

Craft Mango Achar



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Mangoes are native to South and Southeast Asia and is one of the most important tropical and subtropical fruits in the world in terms of production, acreage and popularity. There are hundreds of mango cultivars grown all over the world. Mangoes can tolerate a wide spectrum of soil and climate conditions if there are no frosting problems.

Green mangoes with premature, soft seeds are suitable for achar. Achar is eaten with maize porridge or bread as a meat substitute and serves as an aromatic flavouring with other foods. Owing to its high oil content, achar has a high nutritional value. The oil used is either mustard or ginger oil. Cured green mango slices are drained, mixed with spices and oil and filled into suitable containers and sealed. Extra oil is added at the top to prevent air entry. Mangoes with a high acid content (5-6%) produce the best quality achar. The flow diagram below explains the steps involved in making a craft-style mango achar:

Harvesting of mangoes for achar:

The fruit is harvested in a mature, but unripe stage, and allowed to ripen for a few days before processing.

Cleaning and washing:

Cleaning removes undesirable elements, removes impurities, damaged and shrunken or broken fruit and involves removal of material adhering to the surface of the fruit. The mangoes are washed in a water-bath, filled with potable water, and brushes. A detergent may be added if required. The water must be changed regularly to minimise the chance of any contamination spreading.

Trimming, sorting & inspection:

Unwanted or unfit parts of the fruit is removed so that only the best suitable raw materials are selected for the craft-style achar. Inspection and trimming of the mangoes is the most labour intensive of the processing steps – the quality of the mangoes and adherence to pre-set quality standards such as colour,

Craft Mango Achar Process





shape and size, can only be controlled through careful inspection.

The mangoes should be full size, immature, with incomplete seed formation, free from diseases, scars, mechanical bruises, insect damage, and latex staining.

Washing:

The fruit is given a final wash with chlorinated water in a mixture of 20-66ppm active chlorine.

Peeling of mangoes (optional):

Mangoes are traditionally not peeled for achar but can be peeled by hand with special knives or peelers if required.

Cutting & stoning:

The flesh is quartered and cut into broad slices on a cutting board. Uniformity of size and shape is attractive in preserves and ensures even salt and spice penetration.

Blending with other ingredients:

Blending is a means of dispensing additional components or ingredients into an existing food system, uniformly distributing the ingredients. The selected spice mixture,

typically salt (15-19%) and a general spice mix (5-10%), preservatives such as ascorbic acid (Vitamin C) or vinegar, and citric acid is mixed with the chopped mangoes.

Packaging:

Packaging is defined as the containment of a food product in a protective barrier that prepares foods for transport, distribution, storage, retailing and end-use. The mango-spice mixture is packed into suitable containers that can be sealed hermetically.

Storage & fermentation:

Fermentation is the breakdown of organic molecules under anaerobic conditions (the absence of oxygen) by micro-organisms such as yeast and bacteria. The bottled mangoes are stored for up to 3 months in a cool, dry place to allow for fermentation to take place.

Re-packaging:

The achar must be re-packaged after fermentation into smaller containers, suitable for individual use. Coloured oil, either mustard oil or ginger oil, is added to the achar to cover the product completely and prevent air entry, before the containers are closed.

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