



# Ají Dulce Peppers

Ají dulce peppers have the same shape size and flavor of a Scotch Bonnet pepper without the intense heat.

Unlike many other countries in Latin America, hot peppers are not usually used in the cuisine of Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, or Cuba. One of the most common uses is as a central ingredient for sofrito.

In Puerto Rico, it is known as ají dulce, ajicito or ajíes In the Dominican Republic, it is also known as ají gustoso or ají cachucha In. Cuba it is known as ají cachucha.

## Sofrito Puerto Rican

### Ingredients

2 green bell peppers, seeded and chopped  
1 red bell peppers, seeded and chopped 4  
10 ajies dulces peppers, tops removed 1 #  
3 medium tomatoes, chopped  
4 onions cut into large chunks  
3 medium heads garlic, peeled  
25 cilantro leaves with stems  
25 leaves recaio, or culantro  
1 tablespoon salt  
1 tablespoon black pepper

### Directions

In a food processor, combine green peppers, red peppers, ajies dulces, tomatoes, onions, and garlic.

Add cilantro, recaio, salt, and pepper.

Process to the consistency of semi-chunky salsa (not watery).

Place in a zip lock freezer bag, and use as needed, or freeze in portions.



# Amaranth/Callaloo

Amaranth, also known as callaloo, belongs to the *Amaranthus* genus of herbs and comes in a myriad of colors.

Leaf amaranth is regularly consumed throughout Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Greece. In the Caribbean amaranth leaves are known as callaloo and are used to make soups.

The leaves are fragile and should be cooked right away. Use amaranth instead of spinach, Swiss chard and kale. The young leaves require less cooking than spinach and has a

## JAMAICAN STEAMED CALLALOO

### INGREDIENTS:

4 cups of firmly packed chopped callaloo  
1/8 to 1/4 cup water  
1 medium-sized onion, chopped  
1 medium-sized well ripened tomato, chopped  
1 large clove garlic, chopped  
1/3 skin of a scotch bonnet pepper finely chopped  
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme leaves  
1/8 teaspoon salt (optional)  
1 table spoon cooking oil  
1 tablespoon butter or coconut oil

Serves: 4

### Process

Inspect callaloo and remove any debris, old leaves, or hard stalk, etc. Rinse in a large pot of cold water. Discard the water then add enough cold water to cover the callaloo. Dissolve 1/2 teaspoon of salt into the water and let sit for 1/2 to 1 hour. The salt will help to remove any additional small debris from the callaloo. Throw off the water and rinse the callaloo in another pot of cold water. Remove the callaloo and chop in 3/4 inch pieces in a slanted motion.

In a large pot add the 2 tablespoon oil and 1/8 to 1/4 cup water. Put four cups of firmly packed chopped callaloo on top. Add the remaining seasonings on top of the callaloo. Put a lid on the pot. Place on a medium flame and cook for roughly ten minutes or until pieces of the callaloo stalks are tender. The callaloo must stay green. Any discoloration towards brown means the callaloo is being overcooked.

Best served as a side dish or with bammy and fried plantain or breadfruit for lovely vegetarian breakfast.

Recipe by ©eatjamaican.com





# Asian Cucumbers

Asian Cucumbers have several advantages over common cucumbers. They are slender, thin-skinned, void of developed seeds, never bitter and completely edible even when they get large.

## Sunomono Salad

Thinly slice any Chinese, Japanese, Armenian or Thai cucumbers, Japanese eggplants, shiso leaves, red onions, green peppers, etc. Put in a large salad bowl. Lightly dress with Basic Su and toss.

### Basic Su

A universal Japanese flavored sweet/sour dressing that is used on many foods.

It is the seasoning for making sushi rice, it is the salad dressing for the delicately sliced fresh vegetables in sunomono and namasu or it is the vinegar seasoning to use on vegetables for suzuke.

1 cup sugar

1 cup white vinegar

Salt to taste

Combine sugar and white vinegar in a saucepan on low heat. Stir to dissolve sugar. Add salt to taste. Remove from heat as soon as sugar dissolves.

Cool to room temperature. Basic Su can be prepared in advance and stored in the refrigerator.

