

# The MARVELous Mango

Nutrition Notes by Natalie



Spring has sprung! As I sit before you writing this article the weather is definitely not “spring like” but within a few days the forecast is calling for a dramatic, welcome change. There’s something about the spring and fall seasons that excite me! I think it’s their temperate nature. What I look forward to most this time of year though is the longer days, with all that extra sunlight. It’s a great time of year to clean up the yard, get ready to plant a garden, and dry out a bit. Springtime also brings a new host of fresh fruits and vegetables into season, including one of my favorites....the MANGO.



I will never forget the year I graduated college and took a trip to Maui for the first time. On the way from the airport to the condo I had rented, I ran across a fruit stand on the side of the road. A small little hut of sorts, but they were selling mangoes. Hands down, the best mangoes I have ever eaten in my life! Way back then I didn’t eat mango for the health benefits per se, but rather the taste. Nowadays, the health benefits from this mighty fruit are explosive, it is quite literally a super fruit!

What constitutes a super fruit? Well, unlike the Marvel movies, it doesn’t wear a suit or cape, but it definitely has earned the right to! With over 20 different vitamins and minerals like copper, B-6, folate, and the antioxidants Vitamin A (in the form of beta carotene) and Vitamin C this fruit sure packs a super immunity punch. In fact, a 1 cup serving supplies 100% of your daily needs for Vitamin C. These vitamins and minerals have been linked to a bounty of health benefits including cardiovascular, cognitive, and neurologic function. They are also wonderful for stress assistance, viral protection, and strengthening plus supporting the collagen in your skin. Researchers are even recommending eating a whole mango before bedtime to help you sleep better. I guess good old fashion warmed milk may have met its match.

Apparently it’s the combination of amino acids and phytochemicals that provide the neurotransmitters with the nourishment they need to quiet your body into a deep slumber. You had better believe I will be putting this theory to the test!

So, how do you pick the perfect mango? It’s actually quite simple. Don’t focus on the color alone as an indicator of ripeness. A ripe mango usually has a fruity aroma at the stem and will give a little when you squeeze it. To prepare a mango, I like to wash the outside with soap and water. Then I cut it lengthwise just to the right and left of the stem to avoid the long narrow seed running down the middle. I take each half and cut down through the fruit to the skin with a paring knife. Repeat in the opposite direction and then flip the mango inside out and trim off the cubes you just created.

If this sounds too complicated to you...not to worry! You can buy frozen mango cubes and add them to your favorite smoothies or just thaw and puree them up and add them to a bit of warmed almond milk for a bedtime cup of mango. Here’s a great recipe to get you on your way!

## **Mango Lassi**

4 cups frozen diced mango  
½ cup coconut milk  
2 mint leaves  
1 frozen banana

Combine all ingredients in blender and blend until smooth. Serves 4.

So go by your local grocery store if you not planning a trip to the Hawaiian islands anytime soon and get yourself a fresh, ripe, juicy mango while it’s in season. Enjoy the longer days, and hopefully, warmer climate that this next month should bring.

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