

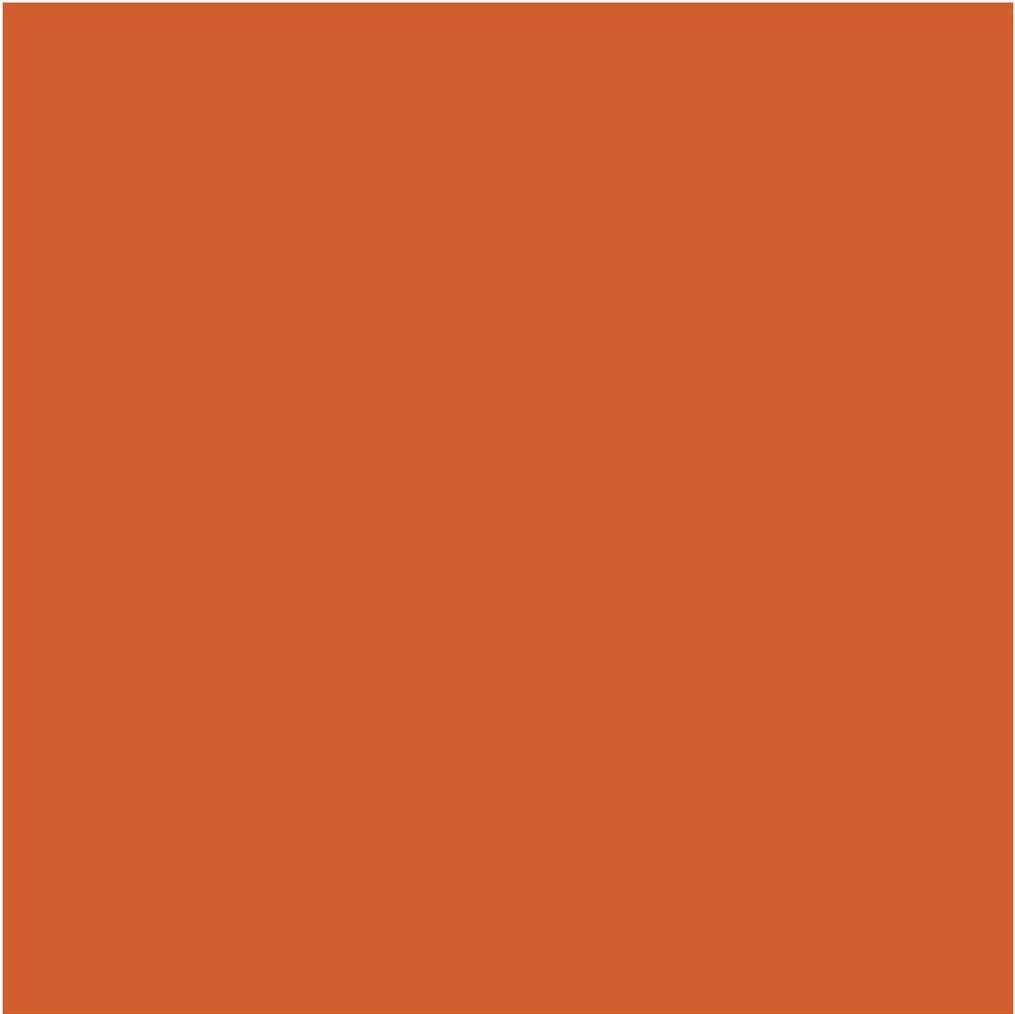
# Erika's Guide

## caribbean Food and Drink

VOLUME ONE: FRUIT/VEG/DRINK



Heather Grant  
Illustrated by Martha Johnson



**Erika's**  
GUIDE  
**Caribbean Food and Drink**  
**VOLUME ONE: FRUIT/VEG/DRINK**  
SECOND EDITION, JULY, 2014

**Heather Grant**  
Illustrated by Martha Johnson

Compliments of  
**Erika's**



**Grenadines Yacht Agent - at your service**

**Clifton, Union Island, St. Vincent & the Grenadines**  
**Tel: +1 784 485-8335 E-mail: vip@erikamarine.com**  
**<http://www.erikamarine.com/SuperyachtServices.html>**

# Acknowledgements

Created and written by Heather Grant  
Illustrated by Martha Johnson  
Layout by Heather Grant  
Published by Erika (West Indies) Ltd.  
Clifton, Union Island, St. Vincent & the Grenadines  
Telephone: 1 784 485-8335  
E-mail: [info@erikamarine.com](mailto:info@erikamarine.com)  
[www.erikamarine.com/SuperyachtServices.html](http://www.erikamarine.com/SuperyachtServices.html)  
© Erika (West Indies) Ltd. 2012. All rights reserved

This book is dedicated to the memory of Norma Harvey (1939 - 2008), who originally aroused my interest in regional food and recipes. Great thanks go to the people who helped to bring this book to fruition (no pun intended), for their support, encouragement and favourite recipes - Joelle Wetter, Stephen Sammons, Maria Rieger, Jaclita Hubbs, Chille Alexander, Alain Fanchette, Nancy Wall and several of the super yacht chefs.

