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Eat, Learn, Sell – Eating by Example - 06.19.15

Lychee: The lychee is the most renowned of a group of edible fruits of the soapberry family, *Sapindaceae*. It is botanically designated *Litchi chinensis* Sonn. (*Nephelium litchi* Cambess).

The lychee comes with either a brown or red outer skin. The skin is not edible and must be removed to reveal the milky white flesh underneath. The meat is like that of a peeled grape with a single dark seed in the middle that is not for eating. They can be enjoyed fresh as they work well with many soft fruits, or gently cooked to produce wonderful sauces. High in vitamin C. Can be spelled Lychee or Litchi.



Longan: Ranging in size from an olive to a small plum and spherical to ovoid in shape, longans have a thin rough-to-prickly brown easy to remove shell called a *pericarp* covering its grayish-white translucent pulp. In the center of the juicy flesh is a large smooth jet-black seed with a white ovoid characteristic mark. Having a flesh reminiscent of a peeled grape, the flavor is wonderfully sweet and often described as a mysterious tasting blend of musk, spruce and gardenia.

The longan or *dragon's eye* is the more temperate relative of the glamorous lychee. Many Chinese prefer the longan to the lychee since it has a distinctive musky flavor and is not overly sweet. The tree is better adapted to California than the lychee, particularly since it is more frost tolerant (22°F).



The round fruit flesh of the longan is smaller than the lychee. The outer shell is relatively smooth and dark tan in color. The aril surrounds a (usually) single large brown seed. These are sold as fresh fruit. Low in calories, one-half cup of fruit contains about 60 calories. Longan is an excellent source of potassium and vitamin C, and is very, very low in sodium.

Rambutan: The rambutan is a fruit considered exotic to people outside of its native range. To people of Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam, Borneo, and other countries of this region, the rambutan is a relatively common fruit the same way an apple is common to many populations in cooler climates.



The fruit is a round to oval sphere 3-6 cm (rarely to 8 cm) long and 3-4 cm broad, that grows in a loose pendant cluster of 10-20 together. The leathery skin is reddish (rarely orange or yellow), and covered with fleshy pliable spines, hence the name rambutan ('hairy lychee'), derived from the Malayan word rambut which means hairs.

The fruit flesh is translucent, whitish or very pale pink, with a sweet, mildly acidic flavor. The fruit has a single seed which is glossy brown, 2-3 cm long, with a white basal scar; it is poisonous and should not be eaten with the fruit flesh. Rambutan trees fruit twice a year, yielding crops beginning late June and August and in December and January

Gold Kiwi (Zespri Gold): The Gold Kiwi has bronze toned, smooth, hairless paper-thin skin. The golden flesh is dotted with the trademark edible black seeds. Its flavors are sweet and tropical with notes of pineapple and mango. Its shape is oval, coming to a blunted point at its stem end. The entire Gold kiwi fruit is edible.



The Gold kiwi fruit is an edible berry. While all other kiwi fruit are cultivars of *Actinidia deliciosa*, the Gold kiwifruit is a distinct and independent species, *Actinidia chinensis* and available throughout the summer.

The Gold Kiwi is a patented variety which was naturally bred in New Zealand from one seedling by breeder Russell Lowe. Though the cultivar's technical name is Hort 16a, its commercial name is Zespri® Gold. Over 4,000 hectares of Gold kiwi fruit are planted around the world.