one week.





After you have scooped out all five compartments of the durian, you may discard the empty shell. We don't recommend composting it, because it attracts wild animals and creates disharmony among neighbors.



Durian is delicious fresh or frozen.



To make durian pudding, blend the following ingredients in a blender until smooth:

½ cup durian meat
¼ cup young coconut meat
½ cup water or coconut water
Serves: 2

From our experience, this wonderful pudding impresses even those who don't like the smell of this spectacular fruit.

Jackfruit

Jackfruit is a tropical fruit originating in India. It is interesting that jackfruit grows not only from the branches but also from the trunks of trees. Jackfruit arils taste like bubble gum. Jackfruit resemble watermelons in size.



Before cutting the jackfruit, it is important to guard against its sticky sap. Coat the knife, hands and the centre of the cutting board with vegetable oil. First make a transverse cut across the jackfruit. Now take the 2 halves and cut each one in half again, quartering the jackfruit. From here, the white fibrous center is exposed. Carefully pull away the white fibrous center from the arils.

Inside the fruit, it is easy to confuse a fibrous material called the “rags”, which are edible but chewy, with the arils, which are the most delicious part of the jackfruit. The arils are numerous and are hiding among the rags.



The arils have a golden color and rich, pleasant flavor. Within each aril is a seed, almost the size and shape of a shelled Brazil nut. Seeds are edible but have to be cooked.



The jackfruit arils freeze well and they may be used at a later time like fresh fruit. Ripe jackfruit arils are an amazing and deliciously sweet treat.

Young (T h a i) Coconut

Young coconuts between six and nine months contain about 750 ml of water. Coconuts are the most health enhancing in their young stage of growth when their meat is still soft like jelly. As the coconut matures its juice hardens into flesh and it loses some of its nutritional benefits. To choose a good coconut, pick one up and give it a shake. If it's a good one, it will be heavy, and you won't be able to hear the water rattle around inside. A quality coconut is completely filled with liquid, and has no air bubbles and it therefore does not make a splashing sound when it is shaken. There are many different ways to open a coconut. Through lots of extensive coconut opening experience, we have concluded that the two most safe and effective ways of opening a coconut are: the lady's way, and the gentlemen's way.

The G e n t l e m a n ' s w a y :



A coconut is shaped like a little hut. The point is the top of the coconut. Lay the coconut on its side. The point should be pointing away from you.



Take a large serrated knife and begin to shave the husk off the point of the coconut so that the shell is revealed.



Rotate the coconut as needed and continue cutting off the husk all the way around the point.



You will notice that under the white husk is a light brown shell. The regular coconuts usually seen in stores have their husk already removed.



Make sure you have shaved off the husk in a complete circle so that it will be easier to open the coconut.



Place your knife just inside the circle you have shaved.



Turn the coconut on its side, and stab the knife into the shell. Coconut shells have a circular grain. When you force the knife through any part of the shell, a spherical crack will form.



Cut about 1 inch deep into the shell of the coconut.



Put the coconut pointed side up again so that the coconut water does not run out. Twist the knife slightly, and a round opening will easily form at the top of the coconut.



When the coconut top is half way separated from the rest of the shell, you can use your hands to help lift the top off completely.



The coconut is filled with a sweet refreshing water. Coconuts work like a natural water filter that takes about 9 months to filter each liter of water.



Coconut water is both delicious and nutritious! It is rich in electrolytes and contains important minerals such as potassium, sodium, calcium, phosphorous, iron, copper, sulphur and chlorides. It also contains both ascorbic acid and B vitamins.



If you drink the water but don't want to eat the coconut meat right away, you may put the pointy shell top back on the coconut like a lid and store the coconut in the refrigerator for three or four days.



To remove the coconut meat, use a spoon to scoop it out of the shell.



The younger a coconut is, the thinner and softer the white meat will be. When the meat of a coconut is slightly pink, it means it is starting to ferment. In most cases, the coconut is still alright to eat, but both the meat and the water will taste differently. If you have doubts, discard such coconut.



The second way to open a coconut is:

The Ladies Way:

Place the coconut on its side. With a serrated knife, begin to saw off 1/2 inch of the husk off the flat end of the coconut. Grip the opposite side of the coconut with your free hand to keep it from slipping away.



Keep cutting thin slices of the husk off until you begin to see a circle in the middle of the coconut.



Once you find the eye of the coconut, which is a soft spot in the shell, stop cutting.

Each coconut has three of these eyes. Through these soft spots the roots of the young coconut grow and reach into the soil at the time when the coconut begins to sprout into a coconut palm tree. A coconut has enough fresh water to sustain itself as a plant for up to one year in the hottest desert.



