

How to make the most of guava season



It is no secret that the reigning royalty of summer fruits includes mangoes, lychees, pineapples, various berries, guavas, etc. And while we have said goodbye to most of these fruits as the season comes to an end, guavas are just about coming to a peak.

Here are 8 ways to make the most out of this guava season while they are still in the markets!

RAW GUAVA SALAD

A raw guava salad is honestly one

of the best things you could prepare with your guavas. Tangy, spicy, utterly delicious and unbearably easy, it's the perfect snack, appetiser or even a meal during this hot summer heat. Toss your thinly sliced sour raw guavas with julienned carrots, onions, and lime juice for the quickest and yummiest tropical salad!

POPSICLES

Another great way to beat the summer heat? Ice-cold guava popsicles! Blend the soft, ripe guavas and strain them to remove the pulp and fibres from the juice. Freeze the juice in popsicle moulds, freeze them and enjoy!

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Your guide to the floating guava market of Bhimruli, Pirojpur

Whenever you think of floating markets selling fresh vegetables and fruit, the Cabiao floating market in Philippines or Damnoen Saduak market of Thailand comes to mind first. In Bangladesh however, not many people know about the floating markets that are in operation in the division of Barishal, one of them is situated in Pirojpur, famous for guavas that are sold during its peak season.

Location of the market

The floating guava market is located on Kirtipasha canal at Swarupkathi under Nesarabad upazila of Pirojpur, a southern district of Bangladesh. The guavas start coming in from July, with the beginning of guava harvesting and goes on till September. So, the ideal time to visit will be from late July to catch the wholesale guava selling in action.

The journey to the market

"If you are planning for at least a couple of days tour, then the tranquil launch journey by night is recommended as you will find launches on Sadarghat for Barishal at night. After getting off from the launch at Barishal Sadarghat, take a CNG or auto and go to Banaripara launch ghat. From there, you can either rent a trawler or boat for Bhimruli," said Esrat Jahan, a travel vlogger who has her own Facebook page and YouTube channel named 'The Flying Girl.'

Thanks to completion of The Padma



The mesmerising floating market

Hundreds of small boats filled with guavas gather here from July, with farmers from districts of Pirojpur, Barishal and Jhalokathi harvest the guavas from orchards and bring them to the floating market. You can start your tour by visiting the adjacent guava orchards, many of which is maintained regularly to accommodate the tourists.

But nothing beats the view of the floating market once you reach Bhimruli,



the crisscrossed rivers, the boats full of guavas; the opulent greenery on both sides of the canal makes you feel like you have entered into a slice of heaven, even in the most humid time of the year!

"The view from the canal is so beautiful, with trees on both sides of the canal creating a lush passageway, it feels like I am in the amazon forest!" said Esrat, when asked how it felt entering the market on the canal. It will be best if you take your time and explore the market on a small boat as it would move slowly, allowing you to experience the hustle and bustle of the market in a serene setting.

There are restaurants near the market if you want to have lunch there, for accommodation you can stay either in boarding houses in Pirojpur to stay close



to the market or can stay at hotels in Barishal and set off for Pirojpur from there.

The village Bhimruli of Swarupkathi has become a tourist destination over the last few years as travellers have been exploring our country more and finding places that are quite extraordinary. So, if you are looking to experience something unique, go out and get a tour of the Bhimruli floating market!

By Feda Al Hossain
Photo: Titu Das/Star

Essentials: For launch journey, launches like Surovi 9 depart at 8PM from Dhaka Sadarghat and reach Barisal by 3AM. For bus journey, get tickets from Gabtoli bus stand or online of bus services like Tungipara Express, Emad Paribahan for Pirojpur.

Bridge, you can go to Pirojpur by bus in 6-8 hours. So, if you set off early in the morning, you could reach the market around noon which is the peak time for trading, experience the market and come back at night, all done in a single day! This was once unthinkable, as there was no other option other than ferry crossing, which was both time-consuming and dangerous owing to unfavourable river current and bad weather.