

LS PICK



Green Mango

Shall I entice you to the power of the force? A spoonful or two is all it will take; maybe even less. The waft of the tangy scent spiked by the strong raw, green chillies mixed well into a concoction – fruit, salt, chilli and mustard paste – will surely water your mouth. Hell! A spoonful and it can water your eyes.

One spoonful and that is all it will take. The olfactory senses teased to its limits, the saliva inside your mouth brews like



a turbulent storm in the sea and just as the mashed pulp touch the tip of the tongue, it rolls and you get the kick – the taste of heavenly manna, a.k.a. 'kacha-aamer bhorta.'

And while you slurp the last mush remaining on the saucer, hands wiping that moisture oozed out from the mango itself, thinking life does not get better than this, well think again!

Enter aam-dal. We pay little heed to the contribution of the everyday dal in the Bangladeshi household. Every home maker knows that this is a staple and can come in handy whenever one runs short of dishes for lunch. But when you put chunks of fleshy, unripe mangoes in the humble dal, it gets elevated to something quite extraordinary.

It's the same tanginess passed on from the raw fruit to the watery soup that makes the dish distinctive. All you need is to mix a pinch of naga morich and the dish will simply blow your gustatory senses.

Yet, while kacha-aamer bhorta and mango-dal are what personify these heady days of kaal-Baishakh, it should also be remembered that kacha-aam can also be used for a number of other uses. Green mango can also be used to prepare green mango juice, a refreshingly cool drink which can quench even the most parched of throats in the coming months. Just cut the mango into little pieces and mix it with a bit of salt, sugar, lemon juice and chilli. Add water to it and blend.

Kacha-aam can also be pickled and used to make sour chutney, which is the perfect condiment for any lunch or dinner. Aside from that, the mangoes can also be dried and used in the preparation of aam-shotto, aam-panna and others.

Another very tasty way of having kacha-aam is by mixing little pieces of the mango with spice and salt and by drying them in the sun. The sun dried mango is exquisite when eaten with a touch of kashondo. Now that the season of summer storms, and stifling heat is almost upon, be sure not to miss out on the bounty that nature provides us.

By Pothbhola and Mormee Mahtab

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

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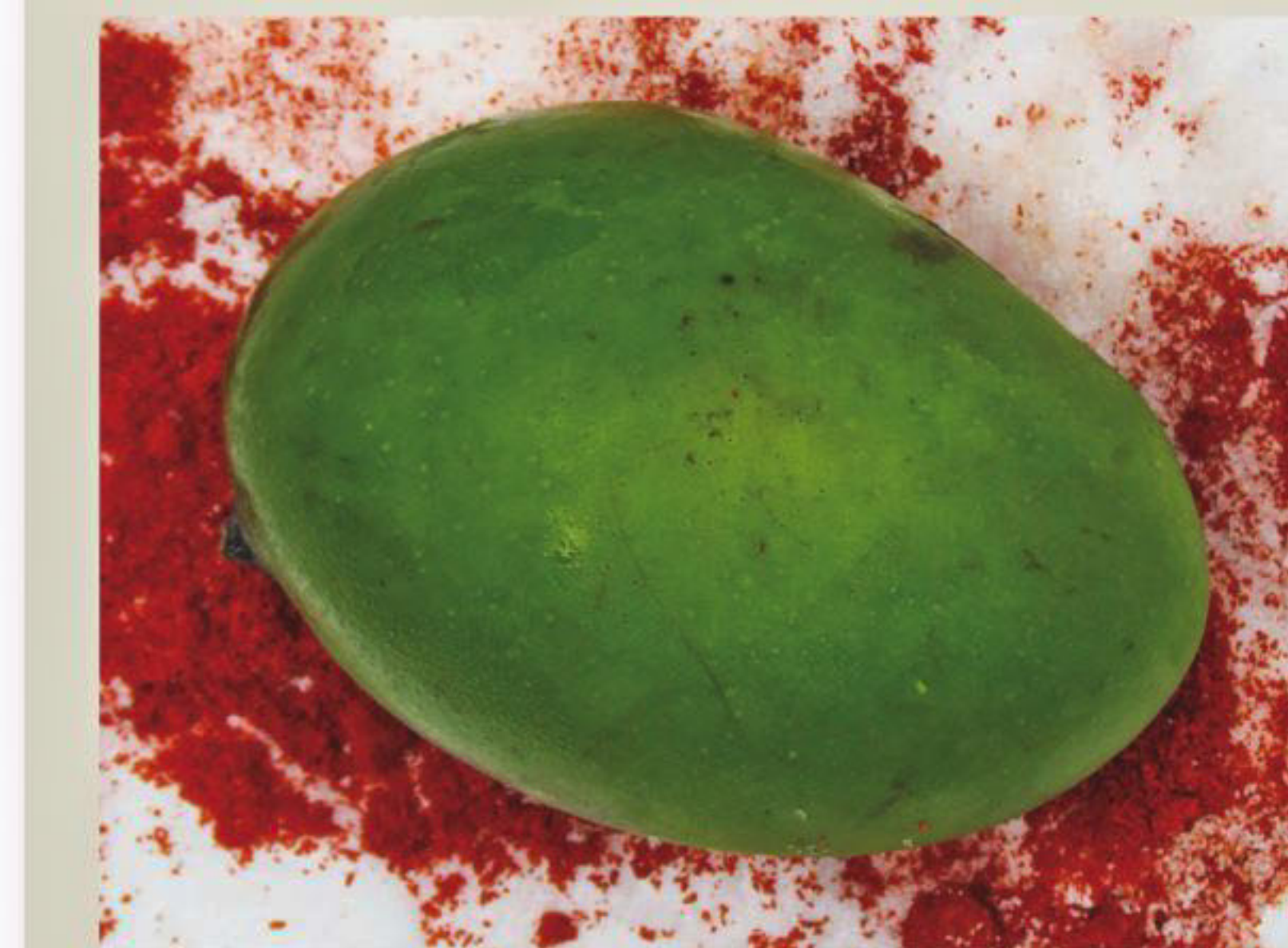
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