



Sugar Apple

Posts From The Caribbean

Fried Plantains

Plantains are a staple in the tropics and a slice or two of fried plantain adorns many a plate of food served in the islands. The plantain is kissing cousin to the banana, both in appearance and taste. But, unlike bananas, plantains are always cooked before being eaten. Plantains range in color from green to yellow to black, with black being the ripest and sweetest.

Depending upon ripeness, plantains can be stewed, fried or used to make tostones - twice-fried plantain slices, popular in Puerto Rico and other Spanish-speaking islands. Plantain chips (like potato chips) are a big favorite with Audrey. I like to use the really ripe, sweet black plantains for frying. They go well with many Caribbean or Latin meals. Try them at breakfast with your scrambled eggs. You can find plantains in markets catering to a Caribbean, Latin or international clientele.

To peel a plantain, cut off the tips of both ends. Then score the plantain lengthways down the side (don't go any farther than skin deep) and peel off the skin. For pan frying, I usually cut the plantain in half lengthwise and then cut each half crosswise in half. To fry, put a few tablespoons of cooking oil in a frying pan (I like a non-stick pan) over medium heat. Fry the plantains over medium heat, turning them over once. I use a fork to gently turn them over because they can be quite soft. Remove from the pan and drain on a plate (covered with a crumpled brown paper bag if you want, but don't use paper towel - the plantains will stick to it). Serve hot or warm.

To turn fried plantains into a dessert, use butter instead of oil for frying. When you put the plantains in the pan, sprinkle some brown sugar over them and fry for a few minutes on either side. Serve warm over vanilla ice cream.

<http://www.abigailblake.com/sugarapple>

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