

LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

November 2009

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YEAR OF THE PITAHAYA/DAGON FRUIT

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NOVEMBER MEETING

Date: Saturday, November 28, 2009

Time: 10:00 A.M.

Place: Sepulveda Garden Center
16622 Magnolia Blvd., Encino, CA. 91316

Program: - **Jim Bathgate**, of the North San Diego CRFG, will speak on "Persimmons & Other Deciduous Trees". **Jim's** background is in chemistry and botany; he has spent 30 years in the electronics industry. He has worked in vegetable and tree crops, ranging from bell peppers to pole beans, melons, citrus, avocados and walnuts. The farm in Valley Center was started while working in the electronics industry. He has been farming 35 years in San Diego County with a focus on persimmons. **Jim** has also planted a large representation of various fruit crops, including apples, apricots, citrus, figs, jujubes, peaches and pomegranates.

Those whose last name begins with **A-M please** bring something for our tasting table to the November Meeting. Remember, we always like to sample those great fruits you are growing. So bring some to brag about!

DECEMBER MEETING

Date: December 19, 2009

Time: 10 am

Place: Sepulveda Garden Center
16622 Magnolia Blvd., Encino, CA. 91316

Put on your holiday clothes and get ready to party!! Yes it's that time of year again. Now is your chance to shine and bring in all of your most prized dishes for our annual **Pot Luck Party**. As usual, we will provide the drinks and paper goods. So bring those main dishes, salads and desserts.

A GENTLE REMINDER

First off, congratulations to all of our members for being exemplary in terms of cheerfully and cooperatively fully meeting membership dues requirements!

Just to clear up any confusion, it might be in order to repeat the price structure. **It is \$42 to cover both the CRFG Inc. dues plus our chapter dues (\$36 for CRFG Inc. plus \$6 for the chapter)** if the magazine comes by regular mail. For those that prefer emailing of the magazine, the yearly membership is **\$31 (\$25 for CRFG Inc. plus \$6 for the chapter)**. For other magazine delivery options, people can refer to the back of their magazine. Also don't forget that anyone wanting to belong to a chapter **must** also belong to the central organization.



THE ARACA

By **Alfredo Chiri**

araçá - Myrtaceae

Donated by: CRFG and planted in 1990 (r.f.-03)

Common Names: Brazilian guava, araçá, araçazeiro, araçá-verdadeiro

The araçá tree is native to Brazil and can vary between 3 and 30 feet high. The bark is smooth with some scales; the top is scattered. The leaves are reddish when young, and the flowers are white with a greenish tint.

The fruit is round, and it can be green, yellow or red in color, depending on the species. The pulp is yellowish-white or reddish, moist, soft and sticky, aromatic, containing many seeds.

The Araçá plant can be found in the wild from the Guyanas to the northwest area of Brazil (Amazonia). It prefers dry areas and is not affected by the climate; it is resistant to frost. It is propagated by seeds or grafting. Fruiting in Brazil is from January to May and in the U.S.A. from June to October.

The fact is that the Araçás and guavas, in the wild, are very similar and pertain to the same family of Myrtaceae, thus their misnomer of Brazilian guava.

The fruit of the Araçá, in general, is more acid than the guava; also, like the guava, the pulp is soft and full of seeds. However, many of the varieties of Araçás have very little pulp, making them of very low economic value.

There exist so many varieties of Araçás: araçá-branco, araçá-cinza, araçá-rosa, araçá-verde, araçá-amarelo; araçá-do-mato, araçá-da-praia, araçá-do-campo, araçá-de-festa; araçá-de-minas. Araçá-pernambuco, araçá-do-pará, etc.

Some of the varieties give fruits that are tasty and are desirable to eat when ripe. Other varieties of fruits are acidic, and their acidity makes them useful in the preparation of sweet-sour flavors, primarily in the

making of the marmalade de araçá which is similar to the guava's marmalades.