From Kitazawa Seed [kitazawaseed.com/recipes.html#sunomonosalad](http://kitazawaseed.com/recipes.html#sunomonosalad)



## Bitter Melon

Popular throughout many countries in Asia, this vegetable lives up to its name. The bitterness of the immature fruit brings out the flavor in other ingredients.

Bitter Melon is often served stuffed, sliced, or stir-fried. Can also be pickled or prepared by quick frying or incorporating into simple egg dishes.

Leaves and shoots are edible when they are young.

## **Bitter Melon**

This is a home-style recipe to experiment with bitter melon. Bitter melons are bitter! If you haven't acquired a taste for them, parboiling for 3 minutes before adding them to a recipe will reduce the bitterness.

### **Ingredients**

1-2 slices of bacon

4-5 bitter melons

2-3 tablespoons soy sauce

2-3 tablespoons sugar

1/2 cup water

### **Directions**

Slice bacon into 1/4" thick pieces and sauté until done. Cut bitter melons in half lengthwise and remove seeds. Slice into 1/4" thick pieces and add to cooked bacon. Add soy sauce, sugar and water and cook until desired doneness.





# Chinese Broccoli

Chinese Broccoli *Brassica oleracea* is also known as Chinese kale, or kailan. It resembles the more familiar western broccoli but has a longer stem and very small head. The long stems and dull green leaves are the main parts eaten, as opposed to the un-bloomed flower.

The full leaves are quite bitter with a sometimes spicy flavor. Chinese broccoli is suited to roles somewhere between broccoli and broccoli

## Sautéed Chinese Broccoli with Garlic

### Ingredients

3 tablespoons vegetable oil

2 cloves garlic, chopped

1 pound Chinese broccoli, cleaned and cut into 2-inch-long pieces

2 tablespoons oyster sauce

Coarse salt

### Directions

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic; swirl to coat. Add broccoli and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water. Add oyster sauce and season with salt; cover and cook until broccoli is bright green and tender-crisp, 3 to 5 minutes. Serve immediately.

SOURCE: Anita Lo



# Daikon

Daikon (*Raphanus sativus*) translates literally to "big root."

They are a mild-flavored winter radish usually characterized by fast-growing leaves and a long, white root. Originally native to Southeast Asia.

## **Daikon Tsukemono (Radish Pickles)**

Most Japanese meals are served with vegetable pickles, tsukemono. The pickling is done in various methods depending on desired flavor and length of storage. Some are preserved for only 1-2 days to 5-10 years.

### **Daikon (giant white radish)**

1/3 cup salt

2 1/2 cups sugar

1/2 cup vinegar

Chile pepper

Cut daikon into 1/2" x 1 1/2" pieces. Pack daikon into a glass container. Bring salt, sugar and vinegar to a boil. Pour the hot vinegar solution over the daikon. Cover with lid.

Refrigerate 3-4 days. Stir once or twice. This tsukemono is not intended for long keeping.





# Eggplant

Eggplants come in many shapes and sizes from the small green bitter ball eggplants to long, curved purple Japanese eggplants to the common rounded Italian eggplant.

Eggplants originated in Southeast Asia.

Botanists credit India as the place of origin of the eggplant, but Asian countries first adopted this fruit vegetable in the kitchen about 3 A.D.

Experimental botanist Thomas Jefferson brought the eggplant to the United States, where they were primarily used as a table ornament until the 20th century.



## Grilled Eggplant with Basil Vinaigrette

**Sliced, grilled vegetables served in a simple marinade or vinaigrette.**

### Ingredients

3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil

½ tbsp. white wine vinegar

½ tbsp. salt-packed capers, soaked and drained

10 basil leaves

1 clove garlic

Kosher salt to taste

Ground black pepper to taste

1 large eggplant, halved lengthwise and cut crosswise into ¼"-thick pieces

### Directions

In a blender, purée 2 tbsp. oil, vinegar, capers, basil, and garlic and season with salt and pepper; transfer vinaigrette to a small bowl and set aside. Put eggplants on a baking sheet, brush both sides with remaining oil, and season with salt and pepper. Build a medium-hot fire in a charcoal grill or heat a gas grill to medium-high. (Alternatively, heat a cast-iron grill pan over medium-high heat.) Cook eggplant, flipping once, until slightly soft and browned, about 6 minutes. Transfer eggplant to a platter and drizzle with vinaigrette.

