

# Betel Juice

By : **Juggernaut**

Chewing Betel Leaf after meals is good for digestion and cheaper than using antacids.



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## *Betel Juice*

Subba Rao

â Apple a day keeps doctor away,â Dan took a big bite of Fuji apple.

â Or chew a leaf to keep antacids away,â Juggernaut started chewing a heart shaped shiny leaf.

â That smells strong, what kind of leaf was that?â

â This is Betel leaf from Betel Pepper plant, a distant relative of black pepper plant; hundreds of millions of people in Asia chew these leaves on a regular basis,â Juggernaut continued to chew with his eyes half closed as if he was experiencing euphoria.

â Eating Apple or any fruit for that matter is healthy but never heard chewing a leaf is good for you.â

â This is not any leaf, Betel leaf was in use over 5000 years ago in South Asia; people chew a leaf or two after meals to aid digestion particularly spicy Indian food, chewing a Betel leaf is cheaper and better than using Tums or Prilosec for acid stomach.â

â I just read on the internet that chewing Betel nuts causes all kinds of cancers,â Dan was still on the internet.

â Betel nuts are from Areca Palm trees and no relation to Betel plant; since crushed Areca nuts were chewed with Betel leaf, the nuts were wrongly labeled as Betel nuts, it is misnomer to call Areca Palm nuts as Betel nuts.â

â Is it necessary to eat Betel leaf with Areca nuts?â

â Not necessarily, during thousands of years of Betel leaf use, to get a kick, people improvised Betel leaf with crushed Areca Palm nuts, liquid lime, and tobacco powder.â

â Was it not cumbersome to get all the ingredients together to chew?â

â I am sure it was but ingenious humans made it easy by putting all the ingredients together and wrapped with Betel leaves in a shape of small cone and called *Paan*; it is handy and small to carry several of them in a pocket and easy to pop into mouth like a large corn candy.â

â It is the most fascinating thing I heard but what it makes *Paan* chewing carcinogenic?â

â Certainly not the Betel leaves used as wrap to make the *Paan*; the contents such as crushed Areca Palm nuts, powder tobacco along with lime paste could cause cancer.â

â An old movie *Betel Juice* has any connection to Betel juice from chewing *Paan*?â

â The lime paste in the *Paan* reacts with phenolic compounds in Betel leaf and Areca Palm nuts to produce brick-red dye that turns saliva into bright red Betel juice from chewing *Paan*,â â The Betel Juice turns the

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teeth, tongue and lips into bright red and disgusting when spit on the streets leaving large red stains.â

â In the movie *Betel Juice*, two people not knowing they were dead continue to live creating horror in a comical way; the real brick-red Betel juice is the spit from chewing *Paan* while induce temporary euphoria can lead to cancer,â

Juggernaut finished chewing the Betel leaf hoping the spicy curry goat he had for dinner causes no heart-burn.

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