

**THE FEARLESS OLIVE**  
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# Toasting to your health

The sun enters the vernal equinox and our collective plight with summer begins as the days get longer and our Dhaka traffic jams leave us melting in the sweltering blaze! At such times, the only thing that can make us feel better is either an ejection button to the Swiss Alps or a cool, fruity drink to cool us. With the mango season just around the corner and kacha aam or raw mango already appearing in the markets, let us take a look at some other juice options we can attempt this summer and calm our senses. Stay healthy, stay cool!

## VIRGIN PINA COLADA

From the streets of Puerto Rico where the likes of Ricky Martin and Joaquim Phoenix get their spunk, comes a drink which was made popular the world over after a song in the 1970s, aptly called "the Pina Colada Song". Even though it is said to have originated on the ships of a Puerto Rican pirate who used local ingredients, pineapple, coconut and rum to stimulate his crew, the current version is said to have been a result of three bartenders in Puerto Rico, all laying claim to be the first ones to make it.

### Ingredients:

2 small pineapples, total weight not more than 400g  
¼ amount of coconut cream (recipe below)  
2 tbsp coconut water  
Mint leaves

### Method:

For the coconut cream, grate the coconut and simmer it on the stove in just enough water to cover the coconut. Simmer for up to 5 minutes then remove and strain the water out in a cheese cloth or a soft, porous, cotton cloth until you have squeezed out most of the water. Freeze this liquid and the solid collected on top is the coconut cream. Peel the pineapples and properly scoop out the "eyes" which can be very itchy if not removed properly. Blend all of this together with the coconut cream and coconut water. You may add some brown sugar to make it sweeter but it's best to avoid added sugar here as the drink can tend to be very heavy. Serving:  
Serve with mint leaves floating inside and a rind of pineapple wedged on the top edge of the glass.

## HEALTH SPOTLIGHT ON COCONUT CREAM

**A rich source of B vitamins, vitamin C, vitamin E and other essential minerals. B vitamins help form red blood cells and turn calories from food into usable energy, while Vitamin E is good for the skin and hair. Yet, since it is after all a cream and high on calories, consuming it in moderation is always the best path to take.**

## BANGI GRANITA

Granitas originate from Sicily where the Italian summers once forced King Nero to demand his culinary staff to come up with a cooling recipe and voila, the ice cream arrived in its many flavoured glory! So from the land that is thought to have invented ice



cream and gelatos, we attempt a different form of granita which is basically shaved, flavoured ice!

### Ingredients:

1 whole bongi or muskmelon  
½ cup brown sugar  
¼ cup lemon zest  
½ tsp of rose water

### Method:

Peel the Bongi and de-seed it. Blend it in as little water as possible with the brown sugar and make a thick juice. Add the zest and rose water. Mix it all then scoop it out in round shaped bowls and freeze it. Serving:  
Take out the frozen bongi and scrape it off or use an ice shaver to get strands of the frozen fruit. Gulp it down immediately before it starts melting. In any case you will be left with bongi juice so enjoy yourself!

## HEALTH SPOTLIGHT ON MUSK-MELONS

**High in Vitamin C, which basically helps as an antioxidant that is eventually an anti aging element as well, bangis are also rich in Vitamin A that improve vision**

## KAMRANGA WITH BASIL SEEDS

From Nicaragua to the Phillipines and in our backyards, agricultural fields and terrace gardens, the star apple or carambola is a popular fruit consumed with relish in a number of ways. Yet, to keep its original taste and goodness intact, I will attempt a very simple recipe.

### Ingredients:

½ kg worth of kamranga or star apple  
1 tsp rock/black salt  
½ cup brown sugar



1 tbsp basil seeds or tukma immersed in half cup water

### Method:

De-seed the kamranga and blend it with the salt and sugar. In a cup leave some tukma or basil seeds for about 10 minutes during which they multiply in size then scoop them out and place them at the bottom of serving glasses. Add the kamranga juice and slurp.

## HEALTH SPOTLIGHT CARAM-BOLA

**Kamrangas are rich in Vitamin C and flavonoids, which are antioxidants and Vitamin B6 complex of vitamins that act as co-factors to help stabilise metabolism. High in dietary fibre that protects the colon from cancer binding molecules, kamrangas are truly a healthy punch so try to consume as many as possible, with the least amount of additives.**

## SAFEDA OR SAPODILA JUICE

Blend some peeled safeda with a squeeze of lemon juice and drink it at one go. The fruit itself is so sweet you really can do without added sugar this time!

## HEALTH SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEDA

**The fruit is rich in the antioxidant poly-phenolic compound Tannin. Research shows that this complex family of naturally occurring polyphenols has potential anti-inflammatory, antiviral, anti-bacterial, and anti-parasitic effects. Hence, these compounds could be useful remedies to haemostatic conditions (stops bleeding) and as a remedy for hemorrhoids.**

## A TREE IN A GLASS

(inspired by a drink at the Dusai Resorts and spa)

### Ingredients:

½ cup molasses syrup (mix about 150g of molasses with water and mash it into a pulp then dilute with a bit of water but keep it thick)  
½ cup lemon juice  
100g mint leaves (make a paste and extract the water of this) and additional 100g for garnishing  
½ cup tulsi tea (use Kazi & Kazi tea bags and make a strong cup of tea with the bag immersed for at least 3-4 minutes)  
1 tsp basil seeds or tukma  
½ cup pineapple juice (blend about 200g of pineapples and strain the juice)  
100g pomegranate seeds

### Method:

Immerse the basil or tukma seeds in half cup water for up to 10 minutes. Scoop them to the bottom of a tall glass. Mix all the ingredients together starting with the molasses drink as it is thick and needs to be stirred more than others, ending with the tulsi tea. Serving:  
Add the whole sprigs of mint leaves and pomegranate seeds floating inside the glass and cut wedges of pineapples and lemons and stick to the top edges of the glass. The idea is to make it really look like a wild plant or a tree!

While you were reading this article, I hope I managed to stimulate your taste buds as well as your brain neurons into concocting your own recipes for seasonal fruit juices. Do not forget to attempt the mangosteen or Bel juices as well as the kacha aam.

**Photo: Collected**