Sincere thanks to Dr. The Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, for his support of this project.

I would like to especially thank my husband, Iain Grant, who encouraged me to persevere, assisted with the layout and also contributed his delicious breadfruit recipe.



The Prime Minister  
St. Vincent and the Grenadines  
West Indies



October 17, 2012

Welcome!

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to our islands. On behalf of all the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines we greet you and extend our wishes for a successful stay.

This Guide to local Caribbean Fruits and Vegetables should allow you to offer your guests an authentic taste of the islands, and offer you some insights into the foods we enjoy – all locally produced in the Windward Islands.

We trust that you will enjoy our local fare, and that you will look at this book and remember your last voyage to Vincentian waters – and hurry back to see us again soon!

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ralph E. Gonsalves'.

Dr. The Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves  
Prime Minister

Tel: 784 456-1703 <> Fax: 784 457-2152  
E-mail: [pmosvg@vincysurf.com](mailto:pmosvg@vincysurf.com)



Typical coconut palm seen on Palm Island, SVG

## About Our Authors

Heather Grant is the Managing Director of Erika's Marine Services in Union Island, St. Vincent & the Grenadines. She has developed a yacht services agency that assists yachts of all sizes as they ply the waters of the Grenadines. Erika's has been helping yachts since 2000. Heather is an active community worker, a founding member of the Union Island Sailing Club, an enthusiastic proponent of literacy in the islands (Boaters for Books) and the "Get Caught Reading" programme, a founding member of Southern Grenadines Animal Kindness, a sponsor of the Union Island 'Artist in Residence' programme and a member of CYBA.

Martha Johnson received her formal art education at the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada - Fine Art BA. Over thirty years working as a visual artist, Martha has produced drawings, paintings, sculptures and installations. She teaches painting at the Avenue Road Arts School in Toronto and in Grand Manan, New Brunswick, Canada in the summer. Martha is currently working on a film about an albatross that was found in the Bay of Fundy, 7,000 miles off course. She is the Gallerist at White Wall North, Toronto, Canada. Martha was artist in residence in Union Island, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, in 2007 and 2008, teaching basic wire sculpture forms to children and adults.  
[www.marthajohnson.ca](http://www.marthajohnson.ca)

## Author's Notes

This small book is meant to be an inspiration to cooks and chefs who are producing meals in the Grenadines. Although not known for its haute cuisine, the Caribbean produces wonderful foods. Those with a creative flair and formal training can use these locally grown products to delight their families, guests and clients, in addition to feeding them well!

Please consider the relative ease with which you can obtain the ingredients presented in this volume. Almost every island has a local market overflowing with fresh, local produce. No planes, trucks, refrigeration or fossil fuels are involved in bringing them to your kitchen/galley. For the environmentally conscious, buying local is not a new concept. And the difference in flavour is remarkable. Fruits and vegetables picked unripe and transported thousands of miles under refrigeration taste quite different from the mango just plucked from the tree, the lettuce pulled from the ground one hour before eating it.

The other benefit of "buying local" is to the farmers who produce the food. St. Vincent has a thriving agricultural industry, working hard on very small patches of land to produce the fresh fruits and vegetables we all enjoy. If we buy more, I hope they will produce more varieties and perhaps can grow certain items to order.

We know our audience consists of professional chefs and are not suggesting that we can teach you how to cook. Our purpose is to introduce you to the cornucopia of fine products available in the Grenadines islands, some of which you may not have encountered before. A few favourite recipes from our kitchen have sneaked into the book. We hope you will accept them in good spirit. Try them, modify them, enjoy experimenting with a new vocabulary of ingredients.

**Heather Grant**  
**Erika's Marine Services**  
**The Grenadines**

## Banned in SVG!\*

Some foods are banned from importation into St. Vincent & the Grenadines. There are a couple of reasons for this. SVG grows many different foods and the government protects its farmers. In addition, the government is extremely concerned about pests and disease that may be brought in on various foods, so the bans are strict.

If these items are imported, they will be confiscated at the port of entry. Unpleasant, but real.

Check with Erika's before ordering from foreign suppliers. We can determine if any of your order is banned and help you substitute - or even find the same thing locally.

\*It is not in just SVG where foods are banned. Other countries have such regulations too. SVG is typical.



Following is a partial list of  
**banned** food imports:

**avocados**

**limes**

**lemons**

**mangoes**

**oranges**

**grapefruit**

**blood oranges**

**bananas - ripe/unripe**

**tangerines**

**sweet potatoes**



*Cove on south shore of Union Island, SVG*

# Contents

Vegetables



Fruit



Drinks



## Breadfruit

On January 23, 1793 Captain William Bligh anchored the HMS Providence off Kingstown (St. Vincent) and completed his ambition of bringing breadfruit plants here from Tahiti. His first attempt resulted in the infamous mutiny on the Bounty. After being adrift for 47 days in the Pacific, Captain Bligh returned and, it is said, one of the trees now growing in Kingstown's Botanical Gardens is a descendant of one of his original breadfruit plants. Breadfruits were used as an economical source of food during slavery.

