

Grilled Ripe Plantains

Flavors of the Sun | March 2007



Ripe plantains should have a black peel and feel soft to the touch. Look for brown sugar loaf at a Mexican or Cuban market.

- 1 LB. LATIN BROWN SUGAR LOAF (PILONCILLO OR PANELA)
OR PACKED DARK BROWN SUGAR
- 2½ CUPS WATER
- 2 3-INCH STICKS CINNAMON (CANELA
IS MEXICAN TRUE CINNAMON)
- 15 WHOLE ALLSPICE
- 8 WHOLE CLOVES
- 2 STAR ANISE PODS
- ½ CUP SWEET SHERRY OR DARK RUM
PEEL FROM 1 ORANGE*
- ⅛ TSP. SALT
- 8 RIPE PLANTAINS
- 2 TBSP. EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
SEA SALT (OPTIONAL)
EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL (OPTIONAL)

In a heavy large saucepan combine brown sugar, water, cinnamon sticks, allspice, cloves, star anise, sherry, orange peel, and ⅛ teaspoon salt. Bring to boiling; reduce heat and boil gently, uncovered, for 35 to 40 minutes or until mixture is the consistency of light molasses, stirring occasionally. Cool. Strain and discard spices and peel. Set aside ¾ cup of the syrup for plantains. Store remaining syrup, covered, in refrigerator up to 1 month.

Cut off both ends of plantains. Brush unpeeled plantains with the 2 tablespoons olive oil. Place on the rack of an uncovered grill directly over medium coals; grill for 10 minutes, turning once. Cover grill and cook 18 minutes more, turning once. Remove from grill rack. Slit the plantain peels lengthwise and open up to expose plantains. Brush generously with most of reserved ¾ cup brown sugar syrup. Return plantains to grill rack. Cover; grill 2 to 3 minutes to heat syrup.

If desired, peel plantains. Sprinkle with sea salt and drizzle with olive oil, if desired. Serve with remaining syrup. Makes 8 servings.

*NOTE: Use a vegetable peeler to remove the peel from the orange, being careful not to get any of the bitter white pith underneath.

Per serving: 343 cal., 6 g fat (1 g sat. fat), 0 mg chol., 102 mg sodium, 77 g carbo., 4 g fiber, 2 g pro.