In Brazil the fruit, plant, and leaves are used in folkloric medicinal preparations.

Among the Araçás the most desirable variety is the Araçá-boi (*Eugenia stipitata*) which is native to Perú and found in the State of Acre in Brazil. The Araçá-boi is a small tree reaching a maximum height of 9 feet. The fruit color is yellow and their size varies. Some of Araçá-boi fruits are as large as the guava's (400 grams). The pulp is juicy and delicious in spite of being acid. The Araçá-boi also has been known to be called Brazilian guava.

Fresh Carrot, Feta, and Black Olive Salad

So many of you loved this salad and requested the recipe so here it is thanks to **Phyllis Parker**.

This is an interpretation of shlata chizo, a classic Moroccan salad.

Prep time: 20 minutes; serves 4-6

5 large carrots, coarsely grated

½ cup cilantro leaves, roughly chopped

1 cup crumbled feta

¾ cups pitted black olives (such as kalamata)

¼ cup fresh lemon juice

1/3 extra virgin olive oil

2 tsp toasted cumin seeds.

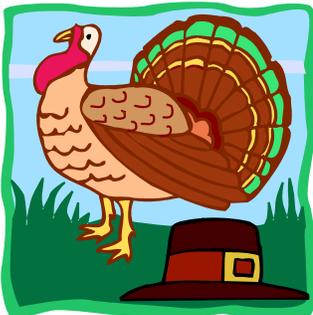
In medium mixing bowl, toss together the grated carrot, cilantro, feta and black olives. Pour the lemon juice into a small bowl, then slowly drizzle in the olive oil, whisking to blend. Pour the dressing over the carrot mixture, toss to combine and sprinkle with toasted cumin seeds.



Tom del Hotel demonstrates how to air layer

Our September meeting was really interesting and chock full of information. Using an extensive collection of photos **Tom del Hotel** spoke on unusual and unknown varieties of eugenias, recommending which ones would grow more successfully in certain areas and which ones had a more appealing flavor. He also demonstrated how to do air layering. Thank you, **Tom** for such an outstanding presentation.

TALKING TURKEY



(This article is from the website of Sustainable Table.org)

What's wrong with the Turkey?

The traditional Thanksgiving turkey is different today than it was 50 years ago. Today, 99% of all turkeys raised in the U.S. are the “Broadbreasted White” variety (sometimes also referred to as the “Large White”). These birds are raised in confinement in extremely crowded conditions on [factory farms](#). They live in unnatural, uncomfortable conditions and are fed a steady diet of grain and supplements like antibiotics, rather than the grubs, bugs and grasses they should eat. They are produced because of their large, white meaty breast. The breasts of these turkeys are so large that they are unable to reproduce naturally. According to the Food

and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, without artificial insemination performed by humans, this variety of bird would become extinct in just one generation.

Industrial turkeys are often injected with saline solution and vegetable oils in an attempt to help improve the taste and texture of the meat. These factory farmed birds tend to be dry and tasteless, so cooks have developed a variety of methods to try to improve the taste. Turkeys are now marinated, brined, deep fried and covered with syrups, spices and herbs.

What You Can Do

If you are tired of eating tasteless holiday meat, you have several options. You can order a heritage turkey, or you can look for organic and/or sustainable birds at butchers, specialty shops and at farmers markets around the country.

Heritage turkeys

There is a movement to reintroduce different varieties of turkeys back to the public. Many of these birds originated here in the United States. Groups like Slow Food USA and the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy are working to re-introduce genetically diversified varieties of animals, including turkeys that were raised years ago. These animals are often referred to as “heritage” breeds.

Heritage turkeys are raised outdoors, freely roam on pasture, and eat the varied diet nature intended them to eat, unlike most turkeys today that are raised indoors in confinement and are fed grains, fillers and supplements like antibiotics.