Breadfruit (10 - 30 cm long X 9 - 20 cm wide, round, oval or oblong) is very rich in starch and before being eaten, it is roasted, baked, fried or boiled. It tastes similar to potato. Breadfruit can be eaten once cooked, or can be further processed into a variety of other foods. A common product is a mixture of cooked or fermented breadfruit mash mixed with coconut milk and baked in banana leaves. Whole fruits can be cooked in an open fire, then cored and filled with other foods, such as coconut milk, sugar and butter, cooked meats, or other fruits. The filled fruit can be further cooked so the flavour of the filling permeates the flesh of the breadfruit.

## Breadfruit Salad - Union Island Style

Breadfruit - One Medium Breadfruit, not quite ripe

Mustard - Dijon mustard, 125 ml (½ cup)

Onion - 3 small Spanish onions, finely chopped

Olive Oil - 125 ml (½ cup)

Limes - Juice of 5

Mayonnaise - 250 ml (1 cup)

Eggs - 5 hard boiled

Shallots - 4 green, sliced thinly

Chives 125 ml (½ cup)

Garlic - 3 cloves, coarsely chopped

Pepper sauce - 5 ml

Salt - kosher (to taste)



Peel and core breadfruit, dice into 2 cm cubes, boil till tender, but firm. Drain. Peel and dice hardboiled eggs; chop onions - add to Breadfruit with olive oil and lime juice. Add Mayo, sliced Shallots, chopped chives and chopped garlic. Stir. Add pepper sauce and kosher salt to taste. Stir. Refrigerate for at least one hour. Stir. Serve cold.

## Green Bananas

Depending on which of the islands you are in, you will hear the words: Green Bananas and Fig being used interchangeably. In both cases, they are referring to the same thing - green bananas. This is the same banana that one would eat as a ripe fruit for breakfast or a snack (dessert banana). Green bananas in this case are used as a vegetable. They are prepared in savoury dishes.

Green Bananas are used to make salads, just as one would make a potato salad, pies such as one would make a shepherd's pie. Whether fresh or dried, they can be made into porridge. When fresh and sliced thinly, one can make Green Banana chips or simply boil the Green Bananas and eat with some sort of sautéed salt meat.

Banana leaves make an impressive decoration for a tropical-themed table.

## Mashed Green Bananas

Makes 2-4 servings

Mashed green bananas, which taste similar to mashed potatoes, complement Caribbean and other summery recipes well. The greener the bananas, the better!

3 green bananas  
3/4 cup water (enough to cover bananas)  
1/3 cup canned coconut milk  
1/3 cup finely onion chopped  
1/4 tsp salt (or to taste)



Chop the top and bottom off the bananas.  
Under cold running water, cut the bananas' skin along their ridges with a paring knife. Then, with water still running, peel off the skin in sections. This washes off the sap that is released when the bananas are peeled.  
Cut peeled bananas in half.  
Put water and bananas in a 2 quart pot. Bring to a boil and cook for about fifteen minutes. They should boil until they are the slightly firmer than cooked potatoes. Drain off water when cooked, and mash with coconut milk, chopped onion and salt to taste.

## Plantain

Plantain is the common name for herbaceous plants of the genus *Musa*. The fruit they produce is generally used for cooking, in contrast to the soft, sweet banana (which is sometimes referred to as the dessert banana). There is no formal botanical distinction between bananas and plantains, and the use of either term is based purely on how the fruits are consumed. Their attractiveness as food is that they fruit all year round, making them a reliable all-season staple food. The end of the plantain is more wedge-shaped than the banana.

In the Caribbean, the plantain is either simply fried, boiled or added to a soup. You can use it either green or ripe, but the level of ripeness determines the way to cook it. Fry or bake unripe to make plantain chips for a snack, use overripe plantains to make fritters for dessert.

## How to Peel a Plantain

Peeling a plantain can be tricky. Ripe plantains peel easily, like a banana. Green plantains are very difficult to peel. Here's how to peel a plantain:

1. Slice off the ends.
2. Use a sharp knife to slit the skin from tip to tip.
3. Peel under cold running water to keep your hands from becoming stained.
4. Peel the skin sideways in one piece.
5. Place the peeled fruit in salted water to keep it from discolouring before cooking.



## Root vegetables (Ground Provisions)

Residents of St. Vincent & the Grenadines call root vegetables "ground provisions". It is a staple part of their diet. Inexpensive and filling, ground provisions are grown locally and are available year round. These are the starches that West Indians eat.



**Yam** is a versatile vegetable. It can be barbecued, roasted, fried, grilled, boiled, baked, smoked and when grated, it is processed into a dessert recipe.

**Dasheen** is another potato-like corm grown in the islands. Their taste is earthy and nutty, and they are a common ingredient in soups and stews. They may also be eaten grilled, fried or puréed. The young, unfurled leaves of some varieties can be eaten as boiled leafy vegetables or used in soups and stew, such as the Caribbean calaloo. (see 'Calaloo').



