



Jumping Jackfruit (or Sweet Potato) BBQ Sliders

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 40 / **Cook Time** 5 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

blend: to stir together two or more ingredients until just combined; blending is a gentler process than mixing.

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

shred: to reduce food into small shreds or strips (similar to grate).

slice: to cut into thin pieces using a sawing motion with your knife.

Equipment

- Can opener
- Colander
- Cutting board + kid-safe knife
- Mixing bowl
- Measuring spoons
- Large sauté pan
- Liquid measuring cup

Ingredients

Jumping Jackfruit (or Sweet Potato) BBQ Sliders

- 1 14-oz can jackfruit in water or brine (or 2 lg sweet potatoes)
- 3 T brown sugar
- 1 tsp paprika

- 1 tsp onion or garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1/4 tsp chili powder
- 1 T vinegar
- 1 1/2 T soy sauce **** (for GLUTEN/SOY ALLERGY sub coconut aminos)****
- 2 T olive oil
- 1/4 C water
- 12 mini slider buns **** (for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free buns or corn tortillas)****

Food Allergen Substitutions

Jumping Jackfruit (or Sweet Potato) BBQ Sliders

GLUTEN/WHEAT: Substitute coconut aminos for soy sauce. Substitute gluten-free buns or corn tortillas for mini slider buns.

SOY: Substitute coconut aminos for soy sauce.

Instructions

Jumping Jackfruit (or Sweet Potato) BBQ Sliders

drain + rinse + shred + add

Drain **1 can jackfruit** in a colander. Rinse well and shake dry. Trim off the rind of each piece of jackfruit, then use your hands to shred each piece. The seeds are edible and can be chopped into tiny pieces! Or, if not using jackfruit, wash and grate **2 sweet potatoes**. Add shredded jackfruit or sweet potatoes to a mixing bowl.

measure + add + mix

Measure and add to the mixing bowl: **3 tablespoons brown sugar, 1 teaspoon paprika, 1 teaspoon onion powder, 1/4 teaspoon black pepper, 1/4 teaspoon chili powder, 1 tablespoon vinegar**, and **1 1/2 tablespoons soy sauce**. Mix until evenly coated.

sauté + add + reduce

Sauté shredded jackfruit or sweet potato in **2 tablespoons olive oil**. Add **1/4 cup of water** and let simmer until sauce reduces and is somewhat thick (about 3 minutes)! Serve BBQ jackfruit with Cool Crunchy Colorful Coleslaw on miniature slider buns or stuffed inside corn tortillas! Delicious!

Featured Ingredient: Jackfruit!

Hi! My name is Jack, and I'm a Jackfruit!

"I'm pretty sure you haven't seen fruit as large or as interesting as me! Some friends of mine have grown to 100 pounds! My skin is kind of spiky, but I'm really quite sweet and nice. People say that my flavor reminds them of Juicy Fruit gum!"

History

Can you guess where jackfruit grows best? Let's think about this. It's a huge fruit that needs LOTS of hot sunny weather to grow. What places in the world have this climate? Tropical places!

The Jack Tree originated in South Asia—the rainforests of India and Sri Lanka, to be exact. Archaeologists discovered evidence in India that revealed jackfruit was first cultivated 3,000 to 6,000 years ago!

Today, jackfruit is grown and enjoyed in the tropical regions of Southeast Asia, South America, Africa, Australia, and the Caribbean.

Jackfruit is eaten in several countries throughout the world, either as ripe or unripe fruit. In Bangladesh, where it is the national fruit, they eat unripe fruit in curries. In Indonesia, they eat ripe fruit on its own or sliced and combined with shaved ice as dessert. In the Philippines, they mix the unripe fruit with coconut milk and eat it together with rice.

Some people insist that jackfruit is the mysterious flavoring used in Juicy Fruit gum!

Anatomy & Etymology

Jackfruit is considered the largest tree fruit! One jackfruit can weigh anywhere from 10 to almost 100 pounds! Jackfruit trees (or jack trees) can get as tall as 30 to 60 feet!

Jackfruit usually grow from the trunk and bigger branches of the tree rather than the outer branches like other fruit. In rare cases, some jackfruit can even grow on the roots of jackfruit trees, and these are noticeably sweeter and more flavorful than jackfruit that grow above ground. Why do you think this is?!?! In just one year, a single jack tree can produce up to 250 fruits!

The outer surface of the jackfruit is covered with hard spikes, which become softer as the fruit ripens.

Cut a jackfruit open to reveal its beautiful orange-yellow fleshy bulbs, or "petals." The flesh is edible, as is the golden seed inside of each bulb. One single Jackfruit contains about 100 to 500 seeds.

The jackfruit's flesh is soft and sweet, and its flavor has been described as a combination of banana, mango, melon, bubblegum, and papaya. It also smells distinctively sweet and fruity.

The wood of a jackfruit tree can be used to make furniture, houses, musical instruments, drums, and oars for rowing boats.

The jackfruit tree is considered a Magic Wonder Tree because of all of its uses: people use the fruit for food for themselves and livestock; they construct furniture and houses out of the trees and branches; and they make medicine from the roots. AMAZING!

The word "jackfruit" probably came from the Portuguese word "jaca," which may be derived from the Malayalam word "chakka."

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Jackfruit are relatively easy to grow, but you might have to wait for 5 to 7 years until a tree produces fruit. Don't wait for the fruit to drop to the ground to pick it, though, because it will be overripe by then. (And you don't want to be under the tree if they drop!)

Why are we using jackfruit in our BBQ sliders this week? The flesh is uncannily like shredded chicken or pork and can be used as a vegetarian substitute for BBQ, carnitas, tacos, nachos, etc.

Ripe jackfruit is eaten as a fruit because it is sweeter and softer. Unripe jackfruit is considered a "vegetable meat." So we're eating unripe jackfruit in our BBQ sliders!

The seeds of jackfruit are edible and delicious when boiled in water with salt! They are also dried in many countries and used in place of lentils in stews and curries.

You can eat jackfruit raw, candied, boiled, steamed, or roasted. Or you can add it to salads, desserts, meat dishes, and curries.

Your grocery store may not have the whole fruit available, but you may find it in the aisles that carry dried, canned, and frozen foods. Another location is in the international aisle, specifically the Asian section.

Nutrition

Almost 75 percent of jackfruit pulp consists of water. That makes jackfruit a hydrating fruit!

Vitamin B6 contributes to a good mood, a more robust immune system, and better brain health!

Vitamin C keeps our immune system strong, aids our bodies' ability to heal faster from cuts and scrapes, and helps protect our skin from damage caused by the sun.

Fiber helps our intestines run smoothly.

Protein repairs tissues within the body. Jackfruit contains about three times the amount of protein as other fruits, which are usually higher in carbs than protein. We commonly get our protein from meat, chicken, beans, and nuts.

Jackfruit is good for the skin, immune system, heart, and digestion!