

Light Caribbean-Style Plantains to (not) Die For

Peel* the plantains (one per person is quite sufficient) and cut into diagonal slices. One average-sized plantain will yield about eight to ten slices. Make them less than one inch thick – the thinner they are (within reason), the more flavor they will absorb in cooking.

Spray a pan (does not have to be non-stick) with butter-flavored cooking spray. Heat to medium / medium high, and toss in the plantain slices so each is flat on the bottom of the pan. Spray the side of the plantains that are up.

Brown them for a few minutes, watching to make sure they don't stick. Use more spray if necessary to keep them from sticking to the bottom of the pan. After they have browned, flip and brown the other side.

While they are browning, put a packet of Sweet 'n' Low™ into about 1/3 to 1/2 cup (gauge according to how many plantains you are cooking) of hot water. Add one teaspoon (or more) of pure vanilla and stir well. You want enough liquid to not quite fully cover the slices of plantain in the pan when you pour it in.

After the plantains have browned on the second side, loosen them with a spatula to make sure they're free from the bottom. Add the water / flavorings mix, cover the pan, and let the plantains simmer for about 10 to 15 minutes, or until all the liquid has been absorbed. You can flip them to get more uniform absorption of the liquid.

Cooking the plantains this way adds no fat or calories to the plantains, but they sure do taste good! They will be soft and flavorful, but not greasy.

Alternatives:

I also make these plantains by adding a teaspoon of Jamaica Rum flavoring, and about a half teaspoon of coconut extract to the flavoring mix. These are REALLY GOOD.

Experiment – try some orange extract. Try some ginger. Some almond flavoring. Get creative!

* To peel a plantain, slice end to end in three places equidistant (approximately) around the plantain. Then just peel straight down like a banana. Plantain skins are too thick to peel without that preslicing.

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