

RECIPE

Go nuts for coconuts!

Bangladeshi summers are unmatched with any other — the blazing sun and scorching heat, and the constant humidity. Having a tropical monsoon climate, we are lucky enough to be bestowed with an abundance of coconuts.

Coconut is not only a resourceful fruit, with its flesh and water, it comes packed with a lot of nutritional and health benefits too.. They consist of protein, carbohydrate, and fat that are used to produce energy. Coconut also has copious amounts of fibre, which aids bowel health. Coconut also holds some vital minerals and nutrients such as manganese, zinc, potassium, iron, and copper, which aid in bone formation, enzyme function, and fat metabolism. They also comprise of powerful antioxidants that protect cells from potential damage.

Coconut juices are the perfect summer treat to quench the summer thirst. Thus, here are four soul replenishing drinks made using coconuts for you to enjoy during summer!

STRAWBERRY COCONUT MILKSHAKE

This thick milkshake combines the tart flavour of local strawberries with the sweetness of coconut milk, giving it a delectable taste. It is also quick and easy to make with minimal ingredients. The sweet pink colour of this milkshake is soothing to the eyes as well.

Ingredients

- 1 cup strawberries
- 1½ cups coconut milk
- 2 tbsp white sugar
- 1 scoop vanilla ice cream
- 1 scoop strawberry ice cream
- 1 tsp strawberry essence

Method

Wash and clean about 12-15 strawberries properly and remove their tips and leaves. Chop each strawberry into halves or quarters to attain 1 cup of chopped strawberries. Sprinkle sugar over the chopped strawberries and let them rest for approximately 10-15 minutes. This will bring out all the natural juices from the strawberries, enhancing their flavour.

After 15 minutes, add the chopped strawberries along with 1 scoop of vanilla ice cream and a scoop of strawberry ice cream. Drop in the strawberry essence as well. Blitz this well until the strawberries are pureed and mixed entirely with ice cream,

creating a thick and creamy strawberry mixture.

Shake the can of coconut milk well before opening, as the fat and liquid tend to separate while in storage. If you are unable to shake it, just mix the inner contents of the can with a spoon after opening. Pour the coconut milk into the jug and blend it for one last time. This coconut strawberry milkshake tastes best when served cold.

If you are opting for a prettier presentation, take one strawberry and remove its leaf. Cut it in half lengthwise so that you have two long halves of the strawberry. Cut it again from the centre but not entirely, leaving half of it uncut. Attach this on the rim of your serving glass to give it a fancy look.



COCONUT LYCHEE JUICE

This is the ultimate coconut drink for summer, where every sip will leave you craving for more. Made with a combination of coconut and lychee — one of the most awaited fruits of the season, this drink enhances the flavours of both, giving it an incredible taste. The pearly white colour provides it with an invigorating outlook, making it look like something out of Narnia.

Ingredients

- 1 cup lychee pulp
- 2 cups coconut water
- ½ cup water
- 2-4 tbsp white sugar
- ½ cup desiccated coconut

Method

Peel about 20-25 lychees and remove their



seeds carefully. This should leave you with 1 cup of pure lychee pulp. Wash the pulp in order to get rid of any dirt or debris left from the seeds and peel.

In a blender, drop the lychee pulp along with sugar and water. Blend this for a couple of minutes to get a thick paste. Once in that stage, add in fresh coconut water. Depending on your preference of thickness, add about 1½ to 2 cups. Give it a churn for another couple of minutes until the juice becomes a homogenous mixture.

Once the mixture comes to your desired thickness, taste for sugar and add accordingly. The quantity of sugar will depend upon the sweetness of lychees, thus taste as you proceed and adjust as needed. Once ready, strain the juice through a fine mesh sieve to get rid of the harder bits of the lychee pulp.

If you are willing to go that extra mile for better presentation, wet the rim of your serving glass to about half-an-inch with



your prepared juice. In a shallow bowl, spread a thick layer of desiccated coconut and dunk the moistened rim in it. Rotate it a few times until the rim is fully covered with desiccated coconut. Pour the juice without distorting the coconut ring and chill in the fridge before serving.

COCONUT MANGO LASSI

This fruity version of lassi beats the traditional thick drink by a big margin. Made with everyone's favourite summer fruit, the combination of mango and coconut make up for a blissful summer drink that is hard to forget.

Ingredients

- 1 cup ripe mangoes
- 1 cup curd
- 1/3 cup shredded coconut
- 1 cup lukewarm water
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp mango essence
- 5-6 ice cubes
- Pinch of saffron

Method

Start by preparing the mangoes — carefully remove the skin from a couple of medium sized mangoes or one large one in order to attain a cup of cubed ripe fruits. Choose mangoes that are sweet and orange in colour to make the best tasting lassi.

To make coconut milk from scratch, add the shredded coconut and lukewarm water in a blender and blitz well until it turns into a cloudy mixture. Strain this mixture through a cheesecloth to separate the coconut remains from the milk. You can repeat this process a couple more times to retrieve maximum coconut milk.

Drop a pinch of saffron into the stated amount of coconut milk and let it infuse for 10 minutes approximately. Meanwhile, drop the diced mangoes along with sugar and mango essence in a blender and blend them well to get a fine mango puree.

Once the coconut milk is infused with saffron and the milk takes on a yellow hue, pour this in the blender along with curd and ice cubes. Blend this again for a couple of minutes to get a thick mango lassi texture. If you want a thinner consistency, add more coconut milk from the fresh reserve and add as required until you achieve the desired thickness.

By Fariha Amber

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