

Gongura Leaves



4905 – PLU

Description/Taste

Gongura leaves are medium to large in size and are broad, flat, and pliable. The vibrant green leaves are deeply lobed with three to five serrated, finger-shaped leaflets. Gongura leaves come from a dense shrub-like plant that typically reaches heights of two to three meters. It has reddish-purple stems with dark green foliage and trumpet-shaped flowers. The flowers have five creamy yellow petals that fade to a deep maroon in the center. Smaller Gongura leaves offer a mild green and tangy flavor, whereas more mature specimens are robust and acrid. Warm temperatures also affect the taste of the leaf because the hotter it gets, the sourer the leaf will taste.

Current Facts

Gongura leaves, botanically classified as *Hibiscus sabdariffa*, grow on an herbaceous perennial that is most commonly found in India. Also known as Red Sorrel, and Ambada, Pitwaa, or Pulicha Keerai in parts of India, you might hear Gongura referred to as the roselle plant as well, since the calyx that surrounds the plant's blossoms is known as a roselle and is often used to make jellies, jams, juices, and natural food coloring. There are two main varieties of Gongura including red stemmed, and green stemmed. The green stemmed variety has a mild tartness whereas the red stemmed variety has a strong sour flavor that intensifies with the heat of summer.

Nutritional Value

Gongura leaves are an excellent source of folate, riboflavin, iron, zinc, antioxidants, and vitamins A, B6, and C.

Applications

Gongura leaves may be pickled, steamed, blanched, or ground into a paste and combined with garlic, chilies, and salt to make chutney. The sour leaves heighten the rich flavor of legumes and fatty meats, therefore making them a perfect complement to dishes with lentils, goat, or mutton. Gongura leaves can be cooked with shrimp, mussels, and fish and are also used raw in salads. In Myanmar, they are cooked into a sour soup base, which is clean, tangy, and light. Another Myanmar staple is chin baung kyaw or fried roselle leaves with bamboo. Gongura leaves are commonly prepared with the flavor profiles of tamarind, red and green chilies, turmeric, cumin, onion, garlic, sesame, and curries. They will keep up to five days when unwashed, wrapped in a damp paper towel and stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

Gongura Pickle

This pickle is popular in Andhra. Gongura is a green leafy veggie called Sorrel leaves in English, pulicha keerai in Tamil and Ambadi in Hindi. It is very nutritious too.

Prep Time: 15 mins
Cook Time: 15 mins
Total Time: 30 mins

Course: Side Dish
Cuisine: Asian

Servings: 4

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Ingredients:

- Gongura leaves - 4 Cups (tightly packed) (1 big bunch)
- Red chilies - 20
- Coriander seeds - 1 tbsp
- Fenugreek Seeds -1/2 tsp
- Cumin - 1 tsp
- Mustard Seeds - 1/2 tsp + 1 tsp
- Garlic cloves - 1/2 cup
- Salt - to taste
- Sesame Oil -1/3 cup + 2 tsp



Instructions:

- From the Gongura bunch, separate the leaves from the stem and wash and drain the water completely.
- In a deep cooking pot add 2 tsp oil and roast the coriander seeds, fenugreek seeds, cumin seeds, 1/2 tsp mustard seeds and red chilies one by one and keep it aside.
- In same pot add the leaves, sauté well until they turn very soft. Turn off the flame and let them cool.
- In a mixer, first powder the roasted ingredients, then add the sautéed leaves and salt. Grind it into a coarse paste. Don't add water while grinding.
- Crush the garlic cloves slightly and keep aside. In a pan add the 1/3 cup oil, add the 1 tsp mustard seeds, once splutter add the 2 red chilies and crushed garlic cloves. Once the garlic turns golden brown add the ground gongura. Give it a nice mix. Sauté it well on a low flame for 10 mins until the oil floats on top.
- Once it cools, store it in an airtight container. Now the pickle is ready to serve with hot rice. Just mix it with hot rice and POUR ghee/sesame oil OVER IT BEFORE EATING.

My Tip:

*Sautening the pickle well will increase the shelf life. *Always use dry spoon and it will stay good for a week at room temperature.