Manioc: An all time favorite

Posted on



Long, tapered manioc tubers are dull brown with a hint of grey and rough on the outside. The white flesh of manioc can be composed of floury, sweet, and sour mouthwatering dishes and snacks. Sri Lankans enjoy these tropical roots as a creamy side dish served with rice, a crispy, piquant snack, or a filling breakfast.



Manioc is an all time-favorite for Sri Lankans.

Cassava, tapioca alias manioc, is renowned for surviving extreme droughts and thriving in rainy conditions. A delicious substitute for potatoes and the thirdlargest source of carbohydrates for human food, this tropical root continues to leave its mark in the world of gastronomy. In Sri Lanka, manioc is the next best thing to staple food, and manioc lovers consume it in all its forms.

Boiled manioc with lunu miris (a tangy chili paste with onions and Maldive fish) and scraped coconut is a preferred breakfast dish amongst many Sri Lankans. Some prefer boiled manioc with a spicy meat dish and grated coconut. The yams are peeled, washed, and boiled in an open vessel with a pinch of salt and turmeric to enhance the flavor and add a beautiful yellow hue to the dish. The red hot lunu miris, soft yellow manioc, and the white scraped coconut send an appetizing message.

Manioc curry is a thick creamy curry that most Sri Lankans love. The rich consistency of this concoction owes its savory aroma to the spices that go into making the dish. As is the case with most Sri Lankan dishes, manioc curry preparation slightly varies from region to region. However, the typical manioc curry is a simple dish.

Peel the tubers, wash thoroughly and cut into fair-sized pieces. Boil till the manioc is tender. Add turmeric powder, chili powder, cumin powder, cinnamon, pandan leaves, and salt. Mix well and pour coconut milk. Boil the mixture till the yams absorb most of the liquid. This tempting dish is served with rice.



Ideally, boiled manioc with lunu miris and grated coconut is one of the preferred Sri Lankan breakfasts.





Creamy manioc curry tastes so good when accompanied by rice.



Nevertheless, there is one rule that all Sri Lankan manioc fans comprehend. “Never take manioc with ginger.” According to popular belief, manioc and ginger are taken together could cause poisoning.

Manioc chips come in several shapes and sizes; extra thin round chips, thick square chunks, long thin French fry lookalikes, and much more. The making of

manioc chips is an art in itself.

As dusk falls, roadside manioc vendors get ready for the day’s work. The brown outer layers are peeled off, revealing the chalk-white flesh tinged with soft pink. The vendors then grate or cut the tubers with a swift rhythmic movement of the hand that is fascinating to watch. The sliced or grated manioc slices go into a wok filled with boiling hot oil.

Yellow chips with slightly browned edges are ladled out of the wok and then piled onto partitioned sections of their carts.

The chips are sold to manioc chip lovers from all walks of life with the customary chili powder and salt mix. Some manioc chip shops are open from early morning till late evening. This is proof enough that manioc is a well-loved and relished food in Sri Lanka.

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