



# What Is Jackfruit, and How Should You Eat It?

By Katie Simmons  
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Native to southern India, jackfruit is traditionally used in spicy curries, hearty kormas, and a toffee-like pudding called halwa. In recent years, however, the tropical fruit has started popping up in grocery stores and restaurants all over the United States.

## What Does Jackfruit Taste Like?

Ripe yellow jackfruit has a subtly sweet flavor, often described as a combination of banana, apple, and mango. Young green jackfruit, on the other hand, has a neutral flavor and texture similar to shredded meat, making it a popular meat substitute in savory dishes.

## Is Jackfruit Healthy?

Naturally rich in potassium and vitamin C and low in fat and calories, jackfruit is a healthful alternative not only to meat but also to highly processed imitation-meat products. One thing to watch out for, though, is sodium: When purchasing canned jackfruit, look for water-packed varieties, as brine-packed varieties can be very high in sodium.



## Where To Find Jackfruit In the Grocery Store

You can purchase jackfruit in several different forms.

### Fresh

Look for the fresh fruit in Asian markets or the supermarket produce section. A whole fruit can weigh up to 100 pounds, so grocers often package it in large pieces sold near other pre-cut fruits and vegetables.

### Shelf-Stable

Check your supermarket's Asian food section for canned jackfruit, which comes packed in water, brine, or sweet syrup. Skip the syrup versions to avoid unnecessary sugar. Brine-packed will be high in sodium, and even water-packed varieties can have added sodium. Check the label and thoroughly rinse and drain the fruit before using it in recipes. [Trader Joe's](#) also offers canned green jackfruit in brine. You may also find it in shelf-stable, vacuum-sealed bags, such as [Edward & Sons Organic Young Jackfruit](#), which is available for purchase online.

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## Refrigerated or Frozen

Some stores sell packaged jackfruit near other vegan foods in the refrigerator or freezer aisle. [Upton's Naturals Original Jackfruit](#) in the refrigerator case has just one ingredient (jackfruit) and only 15 milligrams of sodium per serving.

## How To Cut Fresh Jackfruit

The fibrous flesh of this fruit is quite sticky; it may help to wear gloves. Once you're prepared here's what you need to do:

1. Slice the fruit in half, and use your hands or a knife to remove the fruit pods from the skin and core.
2. Make a slit in each pod to remove the seeds.
3. Chop or shred as desired.

**Tip:** Slice any extra fruit into manageable wedges. Freeze them in freezer bags for up to six months

## How to Eat It

Use the fruit to add heartiness and texture to a wide range of dishes, from sweet to savory. Here are just a few examples to get you started.

- Sandwiches: Sauté shredded green jackfruit with [barbecue sauce](#) for vegan pulled pork-style sandwiches.
- Tacos: Substitute shredded jackfruit for chicken in tacos.
- Casseroles: Use chunks in place of chicken.
- Sweets: Add sweet ripe jackfruit to puddings, stir into oatmeal, or puree with frozen bananas for nice cream.

## Can You Eat Jackfruit Seeds?

Yes, you can also eat the seeds. Boil the seeds 20 to 30 minutes (or roast in a 400°F oven 20 minutes) until tender. Let cool, then peel and eat.

## Jackfruit Recipes

Here are some of our favorite recipes that feature the versatile fruit:

- [Jackfruit Barbecue Sandwiches with Broccoli Slaw](#)
- [Vegan Jambalaya Stew](#)
- [Chipotle Jackfruit Tacos](#)
- [Vegan Tamales](#)

*For more guidance in healthy cooking, check out [Forks Meal Planner](#), FOK's easy weekly meal-planning tool to keep you on a plant-based path. To learn more about a whole-food, plant-based diet, visit our [Plant-Based Primer](#).*