

TUTTI FRUITTI

Can't differentiate between a *mang cut* and a *mang cau*? Don't know a lychee from a longan? Love a *sapoche sinh* too but have no idea what it is? Here are the ins and outs of ten tropical treats. Words by Giselle Whiteaker



'Rambut' means hair in Malaysia, giving rambutan the nickname the Hairy Cherry.

RAMBUTAN (*Chom Chom*)

Appearance: Rambutan are small, round fruit with thick skin that turns from green to yellow to red as it ripens. Overripe they turn deep red and are hard enough to crack skulls with. The skin has soft fleshy hair over the entire surface. The flesh inside is white and firm, with a central stone. Both rambutan and longan are the offspring of lychees.

Flavour: Rambutan have a light, sweet flavour with a faintly acidic tang. The flesh is a similar consistency to that of a grape.

Try: Rambutan and mint blended with ice. It makes for a delicious and refreshing cooler.



Mangosteen is hard to grow. A tree takes eight to 15 years to bear fruit.

MANGOSTEEN (*Mang Cut*)

Appearance: Mangosteens are slightly smaller than a tennis ball, with a deep purple rough skin. The skin is fleshy and inside sits partly transparent white pulp split into segments.

Flavour: The segments taste both sweet and sour and have an acidic after-taste, close to the flavour of a peach.

Try: Chutney with a zing. Just mix chilli, onion, mangosteen, lime juice and brown sugar in a frying pan until the onion and mangosteen soften.



The pomelo is sometimes called Shaddock after the English Captain who took it to the Caribbean during the 17th century.

POMELO (*Buoi*)

Appearance: Pomelos are the largest citrus fruit, ranging between 15 to 25cm in diameter and weighing over a kilo each. They are shades of green, with an extremely thick rind and pale yellow flesh, similar to grapefruit. The skin around each segment is too thick and woody to eat.

Flavour: If you could remove the bitterness from a grapefruit, you would be left with a pomelo.

Try: Pomelo rind marmalade.



The five ridges running down the side of the fruit are not definite. There may be as few as three, which distorts the star to a triangle.

STAR FRUIT (*Khe*)

Appearance: Star fruit are green when young, turning yellowy-orange and slightly translucent when ripe. The skin is tough while the flesh is soft. When sliced cross-wise, the pieces look like five-pointed stars.

Flavour: The entire fruit can be eaten and the flesh is juicy, sweet and sour tasting. Unripe star fruit taste like green apples but the flavour is similar to a combination of pears and oranges when ripe.

Try: Starfruit and avocado salad, with lettuce, tomato and red onion, drizzled with lemon vinaigrette.