**Sweet potato** is a large, starchy, sweet-tasting, tuberous root. The young leaves and shoots are sometimes eaten as greens, but the starchy tuberous roots are by far the most important product. In the Caribbean, they are a staple food crop.



**Eddoe** is a tropical vegetable, a variety of *Colocasia esculenta*, closely related to taro (dasheen), that is primarily used for its thickened stems (corms). It has smaller corms than taro, and in all but the best cultivars there is an acrid taste that requires careful cooking.

We mention these, so that when you are in the local markets, you can distinguish between the various "ground provisions". It has always been a great mystery to me!





Breadfruit



Green Banana



Plantain



Dasheen



*Yam*



*Tannia*



*Sweet Potato*



*Eddoe*

## Calaloo

Calaloo is the top, leafy portion of the taro or dasheen plant, a root vegetable grown for its starchy corm. It can be used as a substitute for spinach, as it reacts to cooking in the same way as spinach. It is used extensively in the Caribbean.

### Stewed Calaloo

Chopped calaloo leaves- you can leave some of the stalks in, but better not to leave all

3 tbsp. vegetable oil

2 minced garlic cloves

2 medium onions

Coconut milk - enough to cover calaloo

Salt

Pepper

Hot pepper sauce (optional)



Heat oil in heavy saucepan. Add chopped onions and garlic. When soft, add calaloo leaves and toss until coated with oil and wilted.

Add coconut milk until enough to cover calaloo. Simmer until the calaloo is soft and most of the milk has evaporated.

Add seasonings and serve as a vegetable.

You can add salt fish, chicken pieces, or other meats to make a stew.

If you wish to make calaloo soup, and we recommend that you do so, follow the same steps, but add more coconut milk as well as chicken broth. Then use a blender or food processor to whip up the mixture so that there are fewer distinct pieces and more of a smooth soup texture.

# Christophine



The chayote (*Sechium edule*), also known as christophene or christophine, is an edible plant belonging to the gourd family cucurbitaceae, along with melons, cucumbers and squash.

The christophine is used both raw and cooked. When cooked, it is usually handled like summer squash, and lightly cooked to retain the crisp flavour. Raw christophine may be added to salads or salsas, and it is often marinated with lemon or lime juice. It can also be eaten straight, although the bland flavour makes this a dubious endeavour. Whether raw or cooked, christophine is a good source of amino acids and vitamin C.

## Stuffed Christophine

For six people use 4 large Christophine or 8 small ones. This will make either six large halves or twelve small ones. You need the extra Christophines because you will end up wrecking at least one shell and because it is good to have some extra for stuffing.

Cut the Christophine in half lengthways using the natural split at the base as a guide for the knife. Boil for 20 min or until the flesh is soft enough to be scooped out with a spoon.

Use a tablespoon to very, very carefully scoop the flesh out from the skin. The skin is very fragile, so leave a bit of flesh attached. Mash the flesh or put it through a Foley food mill, and let it sit until much of the juice has seeped out. There will be a lot. Drain this liquid into a cup and reserve.

Make a thick Mornay sauce using the christophine juice as the principal liquid. Fold the sauce into the mashed christophine. Taste and add salt if necessary. Put the shells on a baking dish. Bake in a hot oven fifteen minutes or until the tops are light brown - broil for additional browning.

Like a baked potato, the skins are edible, but the dish is best if you just eat the stuffing from the shell.

Tip: Make the Mornay sauce very thick

## Pigeon Peas

Pigeon peas are both a food crop (dried peas, flour, or green vegetable peas) and a forage/cover crop. They contain high levels of protein and the important amino acids, methionine, lysine and tryptophan. Pigeon peas can be of a perennial variety, in which the crop can last three to five years.

They are a popular vegetable in the West Indies. You find the plants in people's gardens and the local people hand pick them, selling them in the roads and in markets.



When out of season, locals use tinned pigeon peas to good effect. GOYA is a reliable local provider.

## Stewed Pigeon Peas

Fresh pigeon peas  
Olive or vegetable oil  
Coconut milk  
Chopped onion  
Garlic cloves  
Hot pepper sauce - to taste  
Salt  
Pepper

Heat the oil in a heavy saucepan. Add pigeon peas and coat with the oil. Add coconut milk until the pigeon peas are covered. Add onion, garlic and spices. Cook until the peas are soft, about 30 - 40 minutes. Correct the flavour and serve. You can add a little hot sauce to bring out the flavour.

# Pumpkin

The Caribbean pumpkin or "calabaza" or "West Indian pumpkin" is a large pumpkin-like squash. It has a sweet taste and is typically used in recipes that call for butternut squash or pumpkin as an ingredient. Its seeds are edible and can be toasted and eaten whole.

It is generally green or off-white on the outside, unlike the orange pumpkins we are used to seeing.

The pumpkin is found in markets everywhere.



## Cream of Pumpkin Soup

1 pumpkin, 4 - 5 lb..  
1 onion  
2 oz. butter  
1 large potato  
1 pint water or chicken stock  
1 pint sour cream  
1 heaping teaspoon grated nutmeg  
salt  
black pepper

Scrape the pulp from the pumpkin and leave aside. Retain the shell to use as a tureen. Remove seeds. Brown chopped onion in butter, then add pumpkin. Add water and diced potato. Simmer for 40 minutes. Blend in sour cream and bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Add salt, pepper and nutmeg. Purée, then pour into pumpkin shell.

