

PENNY SAVER NEWS

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How do you like your mangos? Are you a red-mango person? Or have you discovered the joys of green or yellow mangoes? There are lots of varieties, not just big red ones. Those little yellow ones are not under-ripe, that's what they're supposed to look like. Some varieties are more long and slender, some are more round and full. Some are pale yellow when they're ripe, some are green.

Depending on where you grew up, you may prefer a yellow or a green variety. Most Americans who didn't taste a mango until they were adults tend to choose a red variety. We think that red color is the sign that it is ripe, just a peach gets its pretty red blush as it ripens.

But people who grew up eating Asian or South American fruit will often choose green or yellow fruit. Many of the importers who bring the fruit in and distribute it to grocery stores have been converted to the yellow or green varieties. They've learned that these are often sweeter. And some don't have strings that stick in your teeth.

For produce sellers, all this variety is a problem. How are we supposed to tell when a fruit is ready to eat if we can't depend on the color? How should we know that a smaller fruit is actually more flavorful? What happens is that we decide to try one, pick a big red one, and find that it's full of strings, isn't very sweet and many even tastes bitter. Ugh! Then we never go back to try it again.

That's a real pity. Unless you happen to be among the unfortunate who are

allergic to them, mangoes are a real delight. They're sweet, juicy, with a flavor described as a mixture of peach, orange and some tropical exotic deliciousness. A good ripe mango can be eaten with a spoon or cut into chunks for a fruit salad or parfait. If you don't mind the juice running down to elbow you can even peel one and eat it out of hand. They make good pies and great fruit salsa.

How do you pick a ripe one if the colors vary so much? Give it a slight squeeze. A ripe mango should have just a little bit of give. If the skin looks shriveled or feels soft, it's either bruised or not nearly ripe enough. Ignore the color, Tommy Atkins are red, Ataulfos and Manillas are yellow, Kents and Keitts are green, Francines are green and yellow. There are lots of other varieties, coming from many other countries, so don't limit yourself.

Once you've chosen your fruit, treat it nicely. Mangoes are like bananas, they don't like cold. When they get too cold the flavors will change and they'll get uneven soft spots. Don't refrigerate them unless and until they are completely ripe and soft and you need to keep them a few more days.

To cut a mango, lay it on its side and slice toward the center. When the knife hits the seed turn the mango and slide the knife the whole way around the seed. Now twist the two halves apart and lift the seed out. Make several slices through the flesh but don't cut through the skin. Turn the fruit and make several cuts across the first ones. Now put your thumbs in the middle of the skin side and push. You'll turn the fruit inside out, and all those little cubes will be ready to cut or scoop off the skin, into your mouth.

This time of year most of the mangoes in the store are probably imported, so it's

a good time to try some new varieties. Our Florida fruit will start ripening in May and be available until October. You have lots of time to enjoy them all!

If you want something other than mangoes in a fruit salad, here's a chilled chicken salad for dinner. For variety you could add a teaspoon of curry powder or a few drops of hot sauce to the dressing. To speed things up, use a rotisserie chicken.

Mango Chicken Salad

2 cups chopped cooked chicken	2 cups cubed ripe mango
1 large tomato, chopped	1 medium sweet green pepper, chopped
2 green onions, chopped	1/2 cup plain fat free yogurt
1 Tbsp vinegar	1 Tbsp lemon juice
1 tsp sugar or sweetener	1 bag salad greens

Combine chicken, mango, tomato, green pepper and onion in large bowl. Blend vinegar, lemon juice and sugar into yogurt in small bowl. Stir into chicken mixture. Chill 2 to 4 hours. Put salad greens in large serving bowl, top with chicken mixture and serve. Serves 4.

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