By Dmitri Allicock

When I was a child in the 1960s most fruits cost one cent or a penny. There was a song of the time that said, “Mango ripe! Mango sweet! I want a penny to buy,” (repeat). That was very true of the times as most of us can remember. Sucking a juicy spice mango that ran down your elbow was a trade mark of the school children at Wismar or Mackenzie market place. A coconut base Salara, Bun or Biscuit and a very large cup of delicious Mauby to wash it down was five cents.

Fruits are always in abundance in the homes of the Guyanese. Native Fruits are seasonal but the varieties available ensure a ready supply at all times. Like most of Guyana’s flora, most fruits availability is also accordingly to the difference of the soil and its formation around the country, as each of these regions has distinct plants association and variation. Indigenous fruits of the highlands are less common and may not be seen in the coastal areas of Guyana.

Fruits are classified into the established variety and not so established. From the known Mangoes, Pineapple, Oranges to the bush kind like the Simmoto, Plum Rose or Malacka. There are dozens of native nuts, seeds, cashews and fruits of the forest that is only available depending on location. The many varieties of figs, berries, and fruits from the many various palm trees like the Corio{ Akuyuro Astro Caryum}, Kokerit, Awarra{Astrocaryum}, Paripi{ Guil elma Speciosa} to name a few. The Sawarri nut is one of the best edible nuts from the Caryocar Tomentosum tree. Brazil nuts from the tree Berthalletia Excelsa, mostly from Guyana’s highlands, is also well known along with Monkey pot nut, the fruit of the Wadaduri tree.

Fruit drinks are made from every available fruits. Many favorites are Lemonade, Sorrel, Mango, Orange, Five- finger {Star Fruit}, Cashew, Pineapple, Paw-Paw, Guava and Mauby. Some are used to make tea such as delicious Turu tea from the seed of the Turu palm {Aenocarpus Baccaba}.

Fruits are used to make a number pastries and cakes. Star fruit and Sourie when dried make a very good substitute for the traditional raison and currant base black cake. Pineapple makes the tasty pinetart and jam. Guava jelly, jam and cheese are international. The uses of guava in pastry making are wide spread. Fish and other meats would not be complete without citrus like lime and lemon for marinating.
Malacka makes a tasty jam. Coconut makes sugar cake, peanuts in fudge. I love Corio with bread or crackers. Avocado (Pear) with bread and coffee makes a nice breakfast.

Soursop or Mango makes a delicious ice cream. The smooth sweetness of the ice cream melting in your mouth won’t only be the taste of premium ice cream made with real fruit pulp; you would have tasted the essence of Guyana. There are endless more applications of Guyana’s fruits to the taste buds of Guyanese.