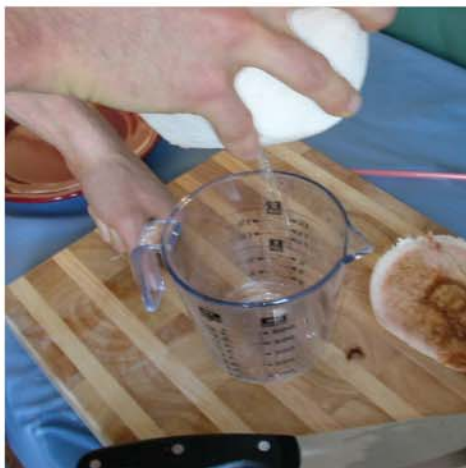
Hold the coconut as upright as possible with the flat section on top. If the coconut is left on its side, the water may spill out when it is opened. With the tip of your knife, begin to carve out the eye of the coconut.



Carve out the eye so that you are left with a clean opening.



At this point, you may drink the coconut water through a straw and look very tropical.



You can also pour the coconut water out into a container. Each coconut has approximately three cups of water.



To crack the coconut in half, use a heavy item such as a boulder, mallet, or 5-pound weight. Place the coconut on its side and hit it several times with the heavy item of your choice.



Two or three strikes should be enough to crack the coconut almost in half.



To help separate the two halves of the coconut completely, pull the two sections apart with your hands.



Use a spoon to separate the meat of the coconut from the shell.
Enjoy!

Cherimoya

Cherimoya was originally grown by Inca farmers in Ecuador and Peru, however, cherimoya is now savored world-wide. Cherimoya is considered one of the most exquisite fruits of the world and tastes like a blend of pineapple, mango and strawberry flavors. Ripe fruits are black-green and give to slight pressure, like an avocado or peach. Cherimoyas are very delicate and are exported on a small scale. The cherimoya season is from October to May in California.



Cherimoyas ripen within two to three days at room temperature. You should eat ripe fruits immediately.



Inside, cherimoya is creamy, similar to a ripe peach. It will "melt" in the mouth.

Cherimoya contains several black inedible seeds.

You may slice cherimoya in wedges and enjoy it like an orange. Or peel, seed and cut the white, slightly ivory-colored flesh of the cherimoya into chunks.



Kum quat

Kumquat fruits are produced from small evergreen trees. Kumquats are native to China and Indochina, but are also cultivated in Japan and in warmer areas of the United States.

Kumquat trees produce small, edible fruits that look similar to oranges, only kumquats are approximately 1 to 1 1/2 inches in length and are either oval or round in shape. These fruits are extremely juicy and tasty and usually have a sweet outer skin accompanied by a tart, inner flesh.

Kumquats offer many nutritional benefits. They are cholesterol, fat, and sodium free and provide a good source of fiber and of the vitamins A and C. Kumquats contain traces of calcium and iron. Thus, they offer a sweet alternative to other less healthy snack foods.



You may eat kumquat fruit whole, as is, with the skin, or add pieces of it to fruit salads or to dessert recipes.

Slices of kumquats may be used as a fancy decoration for any dish.



Longan

The longan is a round fruit and varies from 3/4" to 1 - 1/2" in diameter. Many people prefer the longan to the longan's pink relative, the lychee, since it has a distinctive musky flavor and is not overly sweet. It is high in vitamin C and Potassium.



Longan has a thin, leathery, light brown skin that can easily be peeled off the fruit. The edible part is a whitish, somewhat translucent gelatinous aril which surrounds a shiny dark brown seed.



The flavor is sweet and pleasant. It tastes similar to a grape. When refrigerated, the fruit are very refreshing



Prickly Pear

Prickly pear is the berry of a common desert cactus. It is native to Mexico. Prickly pears are oblong and may be purple, orange, garnet red or green. Small tufts of thorns dot the surface. The fruit is delicious and has many health benefits. Prickly pears are a good source of potassium and fiber. They have significant amounts of calcium, vitamin A and many flavonoids.



When you pick prickly pears off the cactus, always wear gloves, so that their tiny thorns will not get on your skin. In stores these thorns are usually washed off.

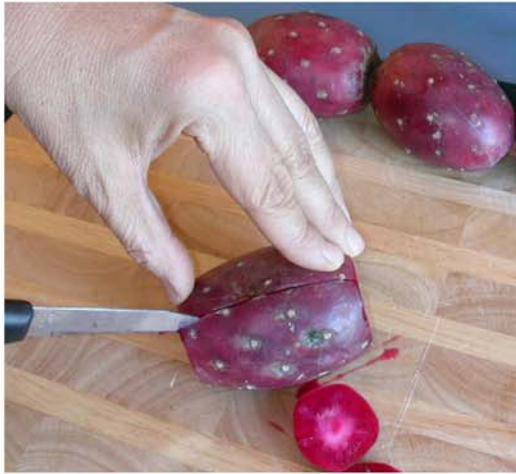
Prickly pears are ripe when fruit is soft to touch.



