

Acai - Not Just a Juice in the Amazon

The Acai Berry is quickly becoming famous in the developed world as an antioxidant ingredient in drinks to boost your health but its origins are of much greater use.

The fruit found atop tall palms near the banks of the Amazon grows in clusters averaging 800 berries. It is harvested by locals that shimmy up the trunks of 15 -25 meter palms, in often less than a minute, making the great skill almost appear to be easy. There are about 50-60 berries on a sprig from a cluster. The berry is about the size of a grape and dark purple in color when ripe, an inner pulp is only about 20% of the fruit with a large making up the rest of it.

The natives of the area have long appreciated this palm for its many resources, including its nutrient rich berry.

Berry

- In its simplest form the fruit is chewed off the seed when picked fresh from the tree
- A thick juice made by crushing the berries is very popular with locals of the Amazon
- Berry pulp is used to make sauces in meat & fish dishes native to the area
- A mixture of acai, sugar, and manioc (cassava)

Trunk

- Wood used in construction

Leaves

- As is common with other varieties of palms the leaves are often found traditional used in house hold items such as brooms, baskets, mats and for thatched roofs

Seed

- A single seed can produce over 20 individual shoots
- Used in the making of local jewelry

Palm Hearts

- The tree must be felled for this portion of the palm that is a local vegetable staple as well as an exported product (hearts of palm are harvested from approximately 20 varieties of palm, but mainly in the acai)

Roots

- Used for traditional medicinal purposes

About the Author

Gabrielle Martineau is a regular contributor to [Acai Berry Info](#), an online source for acai berry and [acai fruit juice](#) information, news, discussion and videos. Details the various health benefits that acai berries provide and features acai product retailers and suppliers.

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