



The edible portion of a durian only accounts for around 15 to 30 percent of the total mass of the fruit.

DURIAN (*Sau Rieng*)

Appearance: Resembling jackfruit, durian are large, spiky green or yellow knobby fruit. Inside there are five pods of creamy yellow flesh with three seeds.

Flavour: Custard-like, with an almond tinge, rich and creamy, complemented by the smooth flesh. Unfortunately this is marred by the pungent odour that has led to it being banned in enclosed public transport and hotel rooms.

Try: Durian ice-cream. Most supermarkets stock it. We're not saying it's great, we are just saying it exists. And smells less.



Like the dragonfruit, waterapples are often used as offerings on the altar in Vietnam because of their vibrant colours.

WATER APPLE (*Roi*)

Appearance: Varying from pale green to ruby red, the waterapple looks like a standard apple, but is much lighter. It is bell shaped and the centre of the fruit is hollow.

Flavour: Mild, crunchy and insubstantial, with a light juice. It's like eating candy floss sprinkled with lime juice.

Try: Waterapple jam as a tasty spread. Boil around 50 fruit with two cups of water until the volume halves, then strain. Simmer the juice with a cup of sugar until it sets then drop a small amount onto a plate.



If you want to speed up the ripening process of a custard apple, put it in a paper bag with a banana.

CUSTARD APPLE (*Mang Cau*)

Appearance: Round and bumpy. The peel is thick and covered with white or green pollen. It looks like dragon scales if you have the right imagination. The pulp is white or light yellow and contains a lot of black seeds.

Flavour: The custard apple has an unusual texture — gritty, but juicy. It is a sweet bread-pudding like fruit.

Try: Sauce for a summer salad. Blend equal amounts of custard apple puree and ranch dressing to make a perfectly sweet sauce.



Dragonfruit are a kind of climbing cactus with white flowers that bloom at night.

DRAGON FRUIT (*Thanh Long*)

Appearance: Dragonfruit lead the pack when it comes to exotic looks. A deep pink exterior with lime green wedge-shaped spikes hides pure white flesh with hundreds of tiny black seeds.

Flavour: The flesh of the dragonfruit is light and tangy, with a hint of lemon. Take the taste of a kiwifruit, mix it with a crunchy pear, and voila — dragonfruit.

Try: A fruit salad. Combine chopped mango, dragonfruit and pineapple, and sprinkle lightly with brown sugar and lime juice. Delicious.



When unripe, sapodillas are inedible as they contain a lot of sticky resin. The fruit won't ripen unless it's picked.

SAPODILLA (*Sapoche*)

Appearance: Shaped like eggs with brown peel that has tiny cracks near the stalk. The pulp is yellowish brown with two to five black seeds in the central cavities.

Flavour: Sapodilla have a malt flavour, moving closer to caramel at the right stage of ripeness.

Try: Dessert sauce. Press sapodilla through a colander with a splash of orange juice and top it with whipped cream.



Jackfruits grow on every part of the tree — the trunk, branches and even the roots.

JACKFRUIT (*Mit*)

Appearance: Usually oblong, growing up to 90 cm long, weighing up to 44kg. Jackfruits have a thick green rind with hundreds of hexagonal spines. Inside sit many yellow pulp segments, with a brown pit in the centre.

Flavour: The yellow flesh is rubbery and sweet. It can be torn into fleshy strips with a mild odour reminiscent of scented insect spray. The flavour is a mix between a pineapple and an almost ripe banana.

Try: Adding it to a Thai curry.