

Try mango in all kinds of ways at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's annual Mango Festival

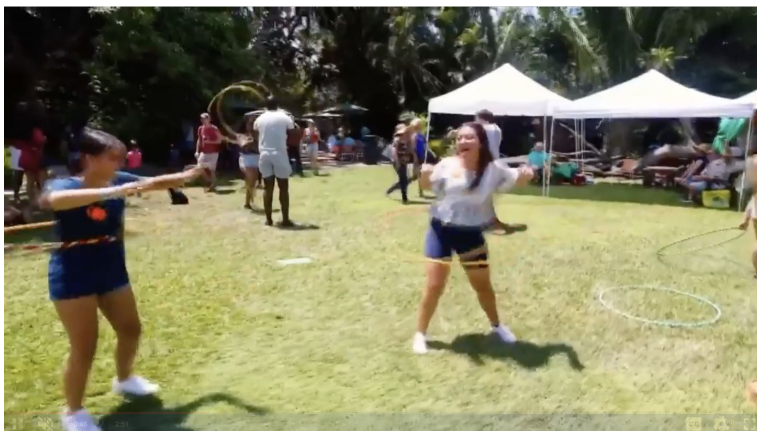
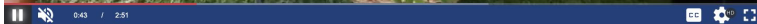
BY SHIREEN SANDOVAL, KI-JANA KING

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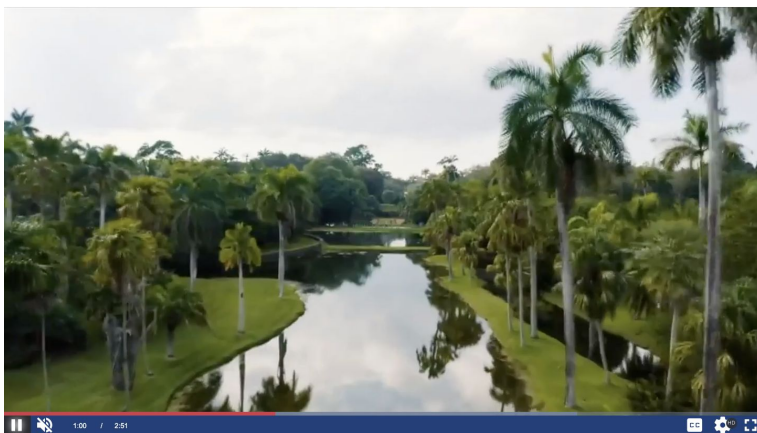
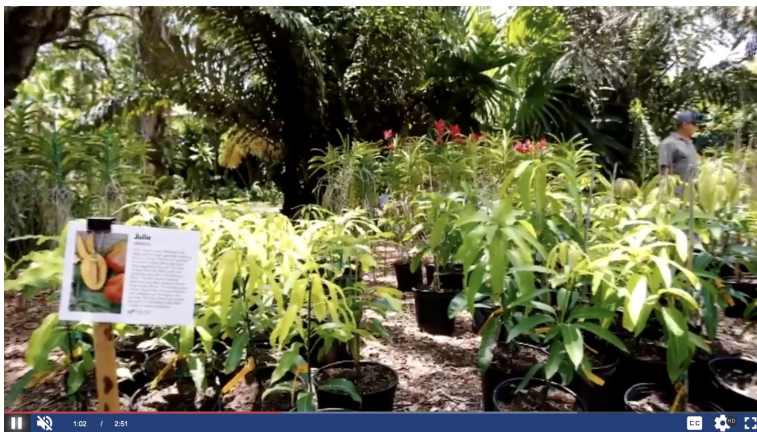
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There are many ways to enjoy a mango. You can eat it straight out of a tree, you can juice it, turn it into a drink ... or you can pair it with a nice slab of meat.

One thing's for sure, though: you can have it any way you like it at the Mango Festival at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden.

It's mango season again, and that means it's time for the annual Mango Festival.

Nannette Zapata: "It's a celebration of the incredible flavors, diversity of mango here in South Florida and throughout the Caribbean islands. It's two days, and we are expecting to have a lot of people come to the garden and enjoy everything that is mango."

Two days of mango fun made for the whole family to enjoy.

Nannette Zapata: "Lots of mango tastings, mango tree sales, lectures, how-to's, and just an overall good time."

But that's not all.

Nannette Zapata: "On Sunday, we celebrate the Mango Festival with a beautiful brunch. We welcome each year South Florida's finest chefs"

Like Chef Niven Patel, from the Orno restaurant in Coral Gables

Niven Patel: "Fairchild has been a huge anchor of this whole community for decades and centuries now, and being invited to it is amazing."

What's more amazing? These chefs are not amateurs when it comes to mangoes.

Niven Patel: "We have about 15 mango trees, so the mangoes that you see behind me are from our farm called Rancho Patel."

Along with Chef Patel, six others local to South Florida will be whipping things up at the brunch, including Chef Allen Susser.

Allen Susser: "This year's brunch is going to be completely different. Each one has their own creativity. They bring something to the table from their culture, from their restaurant, from their inspiration, so the food is awesome."

And if you can't make it to the festival, no worries.

Casa Sensei in Fort Lauderdale has got the mango treats your heart desires.

Max Potemkin: "Mango madness here at Casa Sensei, and what better to celebrate than with a spicy mango margarita?"

They aren't skimping on the alcohol, either.

Max Potemkin: "It's a hundred milliliters, which is basically three shots of tequila."

And you have to have some good food to pair the margarita with.

Max Potemkin: "We also have an octopus with a mango papaya salad. We dice up fresh mangos, fresh papaya, all local ingredients, along with a basil Thai vinaigrette."

The Mango Festival runs Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

FOR MORE INFO:

Mango Festival
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden
10901 Old Cutler Road
Coral Gables, Florida, 33156
305-667-1651
ftbg.ticketapp.org