To eat the sweet prickly pear fruit, you need to peel off the skin.

First, cut 1/4 inch off the both ends of the fruit.





Using a small knife, make a shallow cut from one end of the fruit to the other .



Open the cut with your hands.

Peel off the skin of the fruit and slice the middle part. The flesh of a prickly pear is pulpy with crunchy edible seeds.



The bright magenta color of a prickly pear makes this delicious fruit attractive for everyone, especially for children.

Prickly pear adds magic to any feast.



Mango

Mangos are native to India. They are a very sweet fruit, containing up to 15% sugar. Mangos are packed with powerful and healthy nutrients, and contain significant amounts of vitamins A, B, C, E and P, in combination with calcium, iron, potassium and magnesium.



When ripe, mangoes are quite juicy and can be messy to eat. Here are some good ideas on handling mangos.



Mangos have a large flat pit inside. For this reason, they are shaped like a slightly squished oval. The widest part of the mango is where the flat pit is located. To get the most meat, slice off the flatter sides of the fruit as close to the pit as possible.





Your goal is to cut off most of the mango meat in these two cuts.



There will be some meat still on the pit, which you may cut off separately with a small paring knife.



Put one side section of the mango into your palm and carefully begin to cut parallel lines with a small knife.

The cuts should be approximately 1/2 an inch apart or closer.

Watch out! Don't cut so deeply that you injure your palm.



Rotate the mango side in your palm, and begin to make parallel cuts 1/2 an inch apart from each other. To insure that the mango cubes separate well, it is important that these cuts reach the peel all the way along.



These cuts should form a grid. Take the mango side in both of your hands, and turn it inside out.



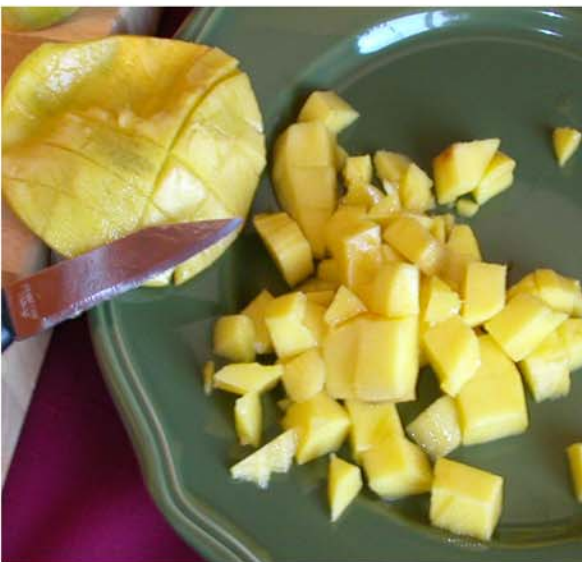
The mango cubes should stick out like the spikes on a porcupine, making it easy to gobble up the mango neatly.



You may enjoy eating the scrumptious mango cubes right off the skin.



You may also cut them off with a knife and serve them in a nice dish decorated with colorful pieces of other fruit.



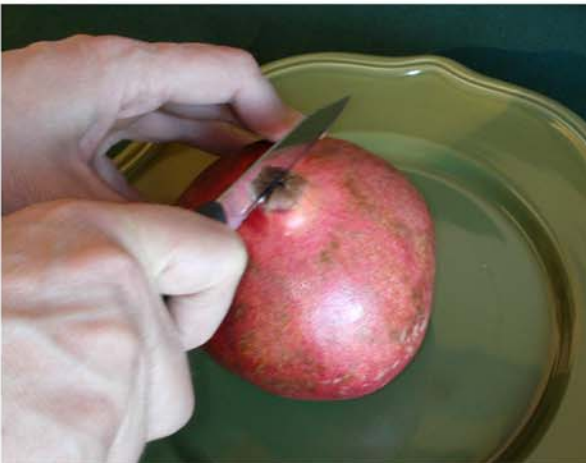
Pomegranate

Pomegranates are native to Arabia, Persia, Bengal, China, and Japan. Each of these wonderful fruits is filled with over 650 sweet and juicy ruby-red seeds. Pomegranates grow best in areas that have cold winters and hot summers. They grow on a small tree that ranges from 15 to 24 feet in height.



Cutting into pomegranate can be rather tricky. Here are some great tips on serving and eating a pomegranate.

