

FAIRCHILD TROPICAL BOTANIC GARDEN

Avocados (*Persea americana*) are delicious any way...

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Curator of Tropical Fruit*

The avocado has been part of the human diet for thousands of years. Native to the tropics and sub-tropics; records of its usage occur from 7000 B.C in Mexico. There are three major types of avocados: Mexican (grown in California) and Guatemalan types, which are relatively small-fruited compared to Florida avocados (West Indian types), which have very large fruit. Florida avocados are large, smooth-skinned and lower in calories and fat compared with Mexican and Guatemalan avocados.

“Four or five tortillas (corn cakes), an avocado, and a cup of coffee - this is a good meal” proclaimed Wilson Popenoe, one of the foremost avocado explorers. He spent years in the wilds of Central America hunting for the best avocados, surviving on scarcely more than corn and avocado. Avocado is a very healthy fruit; it is relatively low in calories, high in Vitamin A and Potassium, and contains no cholesterol. Avocados are great with lemon juice and salt. They can be mashed for guacamole, but are also delicious sliced and served with vegetables, or as an avocado salad with crab, tuna or chicken. Avocados are good in sandwiches and on hamburgers. In Brazil, Vietnam, the Philippines and Indonesia, it is looked on more as a dessert fruit and made into a delicious mousse or ice cream.



Avocado Carambola Salad (Serves 2)

Torn iceberg lettuce leaves
2 tomatoes, sliced
½ red onion, chopped
1 avocado, sliced
2 carambolas, sliced

Arrange a bed of lettuce on each salad plate. Layer the remaining ingredients in the order listed. Repeat until all ingredients have been used. Add the dressing of your choice.

Avocado Ice Cream (Makes ¼ gallon)

3 avocados (2 cups)
1 cup sugar
1 large can sweetened condense milk
2 cups whipping cream
¼ cup lime juice

Whip avocado pulp, lime juice and sugar in blender or food processor. Pour the avocado mixture in the ice cream maker and add the whipping cream and the condense milk, following the manufacture machine instructions. Freeze and churn until ready.