## Snake Gourd

The long, narrow, soft-skinned fruit is green with vertical white stripes - snake-like in appearance. Its soft, bland, somewhat mucilaginous flesh is similar to that of the luffa and the calabash. It is a wonderful vehicle for stuffing, generally in an Indian style of cuisine. Snake gourd masala or curry are popular. Here is a recipe using beef.

Snake gourd - 1 (cleaned and chopped in 1 inch pieces)  
Boneless beef – 1/2 cup  
Onion - 1 (finely chopped)  
Ginger-garlic paste - 1-1/2 tbsp  
Green chilies 2 (finely chopped)  
Coriander powder - 1 tsp  
Coconut - 2 tsp (grated)  
Chili powder - 1-1/2 tsp  
Curry leaves - 6 sprigs  
Egg - 1 (beaten)  
Oil - As required  
Salt - As required



- 1) Mince the beef in a blender and keep it aside.
- 2) Heat oil in a pressure cooker and sauté onion for 7 minutes on low flame. Add the ginger-garlic paste and sauté for 2 minutes.
- 3) Then add the coriander powder, grated coconut, green chilies, chili powder, curry leaves and cumin powder. Sauté for some time on low flame.
- 4) Toss in the minced beef with salt and mix well. Allow the beef to cook with a closed lid.
- 5) Open the lid and allow it to boil if there is any water.
- 6) Then stuff the snake gourd with the filling.
- 7) Heat oil in a frying pan.
- 8) Dip the stuffed snake gourd in the egg and fry it in the frying pan on low flame on all sides.
- 9) Serve hot.



Calaloo



Christophine



Pigeon Peas



Pumpkin



Snake gourd



## Cocoa

Cocoa is the dried and fully fermented fatty seed of *Theobroma cacao*, from which cocoa solids and cocoa butter are extracted. They are the basis of chocolate.

A cocoa pod (fruit) has a rough leathery rind about 3 cm thick (this varies with the origin and variety of pod). It is filled with sweet, viscous pulp (called 'baba de cacao' in South America) enclosing 30 to 50 large seeds that are fairly soft and white to a pale lavender color.

Cocoa butter is used in a variety of health and beauty products, such as lotions, facial products, cosmetics and pharmaceutical products. It is full of antioxidants and good fats. So in addition to the delicious chocolate confections made with it, it also makes a fragrant natural skin moisturizer and protective cream, often blended with other precious oils for skin care.

The Grenada Chocolate Company Ltd. produces high quality Organic dark chocolate in Grenada with their world famous cocoa beans, all available in the Grenadines.



Their award-winning organic dark chocolate has the wonderful complex flavour of Grenada's fine-flavoured organic cocoa beans, processed carefully in small batches. Producing chocolate right where the cocoa grows allows them to do their own fermenting which gives them a real advantage in creating the finest, most complex taste from the beans. They use their own extracted cocoa butter in their chocolate, also from Grenada's fine-flavoured cocoa. This brings in a luxurious extra richness and chocolaty flavour. Their chocolate has a truly deep and rich flavour.

## Coconut

The coconut provides a nutritious source of meat, juice, milk, and oil that has fed and nourished populations around the world for generations. The coconut is known for its great versatility and is part of the daily diet of many people. It has several separate products that are used for nutrition.

When green (known as tender-nuts or jelly-nuts), the coconut is full of water, known for its high potassium and minerals. You will see local vendors pushing barrows of these green nuts in the villages, chopping off the tops with their cutlasses and selling them with a straw to drink the refreshing water inside. You can also buy coconut water in bottles.

While still green, the jelly-like flesh can also be eaten by spooning it out of the husk.

'Coconut milk' is the liquid that comes from the grated meat of a ripe coconut. It is found in tins or in powder form and is generally used in cooking - see "Stewed Calaloo". 'Coconut cream' is similar to coconut milk, but contains less water. It is thicker in consistency and is also used in cooking. 'Cream of coconut' is coconut cream that has been sweetened, and is used in desserts or drinks such as pina colada.

Coconut oil is an edible oil extracted from the kernel or meat of the mature coconut. It has provided the primary source of fat in the diets of millions of people, is very heat-stable, so suitable for the high heat of frying.

Coconut meat is the white, fleshy part of the mature coconut, used fresh or dried in cooking, especially in confections such as macaroons, added to curries, made into chips.

## Guava

Guavas, singular Guava, are plants in the Myrtle family (Myrtaceae) genus *Psidium* (meaning "pomegranate" in Latin), which contains about 100 species of tropical shrubs and small trees. They are native to Mexico, Central America, and northern South America, but are now cultivated and naturalized throughout the Caribbean. The term "guava" appears to derive from Arawak *guayabo* "guava tree", via the Spanish *guayaba*.

