

On the table...



Odd looking yet provocatively fragrant, going guava is one experience you won't soon forget!
Food stylist and photographer: Laura Kurella

Going Guava!

By Laura Kurella

I know it may sound strange, but the only reason I ever had an interest in guava was because of a lyric I heard eons ago (as a teen) sung by Barbra Streisand. Many decades later, in a grocery store in North Carolina of all places, my husband sighed, “My these guava are fragrant.”

“Guava?” I squawked. “Hmm, I’ve always wanted to try them,” and so we did!

Offering a taunting aroma that is tropically-teasing, guava is strikingly fragrant, with a tropical-tangy taste that is not only unmatched, but also sadly unnoticed. Rich in calcium, magnesium, phosphorus and potassium, guava also boasts a good source of vitamin A, and is well known as a booster for vision health, which includes helping to slow down the appearance of cataracts, macular degeneration, slow the deterioration of eyesight, and improve the overall health of the eyes. The leaves of guava can also help strengthen eye veins, too.

Loaded with B vitamins, B3 and B6, Vitamin B3 (also known as niacin), guava can help increase blood flow, stimulate cognitive function of the brain, and also improve nerve function, and its high levels of potassium and soluble fibers rate this fruit as one of the major contributors to improved health!

Containing a high amount of antioxidants, guava can help fight bacteria and other illnesses, increase immunity, improve skin issues, and help prevent the growth of cancer cells, including reducing prostate cancer risk and also inhibit the growth of breast cancer cells.

The best way to utilize this fruit is to peel it with a knife or a vegetable peeler. There are lots of tiny stone-like pits, but it is so worth the palate pleasures this gem brings to your plate!

Look for guava that is slightly firm under pressure. Light yellow color is the ripest fruit!

Kicking myself for not hunting this fruit down decades sooner, I can tell you in hindsight that guava is truly a treat and quite the pleasure to both smell and eat!

Here now are some oh-so-aromatic-ways to get you going guava. Enjoy!

Guava Jelly

- Guava Jelly**

Prep time: 5 minutes; Cook time: 45 minutes; Yield: Approximately 12 ounces.

 - 3 cups guavas, peeled and chopped
 - 3 cups water
 - 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
 - 3/4 cup sugar
 - 2 limes, juiced
 - 1 teaspoon natural, fine sea salt

In a medium saucepan, place all ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 30 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool. Pour mixture through a fine mesh sieve to separate out seeds. Using a large spoon, press down on solids to release juices. Return mixture back to saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and let cook for 40 minutes or until thickened. Remove from heat and let cool. Pour into jars and refrigerate until use.
- Personal Guava Punch**

Prep time: 5 minutes; Yield: 1 serving.

 - 1 guava, peeled
 - 1 tablespoon of grated ginger
 - Juice from two peeled oranges
 - Juice of 1 lemon.

Place all ingredients in a blender. Sweeten with honey, if desired, then serve.
- Guava Daiquiri**

Prep time: 5 minutes; Yield: 4 servings

 - 2 ounces guava simple syrup (recipe below)
 - 1/2 cup crushed ice
 - 3 ripe bananas
 - 3 limes, juiced
 - 8 ounces white rum

In a blender, add 2 ounces of guava simple syrup, crushed ice, bananas, lime juice and rum. Blend until smooth and serve immediately.
- Guava Simple Syrup:**

Prep time: 10 minutes; Cook time: 1 hour; Total time: 1 hour, 10 minutes.

 - 1-pound guava, ends removed and quartered
 - 1/3 cup cane sugar

Place prepared guava in a large sauce pan, add just



enough water to cover fruit. Bring to a boil then reduce heat to a simmer.

Cook until guava is very tender, about 30 minutes. Strain through a fine mesh sieve to remove seeds and skin.

Return to stove top and stir in sugar. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat. Let simmer for 30 minutes, or until reduced by half. Let cool. Bottle and store in refrigerator.