

### **Piri Piri**

When traveling north toward Inhambane on N1 you will pass through the town of Inhacoongo which has become the center of producing the local spicy sauce – piri piri. This town is immediately recognizable with its numerous unmanned stalls filled with bottles of piri piri. This sauce has many varieties, for in principle, It's home-made. Mothers and Grandmothers recipes are handed down as the taste of the family. It is HOT or SPICY. A few drops will satisfy most – but then again, tastes vary. It is ideal for shrimp, chicken & poultry, fish and soups. Piri piri is sold in most markets.

### **Fruits**

It is simply amazing how many fruits are sold in Inhambane. Mangoes, bananas, oranges, papayas, passion fruit, watermelons, to name a few that are popular in other regions or countries, but there is more. The fruit of the season are frequently sold along the road side, or at local bus stops, or small town markets. The main method of sale is done by women who carry large containers on their heads.

The local people have learned from their ancestors, on how to add a variety of which can be harvested naturally from the trees surrounding the area. Locally grown *mafura* is an amazing fruit, for both the fruit-bean color and the method in which it is eaten. There are two colors to the mafura fruit-bean, white and a vibrant orange. Both white and orange fruit bean have half-moon black markings. The *mafura* fruit-bean is soaked in water, after it has softened, the water is drained and the fruit-bean is mashed, sugar and/or lemon are added to mix into a yogurt type texture. The *mafura* is only seen in markets and sold on the road side during the months of January thru March.

### **Matapa**

*Matapa* are the leaves from the stem of the *cassava* plant. As food is quite popular across Mozambique, and so no one knows for sure from which province it originates. Since on the preparation of this typically mozambican plate coconut milk and pounded peanut should be incorporated, it is believed that matapa's source is connected to the provinces of Gaza (major producer of cassava and peanut) and Inhambane (producer of coconuts, peanuts and cassava) in the southern of Mozambique and Zambezia (producer of coconut and cassava) in central Mozambique. This plate assumes many variations, according to the ingredients that abound in each province. In Inhambane, matapa is famous for incorporating variety of fresh or dried seafood, most notably the blue crab, shrimps and one species of saltwater snail named "*Dzithogoma*". Is usually served with xima or white rice, but in the original style of *wagaya*<sup>1</sup>, matapa is served with cassava flour (produced and consumed locally).

### **Tangerinas de Inhambane**

If you mention Inhambane to a Mozambican who is not from the region, chances are they will say something about tangerinas de Inhambane. In season, bushel & plastic buckets are almost overflowing with tangerinas on the roadside. The fruit has even made it into local pop culture through the poem, *As saborosas tanjarinas d'Inhambane* written by renowned Mozambican poet José *Craveirinha*.

### **Crab Curry**

Crabs are well known in the province of Inhambane, the natives enjoys taste the crabs boiled with his own sea water and is excellent to accompany a round of drinks with friends.

In Inhambane there are various crab species, being privileged the **blue-crab** or water crab and **Santola** or mud crab (dwells near river mouths), locally called "*dzindrholo*" and "*ci-hologho*" respectively.

Whatever the variety, Curry of crabs is cooked with thick coconut milk and a mix of Indian curry powder to give that spicy taste that contrasts with the sweet taste of coconut milk. Lightly the appetizing smell of cinnamon and spring green onion incorporated just in the last minute of preparation of the plate, as if they had been forgotten. I suggest you wash your hands because the crab tastes better when eaten by hand.

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<sup>1</sup> *Wagaya* means "**people from home**", to charming refers to people from Inhambane

### **Xima of coconut**

Xima (type of cornmeal) is a companion to many plates consumed in Inhambane, but it should be noted that *xima* similarly to *matapa*, is a very popular food and have a lot of fans in Mozambique. It is excellent to be served with stews and grilled meat or seafood. Traditionally it is served hot and is eaten by hand, making a small ball in the palm of the hand and then dipping it in the sauce.

Xima is made from maize or sorghum flour, and in the northern districts of Inhambane province as well as in the central provinces of the Mozambique, men have a reputation for better preparing xima than women.

In Inhambane province, due to the extensive palm planted and the abundance of coconut, xima was slightly altered from its original recipe. Instead of simply prepare with water, it was added the coconut milk, the result was a very good, giving a typical and unique taste of the Inhambane's Xima.

### **Munhandzi**

It is an oil of excellent quality, typical of the southern province of Inhambane. Extracted from the seed *mafura*, this oil has similar properties to the olive oil. In Inhambane, the *munhandzi* is used to anoint the boiled cassava (either in water or coconut milk), is also used in grilled and somehow can accompany any meal.

### **Petisco de amêijoa / Tidbit of clams**

We cannot talk about Inhambane, without mentioning about its blue waters beaches and it's bays rich in varied of fauna and species of clams and shells. As imperative from the mother nature, who gifted this province famous not only for its extensive palmar and sweet tangerines that *Craveirinha* tasted and enjoyed, but also because of the quality and abundance of fish and seafood, the cuisine in Inhambane has seafood as the main ingredient, which is easily found in the local market.

At the very end of the afternoon, buy some clams freshly caught in the bay. Join them garlic, a bit of onion and lots of parsley. Do not forget to add a few drops of *piri-piri Nhacoongue*, needless to say that the beer should already be cold.

### **Bolinhos de sura / Sura bread**

If you talk about food in Inhambane is synonymous of tasty seafood, on the other hand, we cannot leave out the influence that the palmar and their coconuts has on the local cuisine.

The natives have developed techniques for extracting the sap of the coconut palm, through the flower buds of coconuts. This sap is locally called *Sura*, it has a quickly fermentation process and is locally consumed as a typical alcoholic drink.

Before fermentation, when *sura* is still sweet, is used to manufacture a type of sweet bread very much appreciated locally and in other provinces. This bread, commonly known as "*bolinho de sura*", is one of the exclusive brands of Inhambane province, and can be eaten plain or with butter. Among domestic tourists, it is common to buy this very local bread so it will witness that you been in Inhambane.

### **Tõn-tõn-tõn**

The name may vary, some call it "*Três palavrinhas / Three little words*" other "*T3*", "*água branca / white water*" or "*água de papá / daddy's water*", if you ask for any of these names, everyone will know what it is, but the most common name is "*tõn-tõn-tõn*".

It's a local drink very similar to *Cachaça* from Brasil, is a kind of brandy, produced from the simply distillation of sugarcane. Made in artesanal way, on alembics from the bottom of yards, this brandy contains very high volume of alcohol.

It is suggested to be drunken as aperitif or as digestive, people are who prefer to drink it pure and others like to mix into cup coffee. This is not drunk with ice and or other mixing drink as use to be done with whisky, it is drink in small shots and in every shot doesn't miss the well-known creeps / body shakes. I suggest you take any extra t-shirt because just after you start drinking this brandy, your will sweat a lot.

### **Espetadas de Chicorroa / Chicorroa kebabs**

When you are on the way to your holidays destination, along the main road EN1, at a certain village named *Chicorroa*, in the province of Inhambane, please don't afford to stop to taste the famous kebabs of fresh pork meat just grilled in firewood.

The meat is not season with spices, it simply takes salt and fresh lemon juice and them is taken to grill on fire, where to the main season is naturally added the slight smell of smog from the wood burning, thus giving the unique and especial taste.

If you like, ask a piece of lemon to squeeze on the meat or even a tooth of "*sacana*", which is a kind of very small and thin piri-piri, but it becomes a giant when compared with other existing variety of piri-piri, it is very hot. It's impossible a tear not drop after eating a warm kebab with "*sacana*" seasoning.