Guava fruit, usually 4 to 12 centimetres (1.6 to 4.7 in) long, are round or oval depending on the species. The outer skin may be rough, often with a bitter taste, or soft and sweet. Varying between species, the skin can be any thickness, is usually green before maturity, but becomes yellow, maroon, or green when ripe.

Guava can be used as a glaze with meat or seafood, as the fruit flavour in cocktails, or as a dessert. We have chosen a dessert recipe.

## Guyanese Guava Pudding

about 6 ripe guavas, sieved  
3 eggs, separated  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  pt milk  
2 oz sugar



Mix together egg yolks and milk. Add guavas and sugar to taste.  
Bake in a moderate oven, 350 degrees Fahrenheit, for about 25 minutes.  
Cover with meringue made of the beaten egg whites and 2 oz sugar.  
Return to oven and bake until meringue is brown.

Serves 4-6

## Mango

The ubiquitous mango - there are many cultivars available. In the Caribbean, it is almost always possible to find mangoes. And all the ways to use them? Unripe, they are used in chutneys, pickles and side dishes, ripe, they are used to make curries, jam and a wide variety of desserts. Or just eat a fresh mango, as it comes.

### Mango Mousse

3 lb. ripe mangoes, peeled with flesh cut off seed,  
to give 4 - 5 cups of diced mango  
1-1/2 cups whipping cream  
2 egg whites  
1 - 2 tbsp. lime juice  
1/2 - 1 cup sugar  
2 packages gelatin  
1/2 cup hot water



Purée the mangoes in a blender or food processor -  
strain afterwards if still stringy

Pour the cream into a small mixing bowl and put in  
the freezer for 10 minutes

Beat the egg whites until stiff

Beat the cream until it peaks and place in fridge

Soften the gelatin in a little cold water, then dissolve  
the gelatin and sugar in the 1/2 cup of hot water

Add to the mango purée in a mixing bowl along with  
lime juice and sugar to taste. The amount of sugar  
and lime depend on the tartness of the mango and  
personal taste

Fold egg whites, cream and mango until well blended

Pour into serving dishes and set in fridge for 6 hours

## Papaya (Paw Paw)

The sweet-tart musky flavour of papaya is likened to that of apricots and ginger, sometimes with a slightly peppery bite. The taste of papaya has been compared to fruity, coffee-flavoured cooked carrots.

Available in the southern Caribbean from December to June.

Ripe papaya is better eaten raw, while the green fruit is preferred for cooking.

Use scooped out papaya halves as a serving dish for fruit, chicken or seafood salad.

Season green papaya with cinnamon, butter and honey. Bake for a delightfully different side dish.



Cut a papaya in half, sprinkle with lime or lemon juice, port or rum and a sprinkling of sugar for an easy, fresh, delicious dessert.

Try substituting green papaya for winter squash. Drain off the white, acidic sap before using.

For a pepper substitute, try ground papaya seeds.

Puréed papaya added to a marinade will not only give a tropical flavour, but also tenderize meat and poultry.

Fruits that go well with papaya: mango, passion fruit, kiwi and most berries

Complementary herbs: chives, cilantro, basil, mint and rosemary

## Passion Fruit

The passion fruit is round to oval, about the size of an orange, either yellow or dark purple at maturity, with a soft to firm, juicy interior filled with numerous seeds. The fruit is both eaten and juiced; passion fruit juice is often added to other fruit juices to enhance the aroma. It grows in proliferation in the Caribbean.

The flavour is tart and citrus-y. You can eat it raw - simply slice the passion fruit across in half and take out the seeds and juice from the shell. You eat the inside, seeds and all. The outside is just the rind.



Passion fruit is used in many ways:

Refreshing juice

Jams and preserves

Ice cream

Fruit flavour in cocktails

Puréed with creme brulée or as a topping over many desserts

Passion fruit crumble (usually with another fruit)

Passion fruit soufflé

Grilled bananas with passion fruit and yogurt

A variety of cakes baked with passion fruit



## Pineapple

Pineapple is one of the best known tropical fruits and an all time favourite with most people. It is named for its resemblance to the pine cone, consisting of coalesced berries.

Pineapples are grown extensively in St. Vincent and sold throughout the Grenadines islands. This Vincentian pineapple is smaller than those found in other countries, but is one of the most delicious, juicy and sweet versions we have ever tasted. The freshness is a large factor in its scrumptious flavour, as it has not been picked unripe and shipped around the world, but just sent island to island by ferry.



## Grilled Pineapple and Rum

Heat butter in frying pan and add pineapple (can be slices or chunks - your choice)

Add rum. Continue to cook. When bubbly, remove and cool.

1-1/4 cups heavy cream.

Whip cream and then add pineapple mix. Pour into 4 dessert cups and serve. You can wrap the warm mixture in a crepe to make it even more delicious.



## Soursop

The soursop is a broadleaf flowering evergreen tree native to the Caribbean. It is in the same genus as the cherimoya and the same family as the pawpaw. In most Spanish speaking countries it is commonly known as Guanábana. In the Philippines, it is known as guyabano.

