



# Sugar Apple

Posts From The Caribbean

## **Eggplant Choka**

Peel two cloves of garlic for each eggplant you're using. Make two slits down either side of the eggplant and push the garlic inside.

Put your eggplant on a piece of foil with a scotch bonnet pepper or two. Bring the foil up and make a package, sealing the foil so the eggplant will steam inside. Make separate parcels for each eggplant.

Put your foil packages on a barbecue grill or directly on the burner of a gas stove. You can also cook them under the broiler but you won't get that slightly smoky flavor that a bit of flame imparts.

Cook the packages, turning occasionally so that all sides get a go on the heat, for about 30 minutes. You want the eggplant to soften considerably so that you can mash it later. The skin of the eggplant will easily pull away from the flesh when it's done.

Peel the skin off the eggplant and the pepper. Scrape the flesh of both, plus the garlic, into a bowl. Use a potato masher or a fork to mash it all up together and stir it up so the garlic and pepper are evenly distributed throughout.

Peel and chop one small onion and put it on top of the eggplant. Heat a little cooking oil in a small pot over high heat until it's very hot. Devica puts the oil into a metal ladle and holds it right over the gas flame to heat. I think I would probably start a kitchen fire if I tried that so I use a very small cast iron pot. Pour a few spoonfuls of the hot oil over the onion. This will cook the onion slightly and soften it up. Add salt to taste and stir everything together. And that's all there is to it.

In Trinidad, choka is eaten with soft sada roti at breakfast time. It also makes an interesting relish for grilled meat or fish. Choka would also be a terrific appetizer served with toasted pita bread for dipping.

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