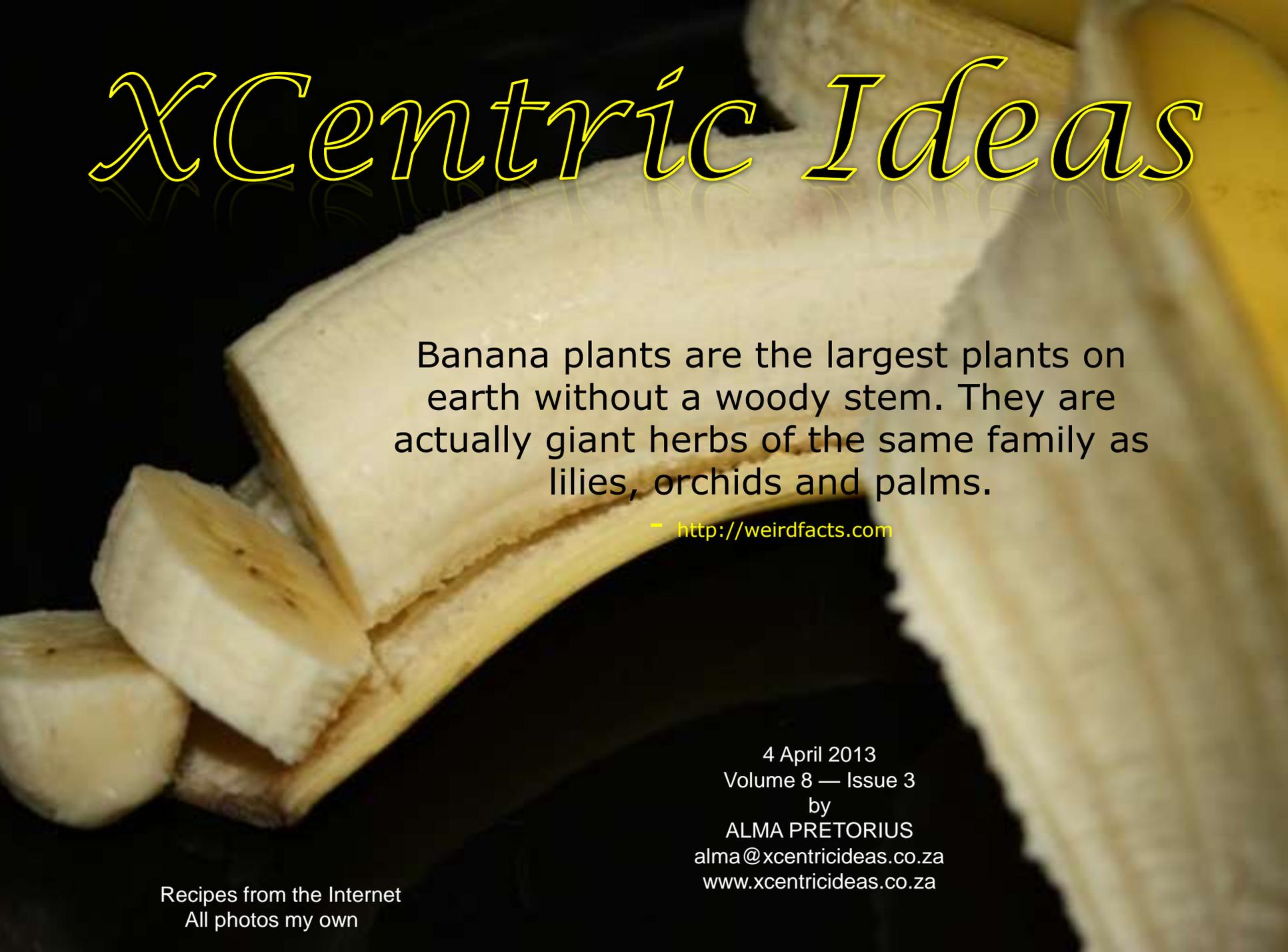


XCentric Ideas



Banana plants are the largest plants on earth without a woody stem. They are actually giant herbs of the same family as lilies, orchids and palms.