Comparisons of its flavour range from strawberry and pineapple mixed together to sour citrus flavour notes contrasting with an underlying creamy roundness of flavour reminiscent of coconut or banana. The fruit is somewhat difficult to eat, as the white interior pulp is studded with many large seeds, and pockets of soft flesh are bounded by fibrous membranes. The soursop is therefore usually juiced rather than eaten directly. It also makes a lovely, refreshing ice cream. Perfect for a warm Caribbean day.

## Raw Soursop Ice Cream



2 cups raw cashews, soaked overnight  
2 cups soursop pulp  
1 cup filtered water, as needed  
1/2 cup honey  
1/4 cup coconut butter or expeller pressed  
coconut oil  
2 tablespoons vanilla extract  
1/2 teaspoon sea salt

1. Blend all ingredients until creamy and smooth.
2. Add water as needed to keep the mixture circulating through the blender.
3. Freeze, stirring occasionally until set, or follow your ice cream maker instructions.

## Tamarind

The tamarind tree produces edible, pod-like fruit, which are used extensively in cuisines around the world. The fruit is an indehiscent legume, sometimes called a pod, 12 to 15 cm (3 to 6 inches) in length, with a hard, brown shell. The fruit has a fleshy, juicy, acidulous pulp. It is mature when the flesh is coloured brown or reddish-brown. The tamarinds of the West Indies have short pods containing one to six seeds. The seeds are somewhat flattened, and glossy brown. See photo on next page.

The tamarind is best described as sweet and sour in taste, and is high in acid, sugar, B vitamins and, oddly for a fruit, calcium.

The ripened fruit is considered palatable, as it becomes sweeter and less sour (acidic) as it matures. It is used in desserts, as a jam, blended into juices or sweetened drinks, sorbets, ice creams and all manner of snacks.

A favourite confection in the Grenadines is the  
Tamarind Ball

1-1/2 lbs. sugar, approximately  
1 lb. tamarind pulp, cleaned  
3 tbsp. flour (optional)  
pepper to taste  
salt to taste



Place about 1 lb. of cleaned tamarind pulp in a large bowl. Add salt and pepper to taste and about three tablespoons of sugar. Knead in the ingredients while separating the seeds. Sprinkle a little water over the tamarind ( very little ) to moisten it a bit. According to how sour the tamarind is, more sugar may have to be used. Let taste be your guide. Add salt to adjust taste. Take up enough tamarind and roll between your hands to make a ball about 2 inches in diameter. In a separate plate or bowl pour some sugar and roll the tamarind ball in it.  
Store in the refrigerator or in a cool area.



Cocoa/Grenada Chocolate



Green Coconut



Guava



Mango



Papaya



Passion Fruit



Pineapple



Soursop



Tamarind

## Lime

Lime is a citrus fruit known by all, 3–6 cm in diameter, and containing sour and acidic pulp. Limes are a good source of vitamin C. Limes are grown all year round and are usually smaller and less sour than lemons.

Almost every type of food can be enhanced with a squeeze of lime, from lamb to fish, vegetables, fresh fruits, even tea., and oddly, gin.

In the Caribbean, the ubiquitous lime is smaller than those found further north, with a thin skin, and very juicy. Fresh locally squeezed lime juice is available in most island markets in the Grenadines



## Ti Punch

This is a well known drink in the Caribbean, especially in the French islands and very simple to make.

1 part cane syrup  
2 parts white or old rum  
1 small slice of lime

Mix liquids, cut slivers from the side of the lime, squeeze and drop into glass. Serve with or without ice.



## Rum

A word about Caribbean rums. They are not all the same. The rums (actually rhums!) of Martinique are different. Martinique rum (known as Rhum Agricole) is derived from the distillation of raw sugar, unprocessed. Rums from other islands, and from other parts of the world, are typically made using molasses (a processed sugar) as the base for distillation.

'Rhum Agricole' is obtained by distilling only fermented sugar cane juice. 100 Kg of sugar cane produces 10 litres of 'Rhum Agricole'.

'Rhum vieux' or Aged Rum: 'Rhum Agricole' allowed to age for at least 3 years in casks of 650L or less. Aged rum from Martinique is amongst the most highly regarded in the world.

Following is a drink we tried recently in Martinique, while waiting for weather to clear so that we could fly our plane north to Dominica. We call it the "Fanchette Special".

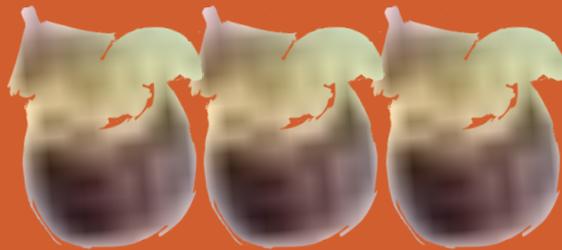
Ripe passion fruits

Rhum agricole, spiced with cinnamon and other herbs (known as "bush rum" locally)

Slice off top of passion fruit. Stir seeds and leave them inside. Pour the rum in.

Sip. Repeat.

Delicious.



