

Sweet and Sour

By : **Juggernaut**

The canopy of Tamarind tree is home for homeless; the green pods make sour chutney and the sweet and sour pulp from ripe pods is extensively used in many culinary preparations.



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In contrast to Mango, Neem or Gooseberry, the Tamarind tree with evergreen dense foliage on drooping branches from towering trunk is known for cool shade. Homeless and panhandlers for generations live under the canopy of Tamarind trees.

Long time ago, when the means of transportation was limited to walking, bicycling or ride on rickshaw, tree lined streets provided enough shade and protection during hot Indian summers and monsoons. Large Tamarind trees were always found on either road sides, street corners or on Government lands and not often in the backyards; perhaps it is too big for the small backyards. People more often plant Banana, Mango or Gooseberry trees over Tamarind in their backyards.

Tamarind trees that lined the streets in the cities and country side fell to make way for more roads and now as people travel in AC cars, natural tree shade on the streets became redundant.

The emerging young leaves, flowers and green Tamarind pods make excellent sour chutney, the sweet and sour fruit pulp from ripe pods is extensively used in a variety of culinary preparations. The Tamarind fruit pulp is a big business.

The dark brown colored seeds with hard skin in each pod have other uses. The fruit extract is also used as metal polisher particularly silver and brass ware. The dark tree wood makes good furniture. Cash flow for traders and home for homeless, the Tamarind is sweet and sour.

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