— <http://weirdfacts.com>

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by

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Recipes from the Internet
All photos my own

Banana Facts

Heart health

A banana contains 467mg of potassium, providing powerful protection to the cardiovascular system. Regular eating of bananas helps guard against high blood pressure, hardening of arteries & stroke.

Energy and Mood Balancing

Bananas contain tryptophan, serotonin & norepinephrine - they help prevent depression while encouraging feelings of well-being & relaxation. In addition, the vitamin B6 in bananas helps protect against sleeplessness, mood swings and irritability.

Vision

Bananas, combined with the African herb Orinol, have been used to treat cataracts in Nigeria. They also have the ability to prevent macular degeneration, the leading cause of vision loss in adults.

Better Digestion

Bananas suppress acid in the digestive tract, lessening heartburn and helping guard against ulcers. Since bananas contain pectin, a soluble fibre, they aid in the elimination process, helping prevent constipation.

Baby Food

Since they are easily digested, bananas are a perfect food for babies just beginning to move to solid foods.

Banana Peel Uses

Polish silverware and leather shoes

Using a banana peel is a great way to put the shine back into your silverware and leather shoes. First, remove any of the leftover stringy material from the inside of the peel, then just start rubbing the inside of the peel on your shoes or silver. When you're done, buff up the object with a paper towel or soft cloth. You might even want to use this technique to restore your leather furniture. Test it on a small section first before you take on the whole chair.

Brighten up houseplants

Are the leaves on your houseplants looking dingy or dusty? Don't bother misting them with water — that just spreads the dirt around. Rather, wipe down each plant leaf with the inside of a banana peel. It'll remove all the gunk on the surface and replace it with a lustrous shine.

Deter aphids

Are aphids attacking your rosebushes or other plants? Bury dried or cut-up banana peels an inch or two deep around the base of the aphid-prone plants, and soon the little suckers will pack up and leave. Don't use whole peels or the bananas themselves, though; they tend to be viewed as tasty treats by raccoons, squirrels, gophers, rabbits, and other animals, who will just dig them up.

Mosquito or ant bites, small scratches or poison ivy rash

Rub banana peel on these bites/scratches - the pain will be eased.

Use the peel to remove a splinter

Tape a piece of peel over the splinter - the enzymes will shift the splinter.



Banana Omelette

Banana Omelette

1 banana
1 egg (*doesn't matter what size*)
Pinch of salt
oil

Mash the banana in a bowl. Add the egg and whisk till smooth. Add salt. Heat oil in pan, pour in the mixture. Let it cook at the bottom, note when the top isn't 'wet' any more and flip.

Serves 1-2 people.

This is truly ingenious! Perfect for gluten intolerant people. You can decide if you want this omelette to be savoury – or sweet.

By adding your favourite toppings, eg: cooked bacon, ham, mushrooms, cheese, veggies, fresh fruit and ice cream, chocolate syrup, etc.

You can transform this into a 'magical' breakfast / lunch or even dinner.

Banana Flatbread



Banana Flatbread

2 cups whole wheat flour (*am sure normal flour would work too*)

1 cup mashed bananas

2-3 tablespoons oil

Salt to taste

Oil for the pan

Peel and mash the bananas well. Combine mashed bananas, whole wheat flour, salt and make a stiff dough.

Add the oil and knead well. (*I've used my plastic blade in food processor to mix it.*)

Break the dough into small balls, dust each ball with flour and roll them out into circles with a rolling pin, but not too thick. (*Mine could have been thinner.*)

Heat a griddle or pan. When hot, lightly grease with oil. Place the flat bread on the griddle. (*If you made small breads, you can fit in more than one on the griddle/pan.*)

When small bubbles appear on it, turn it over to the other side. When this side starts to change colour, apply a couple of drops on oil, spread well and turn over. Apply a little more oil on this side as well. Your flat bread is ready when small red spots appear on it. Do not overheat the griddle as this might burn them.

This would be perfect with any curry dish.



Don't be scared by the length of the recipe – it's really easy!

