

South Florida Tropicals: White Sapote¹

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Background

A member of the citrus family (*Rutaceae*), the smooth-textured white sapote (*Casimiroa edulis*) originates from the highlands of Central America and Mexico. Mostly grown as a backyard fruit tree, white sapote is grown commercially on a small scale in Florida and California. Known as matasano and sapote blanco in Spanish, white sapote is commonly round or oval with a bumpy, irregular surface. Fruit are 2 to 4 inches in diameter with a greenish-yellow skin, creamy white to yellowish, soft, sweet flesh, and 1 to 5 seeds.

Availability

Generally available from May through August and September.

Selection

Choose firm, bruise-free sapotes with green to yellow-green skin.

Storage

Allow sapotes to ripen at room temperature, uncovered, out of direct sun. Turn occasionally until they yield to gentle pressure, then refrigerate, unwashed, in a plastic or paper bag. They will keep 3 to 5 days.

Uses

White sapotes are best eaten uncooked. Cooking makes them limp and less flavorful. Sapotes can be eaten alone or combined with other fresh fruits in salads for added interest. Puree peeled, seeded sapote and mix with orange juice or milk and a few drops of vanilla to make a refreshing drink.

Nutritive Value

Sapotes contain a fair amount of vitamin A, are a good source of vitamin C, have a relatively high amount of potassium, and small amounts of other vitamins and minerals.

100 grams (approximately 1/3 cup) white sapote contains:

- 62% water
- 135 calories

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- 2 grams protein
- 0.6 gram fat
- 34 grams carbohydrate
- 344 mg. potassium
- 20 mg. vitamin C
- 410 IU vitamin A

Source: USDA NDB Number: 09314

Yield

One medium sapote yields 1/2 to 3/4 cup fruit pieces. Approximately five 2-inch sapotes equal 1 pound, and approximately 1 pound yields 1/2 cup puree.

Basic Preparation

Wash sapotes and eat as you would apples, discarding seeds. Or peel fruit, and cut the flesh from the pits. Slice into pieces. The thin immature seeds are sometimes disguised within the flesh. They are almost indistinguishable—be sure to remove these carefully.

Drizzle cut fruit with lemon or lime juice to prevent darkening.

Freezing

Not recommended.

Food Safety During Preparation

Following these steps will help reduce your risk of food-borne illness.

- Wash your hands with hot soapy water before and after:
 - handling fresh produce
 - handling raw meat, poultry, or seafood
 - using the bathroom
 - changing diapers
 - handling pets
- Wash fresh white sapote with cool tap water just before preparing or eating. **Don't use soap or detergents.**
- Cut away bruised or damaged areas before preparing or eating.
- Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops often. Use hot soapy water and rinse well. **Sanitize** them after contact with fresh produce or raw meat, poultry, or seafood.

- Don't cross contaminate. Use clean cutting boards and utensils for fresh produce. If you can, use a separate cutting board for raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- Do not consume ice that has come in contact with fresh produce or other raw products.
- Use a cooler with ice or gel packs when taking perishable food outdoors. This includes cut, fresh fruits and vegetables.

Table 1.

To Sanitize
Mix one teaspoon of unscented chlorine bleach in one quart of water.
Pour the mixture onto the surface and let sit at least one minute.
Rinse well with hot running water.

Using White Sapotes

Tropicals may vary in natural pectin, acid and sugar content from one season to another due to the variations of the climate.

White Sapote Smoothie

1 cup peeled, seeded sapote pieces

1 cup plain yogurt

1/2 cup cracked ice

1 tablespoons frozen concentrated orange juice

2 to 3 tablespoons honey or sugar

1/4 teaspoon ground ginger

In a blender or food processor, combine all ingredients. Whirl until smooth. Pour into glasses and serve at once.

Makes 2 servings (approximately 10 fluid ounces each).

White Sapote Sorbet

1 cup peeled, seeded ripe sapote chunks (2 medium-size sapotes)

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup water

2 tablespoons lemon juice

In a 1- to 2-quart pan, combine sugar and water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Boil until mixture is reduced to 1/2 cup (approximately 5 minutes). Let cool. If made ahead, cover and refrigerate until ready to use (sugar syrup keeps indefinitely).

Cut sapotes in half. Scoop pulp from the centers. In a food processor or blender, whirl sapote pulp and lemon juice until pureed.

Mix syrup and fruit puree; pour into a 9-inch square metal pan. Cover and freeze until almost firm (about 1 hour). Break frozen puree into small pieces. Process briefly in a food processor just until smooth and slushy. Do not over process.

Wrap airtight and freeze until firm (at least 2 hours) or for up to 1 month.

To serve, allow sorbet to soften slightly at room temperature, then scoop out.

Makes approximately 1 1/2 cups (3 or 4 servings).

Sapote Pie

Graham-Cracker crust

1 1/2 pounds sapotes

2 or 3 limes

1/2 cup sugar

1 envelope unflavored gelatin

3 egg yolks

1 1/2 cups non-dairy whipped topping

Peel and pit the sapotes. In a food processor or blender, puree the sapotes and measure 3/4 cup puree. Extract juice from the limes and measure 1/4 cup; reserve the rinds. Add the lime juice to the sapote puree.

In the top part of a double boiler, combine sugar and gelatin. In a small bowl, beat the egg yolks and gradually add the milk. Pour the mixture into the top of the double boiler. Simmer the mixture over boiling water for 10 minutes or until thickened. Remove from heat. Grate enough of the reserved lime rinds to measure 1 1/2 teaspoons. Stir the lime rind and the sapote puree into the gelatin mixture. Cover and chill for about 1 hour. Fold whipped topping into the

sapote mixture. Spoon the sapote filling into the graham-cracker crust. Chill until firm.

Serve with a dollop of whipped topping and garnish with twisted lime slices, if desired.

Makes one 9-inch pie.

Tropical Fruit Cup

1 cup white sapote chunks

1 cup pineapple chunks (fresh or canned in pineapple juice)

1 cup mango slices

1 banana, sliced

1/2 cup chopped walnuts

1/2 cup orange juice

1/4 cup grated coconut

Prepare fruit, mix with walnuts and orange juice. When ready to serve, sprinkle with coconut. Makes 6 servings.