The most important thing to keep in mind while cutting into this extraordinary fruit is that you want as many of the seeds to stay whole as possible. The seeds are filled with juice, and when they are cut the juice leaks out



Place the pomegranate on a plate. Every pomegranate has a protruding navel. Use a small knife to make a long shallow cut right through this navel.



The cut should be no deeper than the skin of the pomegranate. It should go half way down both sides of the pomegranate. At the navel, make the cut slightly deeper than everywhere else.



Next, make another cut identical to the previous one, only this time going perpendicular to the first cut. Both cuts should create a cross that divides the pomegranate into four sections.



Place the blade of your knife into the gap of the cut, and wiggle it from side to side to slightly open the pomegranate.

Repeat this move with the perpendicular cut.



Break the pomegranate into halves, and then quarters, with your hands.



After breaking the pomegranate into fourths, take the thin white peel off the seeds before you begin to eat them because this peel is quite bitter.



One way to eat a pomegranate is right out of the peel. The rind is flexible, and can be turned inside out somewhat like the peel of an orange. The pits inside the seeds are edible, you don't have to spit them out.



Another way to eat a pomegranate is to completely separate the seeds from the peel, and eat them out of a bowl with a spoon. Yum-yum!

Persimmon

There are two popular kinds of persimmons: Hachiya and Fuyu.

Hachiya is an acorn-shaped persimmon that is astringent until it's soft-ripe.

Fuyu is a smaller, flatter, nonastringent variety that can be eaten while still firm.

A Fuyu Persimmon has approximately 118 calories and is an excellent source of Vitamin A. Persimmons are free of fat, cholesterol and sodium.



Hachiya persimmons have two personalities. When ripe, they possess a rich, sweet, spicy flavor. The unripened fruit, however, tastes so astringent that biting into it causes the mouth to pucker. As the fruit ripens and softens, the astringency completely disappears.



The fuyu persimmons are becoming increasingly popular in the United States. Fuyu persimmons are often called "fruit of the gods". They are sweet and delicious with a crisp texture.

You may eat fuyu persimmons just like an apple.



Or you may want to slice them into small chunks. Start by cutting out the stem.

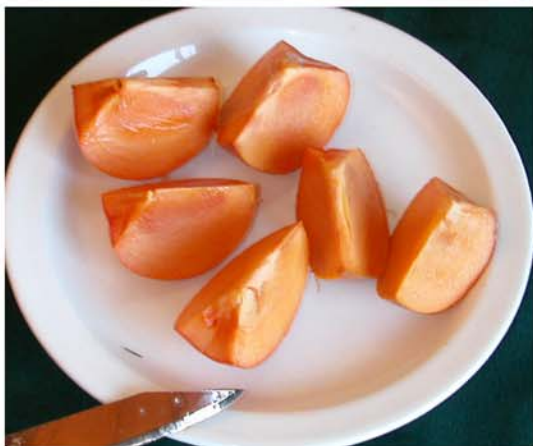


The skin around the stem is somewhat dry and a little hard, so we recommend that you cut out about 1 inch of it around the stem.

Sliced fuyu persimmons make great sweet snacks, a great alternative to candy.



Diced persimmons may be used to enhance a fruit salad with their perky orange color and sweet taste.



To make a delicious persimmon smoothie, blend well in a blender the following ingredients:

5-6 ripe persimmons, sliced
2 cups of water

Serve in a nice glass with a sprig of mint.
Yields: 4 cups



Star Fruit

Star fruit is the common name for carambola. This fragrant fruit is small and oval-shaped ranging from 3 to 5 inches long with four to six deep lengthwise grooves. It has an edible, thin, waxy bright-yellow skin and sweet, juicy translucent yellow flesh. Its taste is similar to a combination of lemon, apple and pineapple. Star fruit can be slightly tart. It is native to Malaysia.



When star fruit is sliced crosswise, the slices are shaped like stars; this is how star fruit got its name.

Star fruit is easy to prepare, because it does not require peeling or seeding. Children love this fruit.



When a star fruit is ripe, it has a soft golden color and is remarkably sweet.

Star fruit is excellent for decoration. It brightens up every dish with its color and with its shape. Star fruit sparks a fun curiosity to those who have never seen it.



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In this series of books we reveal countless tips and tricks that we have acquired through many years of preparing raw foods every day. Our family has been living on a live foods diet since 1994. We love to eat delicious food, and for this reason, we have come up with scores of mouthwatering recipes. After teaching hundreds of food preparation classes around the globe, we have come to the conclusion that a step-by-step recipe book would be particularly useful in educating new raw food chefs. Our family's mission is not only to inform others of the health benefits of raw foods, but also to make this lifestyle realistically possible and enjoyable.

We hope these books will help you make dining-in-the-raw more practical and palatable.



Valya, Igor, Victoria and Sergei Boutenko