Banana Pinwheel

Banana Pinwheel

1/3 cup white/brown sugar

All-purpose flour

3 medium bananas, peeled and cut into very thin diagonal slices (*or you can mash it*)

1 ¼ cup icing / confectioner's sugar

1/3 cup finely chopped walnuts

1 x store bought puff pastry, thawed

3 tablespoons milk

Heat oven to 200°C. Grease a baking sheet. Mix white/brown sugar & walnuts in a small bowl.

Sprinkle flour on work surface. Unfold puff pastry sheet on floured surface. Don't roll it out. Sprinkle **half** the sugar/walnut mixture over pastry sheet. Now roll gently with rolling pin, but keep in rectangular shape. Carefully turn pastry sheet over & sprinkle with remaining sugar mixture. Roll again gently with a rolling pin.

Arrange banana slices on pastry sheet, close to each other (*or spread the mashed bananas on.*) Carefully roll up pastry like a jelly roll, starting from the long side. Cut rolled pastry into 2 ½ cm/1-inch slices. Place pastry slices, cut-side down, onto the baking sheet.

Bake for 12-18 minutes (*check to see that bottoms don't get too brown*) until the pastries are light golden brown on top. Turn pastries over. Bake for another 4 minutes or until golden brown. Let pastries cool on baking sheet or wire rack for 10 minutes. **This recipe isn't very sweet, that's why I made a glaze for it.**

Glaze: Sift icing sugar in a bowl, add the milk and stir till smooth. You can add vanilla essence/extract if you want. Drizzle over the cold Banana Pinwheels.

Banana Bacon Cheese Bread



Banana Bacon Cheese Bread

2 large, really ripe bananas, peeled
½ cup (100 g) castor sugar
1 cup (260 g) bulgarian/greek natural flavored yoghurt
2 cups (350 g) self-raising flour
pinch of salt
125 g bacon pieces, cut into small pieces, cooked, drained (optional)
½ cup cheddar cheese, grated

Preheat oven to 180oC.

Grease a loaf tin. In a medium bowl, mash bananas. Stir in the sugar.

Add the yoghurt, flour, bacon, cheddar cheese and pinch of salt. Lightly mix until just combined, but with no dry flour visible.

Pour the batter into the tin and bake for about 50 minutes, or until skewer comes out clean. Let cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then turn onto a wire rack.

This is such a lovely sweet/salty bread!! Keep it in a closed container in the fridge and the taste will just improve.



Banana S'mores

Banana S'mores

1 medium-large very ripe banana, peeled
3/4 cup finely ground honey graham crackers (*I used oats digestive biscuits*)
1/4 cup mini chocolate chips
1/4 cup mini marshmallow bits

Preheat oven to 180 oC.

Grease a baking sheet. Place banana into a mixing bowl and mash with a fork.

Add finely ground graham crackers, chocolate chips and marshmallow bits, stirring to combine.

With a cookie scoop (or big spoon), scoop dough onto prepared baking sheet. Press each cookie flat.

Bake for 13-15 minutes until baked through. Let cool on baking sheet for 10 minutes before transferring.



Banana Choc Bark

Banana Choc Bark

2 cups chocolate pieces*
1 banana, peeled & mashed
1 packet glazed cherries, halved
crystallised ginger slices, to taste

Grease a baking sheet.

Melt the chocolate pieces (*I melt mine in microwave dish for 30 seconds at a time, until its melted. Just remember that the choc pieces retain its shape, so stir every 30 seconds.*)

Quickly stir in the mashed banana and the ginger slices. Spread the mixture onto the baking sheet, not too thick, not too thin.

Press the cherries on the top in random spots and refrigerate for a few hours.

When hard, break into pieces (*called bark.*)

I found that my 'bark' never went totally hard. So I kept mine in a closed container in the freezer, ready to use when I felt like something sweet.