SOURCE: <http://www.saveur.com/article/Recipes/Grilled-Eggplant-with-Basil-Vinaigrette>



# Kabocha

Kabocha are a winter squash.

These pumpkin-shaped squashes are not native to Asia. They were originally from the Americas and brought to tropical Asia by the Spanish and Portuguese.

Kabocha are used in Latino markets as a substitute for calabaza. Traditional types of calabaza, are larger than kabocha.

Puerto Ricans and Dominicans traditionally use small amounts of

Calabaza for adding to beans, rice, or in soup and will not buy a big

Calabaza. Kabocha types are much smaller than traditional

Calabaza types, the markets do not have to cut them since one

kabocha is the size that families will use.

## Roasted Kabocha (Japanese Pumpkin)

1/2-1 kabocha (depending on size of kabocha and servings needed)

Olive Oil

Salt

Heat oven to 475°F.

Cut kabocha in half and remove stringy portion and seeds.

Peel any skin defects. Slice into chunks approximately 1 inch x 1 inch.

Place chunks of kabocha in a roasting pan. Drizzle with olive oil and salt to taste. Occasionally, toss kabocha to prevent burning. Roast for 15-20 minutes.



# Long Beans

Long Beans are an ancient vegetable thought to have originated in Southeast Asia.

The long bean is also known as the long-podded cowpea, asparagus bean, snake bean, or Chinese long bean. They have a very pronounced flavor and have a distinctly beany taste, and are not sweet like the green bean.

Long Beans, like other beans, belong to the family of plants known as legumes (Leguminosae or Fabaceae). They are not closely related to other beans such as pole beans, bush beans, and snap beans all of which belong to a different genus. Long beans are more closely related to black-eyed peas.

Long beans are good source of protein, vitamin A, thiamin, riboflavin, iron, phosphorus, and potassium, and a very good source of vitamin C, folate, magnesium, and manganese.



## Myanmar Style Long Bean Salad

### Ingredients

1/2 lb. long beans cut thinly lengthwise on the bias into 2" pieces  
1 1/2 cups peanut oil  
2 shallots, very thinly sliced  
2 tbsp. finely chopped roasted peanuts  
4 1/2 tsp. fish sauce  
1 tbsp. fresh lime juice  
2 tsp. sugar  
Salt

### Directions

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add long beans, cook until crisp-tender, about 1 minute.

Drain long beans; rinse under cold running water; set aside.

Heat oil in a small pot over medium heat until temperature reaches 325° on a deep-fry thermometer.

Add shallots and fry, stirring, until golden, 3-4 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer shallots to a paper towel-lined plate. Reserve the frying oil.

In a medium bowl, toss together the long beans, peanuts, fish sauce, lime juice, sugar, and 1 tbsp. of the frying oil (reserve remaining oil for another use).

Season the salad with salt to taste. Sprinkle shallots on top of the salad just before serving.





# Scotch Bonnet Peppers

Scotch Bonnet peppers are a type of Habanero.

They are among the most intensely hot of all peppers, with a Scoville heat rating that starts out around 150,000 and can be as high as 300,000.

The Scotch Bonnet is a tropical hot pepper variety that is grown in Jamaica, the Caribbean, and Guyana. It has a shiny appearance and has a Chinese lantern shape. The sweet fruity, smoky flavor makes it an extremely popular variety of hot pepper. It has become an important export crop for small farmers in the Caribbean region.

## Spicy Island Marinade

This is a sizzling hot marinade with an intensely bold and fruity flavor combination, perfect for grilled chicken or pork. Pour over your favorite meat in a resealable plastic bag or covered bowl; marinate in the refrigerator for 1 to 4 hours. Prep 10 minutes Ready in 10 minutes

### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 1/2 mango, peeled and seeded
- 2 green onions
- 1/4 cup thyme sprigs
- 1 scotch bonnet chili pepper
- 1 lime, juiced
- 1 tablespoon dry mustard
- 1 tablespoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

### Directions

Place olive oil, orange juice, mango, green onions, thyme, chili pepper, lime juice, dry mustard, salt, and cinnamon into a food processor or blender; puree.

If you want to be on the mild side of spicy, exclude the Scotch Bonnet seeds or use Aji Dulce pepper as a substitute for Scotch Bonnet.