## Sea Moss

If you do not know, sea moss is a type of sea weed that is dried and sold at the markets in the West Indies. In some places, you can find it bottled as a drink. It is boiled with cinnamon and milk to make a thick drink that is believed to be an aphrodisiac - so watch out if you serve it to your guests!

The sea moss drink West Indians enjoy is very potent and energizing. Sea moss contains many vital minerals and vitamins. Dried sea moss has 45 calories per cup, of which 12% comes from fat, 70% from carbohydrates and 18% from protein. Its high quantity of mucilage is highly recommended to treat digestive conditions, ulceration of the stomach and duodenum, and inflammation of the urinary system. Whether it is an aphrodisiac or not, is left up to the drinker to decide. So try it out, mix up a batch and see what you think.

## Jamaican Sea Moss drink

1 cup of cashews  
\* 2 tablespoons of Irish moss gel  
1/2 tablespoon of soy lecithin  
generous pinch of salt  
2 tablespoons of Almond essence  
3 cups of water  
1/2 cup of agave  
1/2 tablespoon of cinnamon  
1/2 tsp of nutmeg



1. Blend well, strain, chill and serve.  
\* To make Irish moss gel, soak 1 cup of Irish moss in a large bowl of water overnight. Then blend with two cups of water until gel-like. Keep it in the refrigerator as needed. It should be good for at least two weeks.

## Sorrel

Christmas in the Caribbean is a diverse multicultural affair, not just for the Christian population, but also through the secular participation of the countries at large through the enjoyment of local Christmas songs and especially the creation and consumption of the traditional Christmas foods. No Christmas in the islands would be complete without some rum-soaked black cake, cold thick Punch de Creme, or a cold refreshing glass of sorrel.

Sorrel, made from the sepals of the sorrel flower is fruity and fragrant. Similar in taste to hibiscus tea, sorrel becomes even more heavenly with the addition of rum. Made properly, your sorrel should be thick and syrupy. Fear not, just dilute it with some cold water or club soda when serving.

## Sorrel Drink

1 cup dried sorrel petals  
1 tablespoon cloves  
piece of dried orange peel  
Brown sugar syrup (1 cup water + 1 lb brown sugar boiled together)  
Dark rum, optional, but recommended. Try Sparrow's Rum from St. Vincent.



1. Boil 2 quarts of water.
3. Once water is boiling, add sorrel, orange peel and cloves.
4. Boil for 30 minutes.
5. Cover tightly and steep overnight.
6. Strain and add sugar syrup and rum (optional) to taste.
7. Chill and serve.

## Sugar Apple

The sugar apple (also known as custard apple or sweetsop) grows on a semi-evergreen shrub or small tree reaching 6–8 meters (20–26 ft) tall.

The fruit is usually round, slightly pine cone-like, 6–10 cm (2.4–3.9 in) diameter and weighing 100–230 g (3.5–8.1 oz), with a scaly or lumpy skin. There are variations in shape and size. The fruit flesh is sweet, white to light yellow, and resembles and tastes like custard. The edible portion coats the seeds generously; a bit like the gooey portion of a tomato seed. Sugar apple has a very distinct, sweet-smelling fragrance. The texture of the flesh that coats the seeds is a bit like the centre of a very ripe guava (excluding the seeds). It is slightly grainy, a bit slippery, very sweet and very soft. The seeds are scattered through the fruit flesh; the seed coats are blackish-brown, 12–18 mm (0.47–0.71 in) long, and hard and shiny.

The ripe sugar apple is usually broken open and the flesh segments enjoyed while the hard seeds are separated in the mouth and spat out. It is so luscious that it is well worth the trouble. Alternately, press the flesh through a sieve to eliminate the seeds and then add to ice cream or blend with milk to make a cool beverage. It is never cooked.





*Ti Punch*



*Martinique Rum*



*Sea Moss*



*Sorrel*



Sugar Apple

Randy's  
Tropical Rum Punch  
"A Vacation in a Bottle"  
Made & bottled in  
Union Island,  
The Grenadines



## Sauces

This book would not be complete without mentioning the sauces that are common in the region. While not known for sophisticated seasonings, West Indians are fond of hot pepper sauce. These sauces are found everywhere, from the smallest stalls right up to supermarkets.

Some are made commercially, but many are made by individuals and bottled in their homes. The common denominator is red peppers. Most are very simple recipes, containing vinegar, salt and a bit of mustard in addition.

The other commonly used bottled product is "green seasoning". Here is an example of the ingredients: green onions, celery, cilantro, thyme, sweet basil, tarragon, rosemary, white onions, garlic, scotch bonnet peppers and salt. This is used liberally when seasoning fish and chicken.



# Erika's GUIDE caribbean Food and Drink

**VOLUME ONE: FRUIT/VEG/DRINK**

SECOND EDITION, JULY, 2014



We hope you will enjoy perusing this small volume of Grenadines produce. We enjoyed compiling it. Contact Erika's for further information or for assistance in sourcing any of the products inside.

**Heather Grant**

**[vip@erikamarine.com](mailto:vip@erikamarine.com) +1 784 485-8335 VHF 68**

Printed in Canada

