

(Puerto Vallarta, Mexico?we had a blast at this resort, especially when enjoying these types of views!)

I need a vacation.

Bad.

I'm so ready to make a move out of this crazy city. If something were to be offered in NY, I'd dip in a heart beat. In the meantime, I sit here in the east coasts' sin city and ponder my next move. I find a moment of happiness in thinking about how much I travel and how much I love it. How much I'd love for someone to join me every time.

Not just family. However, when my *familia* does get together for biannual trips to Mexico, it's priceless. I love it; except that our oldest brother has yet to come with us.

One of the reasons I like going to Mexico so much is the super friendly staff that waits on your every beckon call. You'll see resort staff up at 4 am polishing poolside rails and ensuring breakfast is the freshest. And of course the food! The food is NOTHING like what we are served here, even in the most of authentic Mexican restaurants. I remember having *sopes de marlin* (fish) in Cabo San Lucas a few years back. The decor of this restaurant was so eclectic yet soothing, you could sit there all night. The rooftop had an intentional huge gaping hole that opened up to the star lit sky?hints of periwinkle streaks illuminated the black ether.

Everything about that night was perfect.

But then, people. We go to Wal-Mart to buy toiletries, etc... and somehow end up in the grocery section of this mega *tienda*. My baby brother and sis have an incredible sense of humor, so when they stumbled upon this box of cereal bars, I wasn't feeling so bad about having ordered fresh sushi from the "sushi chef" taking orders at the front of the store:

Okay, maybe I did. That was a bad culinary decision on my part. But Thank God brands like Kellogg have imported products to suit natives. I'm just mad they named it **BIMBO!** Really? Whose bimbo was making this decision? Obviously, we skipped on eating bimbo flavored bars! But when I get to indulge in something like this, all my worries and bad decisions are washed away:

Batido de Mamey (pronounced "mah-may") is a must have at least once a week during Summer. Mamey is a yummy tropical fruit, originally from South America, though it is most commonly eaten in

Mexico and Cuba. Yeah baby! We loooooove this fruit! I would just about kill to have mamey everyday! It has a brown, kind of tough outer skin with a melon-ey looking inside. The fruits texture is kind of like that of an avocado. The seed is pretty much useless unless of course you plan on growing it. You can actually buy frozen mamey at your local Latin market, though I've had a hard time finding it even where my parents live in Va.

You can make all kinds of delectable treats with this awesome fruit, including my oh so damn good milkshake pictured above. It has a very smooth and flavorful savory and sweet appeal, believe it or not! I can't really describe it it's so good. But my fave is *elado de mamey*! Oh my God, baby smack me! I can only get mamey ice-cream in Miami, where all things Cuban are attainable, so when I'm able to find it locally, I GETS excited! I'm actually thinking about making some ice-cream myself. **El Palacio de Frutas** ("the fruit palace") in Miami carries all kinds of fruits and vegetables you've never even heard of!

Mamey is also known to have aphrodisiac properties! No wonder I love swallowing this stuff in a matter of seconds!

I recently learned that:

"the mamey is the cornerstone of Cuban holistic medicine. It is used extensively as a veritable panacea for gastro-intestinal maladies. In southern Cuba, the mamey is also used to treat headaches and venereal diseases. There are numerous accounts of the mamey being used as an antiseptic during the Spanish-American War." (wikipedia).

This now justifies me paying \$5.00 (even up to \$3/lb) for one single fruit! Got a headache? Drink a mamey milkshake!

MAMEY MILKSHAKE

Ingredients:

- 1/2 full grown mamey fruit
- 6 cups 2% milk
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- a hint of vanilla (optional)
- crushed ice (optional)

Instructions:

Scoop out center of mamey. In blender, add fruit, milk, sugar, salt and ice. Blend on fast for about 3 minutes or until your shake is super smooth and creamy. Garnish with mint leaves!

Serves 4 glasses.

****SO WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SUMMER SHAKE?!****