Whereas conventional supermarket turkeys can be tasteless and dry, heritage birds raised outdoors are juicy and succulent and taste the way a turkey is supposed to taste. Examples of heritage turkeys include:

Beltville Small White *

Black

Jersey Buff *

Narragansett *

Standard Bronze *

White Holland *

White Midget

(The * means the bird originated in North America.)

Not only do heritage turkeys taste better, they are genetically diverse, which is extremely important. The factories farmed Broadbreasted Whites, 99% of all turkeys, are genetically the same, which means an illness could spread through that breed and wipe them out. By raising genetically diverse turkeys, we are ensuring the survival of the species.

Heritage turkeys cost more money, but consumers rave about the great taste and say once you buy one, you can't go back to the tasteless white turkeys found in most supermarkets. The one drawback to buying a bird is that in many cases you must order in advance. Many farmers

only grow enough turkeys to cover the demand, so most consumers order their birds months in advance.

Organic and sustainable turkeys

If you aren't ready yet to buy a heritage turkey, or can't find one, your other option is to buy an organic and/or sustainable bird. An organic turkey is certified by the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) and must be raised under strict guidelines – no antibiotics, no growth enhancers, only organic feed, and the animals must be given access to outdoors. The animals can be a heritage breed, or the more common Broadbreasted White. (For more information on organic production, visit our [Organic page](#).)

Farmers who raise sustainable turkeys are not overseen by any group or agency, and have no legal guidelines to follow, though many actually exceed the USDA organic standards when raising their birds. Sustainable farmers look to preserve the land, treat their animals and workers humanely, and help support the local community. Sustainable turkeys can be a heritage breed, or can also be the Broadbreasted White. (For more information on raising animals sustainably, visit our piece called "[What is Sustainable Agriculture?](#)")

October Field Trip



Thanks so much to **Jerry Schwartz** for a great October field trip to his Northridge home. Close to 50 members attended as Jerry showed off his garden which consisted of a great range of common and uncommon fruits, including feijoas, avocados, jujubes and many types and varieties of citrus, as well as a peanut butter fruit plant, red sugar cane, jaboticaba, gumi, acerola cherry, weeping mulberry, babaco, sapodilla, and many, many others.

Jerry was a wonderful host and our trip was an enjoyable and educational outing to a good-looking orchard.

More Ethnic Markets

Our new member **Michiko Kus** has kindly provided us with the following list of interesting ethnic markets that carry the sorts of things that we love to shop for.

- 1) Island Pacific Market (Philippine)
8340 Van Nuys Blvd. at Roscoe Blvd. in Panorama City (same corner as Bank of America and Pollo Loco)
(818) 895-2433
- 2) Galleria Market (Korean)
10201 Reseda Blvd., Northridge
(818) 772-5755
3250 West Olympic Blvd. Unit 100, Los Angeles
(323) 733-3830
- 3) Seafood City Market (Philippine)
8231 Woodman Ave, at Roscoe in Van Nuys
(818) 988-8721
Approx. 16 of these stores altogether, one of them on Nordhoff
- 4) Glendale Market (Armenian)
6501 San Fernando Rd., Glendale -- near Justin and Western
(818) 242-9220
- 5) Sunland Produce
8840 Glenoaks Blvd., Sun Valley
(818) 504-6629

We hope we reproduced these properly -- please confirm the information before you make a trip.
Thank you very much **Michiko!** Some of us have already visited some of these places and were delighted!

Rallying the Troops

We are now at the stage where we should be planning in earnest for the Festival of Fruit 2010. We need a number of people to volunteer to "pick up the ball and run with it." Many of you may be willing to serve, but not lead. The critical issue is that we all participate. Remember that CRFG is a volunteer organization, and granted some of us have more time (retired) than others (working). But every little bit helps. Let's make this the best Festival of Fruit ever. If we do our job, this should be a memorable experience for all. With a little hard work, the 2010 event will be even better than the one we hosted in 2004. Contact **Ed** or **Pat Valdivia** to find out how you can help.