

WHITE COCONUT – PLU 4077



Description/Taste

The White coconut is pale cream to ivory in color with hairy white fibers. Round to oval-shaped, the fibrous husk is contained in a rind that encases a thick-shelled oval nut. Inside is a hollow kernel filled with a sweet milky liquid. While there are multiple varieties of coconuts that grow worldwide, they all arrive in the US in one of three stages of maturity: the young coconut, the medium-young white coconut and the most mature of the three, the brown husked coconut. Inside is a hollow kernel filled with a sweet milky liquid. The meat of the white coconut is considerably moister and fresher than the meat of the more mature brown husked coconut and often has a floral fragrance. This is the best stage of coconut for cooking. The flesh is often about ½ inch thick, but there are prized varieties that will produce up to a full inch of the rich coconut meat.

Seasons/Availability

White coconuts are available year-round.

Nutritional Value

Containing iron, protein and potassium, fresh coconut meat has about 346 calories in a 3.5 ounce serving. A good source of fiber, coconut meat contains saturated fat, a rarity for a fruit or a vegetable.

Applications

To get the most out of this hard fruit, drill two holes in the "eyes" of the rounder end of the coconut. Drain the liquid. A straw may be inserted to drink the milky-colored liquid. Or set the fruit in a bowl and let the liquid drip out. To open the shell, place in a 375 degree oven for 20 minutes, until the shell begins to crack. Cool briefly and strike with a hammer along the crack. Pry out the flesh with a knife. The juice is superb added to fruit salads or mixed with rum. Coarsely grated, the coconut meat may be substituted for dried packaged coconut. Add grated fresh coconut to salads. Serve with curry. Flavor puddings, custards, cakes, cookies, frosting and a variety of confections and baked goods. To store, a

coconut will keep at room temperature for a week or two. For longer storage, refrigerate. Grated coconut will keep in the refrigerator for two weeks. Incidentally, the liquid in the coconut is called coconut water. Coconut milk is different and produced when boiling water is poured over grated coconut meat, leaving it to cool and squeezing the liquid through a cloth. Twice as much water by volume as grated coconut produces "milk" of normal consistency. Half the amount of water will yield thicker "cream". The cream and whey will separate when refrigerated so it should be combined by stirring or shaking prior to use.

Ethnic/Cultural Info

Regarded in the islands of the Pacific as a sacred emblem of fertility, the coconut is known around the world. In India, coconut meat is said to be especially beneficial for pregnant women and new mothers. Southern India and Southeast Asia use coconut milk as a standard ingredient in their cooking. In Sanskrit, this palm tree is called, "kalpa vriksha" meaning the "tree which provides all the necessities of life".

Geography/History

In many tropical and sub-tropical parts of the world, the coconut is an important source of food. They say the coconut was given its name when Spanish and Portuguese explorers thought the three little characteristic eyes looked like a goblin or grinning face and named it coco, the word for goblin. Some have translated the word coco to mean monkey face. Tall common coconut palms found in most commercial plantations are categorized into subgroups according to their location such as the West African Tall, Jamaica Tall and Panama Tall. Bearing their fruits before the tall types produce their fruit, dwarf palms do not live as long and their quality does not rate as high. The Philippines grow the smallest of them all: called "cocos nino", this tiny coconut is about the size of a chicken egg.

MOIST FEIJOA AND COCONUT CAKE



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cup feijoa flesh in chunks
- 1/4 cup lime juice
- 150g butter
- 1 1/2 cups caster sugar
- 3 eggs, separated
- 2 cups desiccated coconut

- 2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 2 teaspoons creme of tartar
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 cup milk (if necessary)

METHOD

Scoop the feijoa flesh into a 2-cup jug and pour over the lime juice. Set aside while you continue with the recipe.

In a large bowl, beat the butter and sugar together until creamy. Beat in the egg yolks.

Fold in the coconut and sifted dry ingredients. Add the fruit. If necessary, add some milk, bit by bit.

Beat the egg whites until stiff and fold into the cake mixture.

Turn into a well-greased and lined 23 or 25cm cake tin.

Bake at 180 °C for 1 hour or until cooked, putting several layers of newspaper under the tin after about 30 minutes. Cool for 10 minutes before turning out.