**I have used a mixture of small chocolate slabs I had – all with different flavours like coffee, orange, sea salt & peppercorns. Dark or milk chocolate can be used.*

Banana Foam



Banana Foam

1 x 90 g packet jelly (*I used pineapple*)
250 ml boiling water
250 ml cold water
1 x 385 g tin condensed milk
juice of 1 lemon
4 ripe bananas, peeled and mashed

Dissolve jelly in boiling water and add cold water. Chill.

Whisk the jelly as soon as it begins to set. Stir in condensed milk, lemon juice and mashed bananas. Decorate with banana slices, cherry halves and sprigs of mint. **Use within 2 hours.**

This is a very light and refreshing dessert. You can easily serve this with a 'heavy' dessert, eg bread pudding, pie or even with ice cream.

Banana Bread Pudding



Banana Bread Pudding

6 lemon poppy seed muffins
2 bananas, peeled, sliced
2 ½ rings canned pineapple, cut into smaller pieces
Zest of 2 limes
4 x-large eggs (size doesn't matter)
2 cups milk
lemon juice

Preheat oven to 170 oC.

Break the muffins into pieces and add to a glass oven dish. Dip the banana slices into the lemon juice and press the banana slices and pineapple pieces in-between the muffin pieces.

Mix the eggs & milk and pour over the muffins. Sprinkle with the lime zest. Bake for 45 minutes.

Enjoy with ice cream, cream or custard.

Banana Tarte Tatin



Banana Tarte Tatin

1 x puff pastry, thawed
firm bananas, sliced thickly
150 g white granulated sugar
2 tablespoons water
muffin pan

Preheat oven to 190oC. Grease the muffin pan. Roll out the puff pastry. Cut out rounds the same size as your muffin holes (*mine was exactly the size of a whisky glass*). Cut out the rounds, arrange them on a plate and put in the fridge.

Place the sugar and water in a saucepan over medium heat and stir until a golden caramel forms. Pour the caramel evenly in each muffin hole.

Carefully place banana slices into the caramel sauce. Top with a round of pastry and tuck in the edges to encase the caramel sauce and banana slices.

Bake for 30-40 minutes or till golden brown. Leave in muffin pan for a few minutes. Carefully put a big enough plate on top of the muffin pan and using oven gloves, remove the tarte tatin by flipping the plate. Don't worry if some of the sauce or bananas are stuck to the muffin pan, just scoop it out and place it on top of the pastry shell.

You can add a touch of ginger, lime zest, cinnamon or even raisins.

The empty muffin pans need to be soaked in hot water before the caramel hardens.

Banana Brulee



Banana Bruleé

1 banana, peeled
1 tablespoon milk (any kind)
1 tablespoon smooth peanut butter (optional) *
pinch of All Spice, or just cinnamon
castor Sugar

Blend the banana, milk & peanut butter till smooth. Pour in ramekin (or ramekins, if they're small), pour a thick layer of sugar on top (*if layer isn't thick enough, it won't caramelize*) and caramelize directly under the grill till bubbly and golden - or with a blow torch.

Its not very sweet – so flavour it with lemon zest or more spices in the mixture.

**A tablespoon of canned peach/pineapple can surely be used instead of the peanut butter. Although I've not tested it.*



Banana Ice Cream

Banana Ice Cream

How to freeze bananas:

When you're freezing bananas, they should be so ripe that they're covered in brown spots. Peel bananas, slice them and put them in container or Ziploc bag – freeze for 1-2 hours. (Or just make sure you always have frozen bananas for unexpected guests.)

Soft-serve ice cream

Take the frozen bananas out and blend them in the food processor till creamy, continually scraping down the sides, adding cold milk spoon by spoon to help the blending process.

Serve immediately or replace them in a container and freeze them again.

Frozen mango slices & frozen pawpaw slices will also work.

Variations – add after your frozen bananas are smoothly blended:

Add toasted coconut & lemon zest, blend

4 tablespoons cocoa powder, blend (*use 3 bananas*)

Dash of strong black cold coffee, blend

Frozen strawberries/berries, blend (*use 1 part banana, 3 parts fruit*)

Add honey and peanut butter to taste

Nutella or hazelnut flavoured chocolate spread to taste, blend

Add frozen strawberries and few tablespoons cream, blend.