

Ducq'loss

Ducq'loss is a Lorath vegetable used to produce a wide variety of other ingredients and substances. It is known for its alcohol and opioid content (produced during fermentation) by other nations – due to its cheapness compared to artificial opioid production methods. It is also known for its production of Tsuboxone, an anti-addictive which prevents the re-enforcement loops in the brain associated with opioid addiction from successfully forming.

The Ducq'loss bares similarities to the nightshade family and is best described as 'a cross between a tomato, a pitaya and cooked chilled rice' – with its fermented form being 'more akin to a melon or tomato with a faint alcoholic wisp'.

Without their husks removed, they are said to resemble giant purple exaggerated baby carrots with an orange interior and a white core.

More about ducq'loss

The word ducq'loss (pronounced duh(k)-hwoss or duhhwosz, with a silent C, Q and L) may refer to the plant (*Sorianum Lycoprosparisium*) or the edible, typically green, fruit that it bears. Having originated on Lor, the Ducloss was spread through known space following contact with the Lorath - and its many varieties are now widely grown, often in greenhouses in cooler climates.

The name ducq'loss comes from the old Lorath rootword 'Duhois', a verb meaning 'to taste hubris itself', a term used to describe a particular flavor and intoxicating qualities ducq'loss is known for.

What is Ducq'loss?

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You know the warm feeling you get when you've had a bit to drink for comfort and you become sort of melancholy and nostalgic on some drinks? Imagine that feeling without the stupor or the loss of coordination. And then imagine it also as the feeling you get when you've been crying and you get a big warm hug from someone who was always just out of touch. That girl you went to school with who you nearly dated who you think about far too much or the girl you used to play with as a kid who was your best friend but you couldn't admit your feelings to. Only, the hugs almost motherly and totally accepting of everything you've ever been or done, a soft "ssshh" that everything will be alright. Then add in that feeling you get when you're a kid and when you first fall in love and you don't recognize the sensation yet and it takes somebody else to tell you that you are and you have that moment of disbelief - "really?" - as if before you were told, the feeling was so much purer, more real, loving and true rather than some shitty reproductive drive. Back when you didn't know any better. Back when you weren't jaded. Or maybe imagine you've been out chopping wood in some cabin somewhere in the middle of winter and you've got warmth in your arms and your breath is hazing up and you march through the snow back through. And someone turns and looks back at you in a night-gown with nothing but warmth and happiness to see you in her eyes, still in her slippers. She's cooking something. A pot of warm stew. The smell makes you remember how your mother used to make it when you were a little kid. She takes your coat and she asks you how things went at the store earlier and you have some witty anecdote that makes you feel like king of the world when she gives that funny laugh you treasure, putting it in your pocket as if there might be a day when you never hear it again. Someone who is genuinely happy and pleased to have you there, who makes you feel the same way. Now imagine you can bottle that golden warm feeling. That's duqcloss. Very small amounts, throttled into your spirit as you take it normally. Enough to make takeout on a rainy day with good friends around the couch feel like a winter feast with family at a tavern. That's duqcloss. And the heart of that experience, the intensity? Well. If you ever see someone chewing them, show some compassion - and if they're still chewing them a week later, some concern.

Usage

The Duqcloss is consumed in diverse ways, including raw, as an ingredient in many dishes, sauces, confectionary, drinks and pharmaceuticals. While it is botanically similar to fruit, it is considered a vegetable for culinary purposes which has caused some confusion. The fruit is super rich in potassium, fatty acids usually only found in meat and complex sugars, high complexity carbohydrates usually found in grain which have a wide variety of beneficial health effects.

Fermentation

Left to ferment, the Duqcloss produces ethanol and methylmorphine, better known as codeine. As such, it is a base element in the refinement of many opioids. Its husk usually softens and is also edible in this form. In this form, it is known colloquially as a 'Duqla'.

Cultural history

While originally confined to the country-side, it is gaining popularity in more densely populated areas, due to the interest expressed by other nations for its rich flavor, wide variety of culinary uses and its alcohol and opioid content.

It is often considered an insult to a Lorath substitute any ingredient produced by ducqloss when preparing food. While it is very hard for foreigners to tell the difference, Lorath themselves usually know right away. Since Lorath taste receptors are much 'duller' than those of other species, their food is especially potent and ducq'loss is no exception.

Consumption

The ducq'loss is now grown and eaten around known space. It is used in diverse ways, including raw in salads, and processed into 'duqla' or 'dully' (pronounced duhwahois and durry, respectively) and sauce or ducq'loss soup in its fermented forms.

Ducq'loss juice is sold as a drink, used in cocktails and in various forms of mind altering gum.

Signiature uses and dishes

Ducq'loss is used in many famous Lorath foods and consumables. For example, in A'xan, the rind is processed to produce fruit-juices. The full husk of ducq'loss is often pickled with boiled eggs and powdered into a subtle bittersweet flavor (similar to saffron) which is used in a wide variety of signiature seafood dishes (bulked by ducq'loss' rice-like substance, known simply as l'loss) with striking similarities to paella which are popular among the Lorath - known for their subtle opiate content - making the dish popular among large families or during diplomatic meetings.

Social Stigma

Left to ferment into duqla, these dense areas liquify, becoming soft, fleshy and juicy with a much sweeter less savory flavor - seemingly going from a vegetable to a fruit in a matter of days. In this form, it is usually chilled, sliced into quarters and dabbed with salt, sugar and a dash of pepper-spice if preferable.

For this reason, there is a social stigma of intoxication tied to sweet foods in Lorath culture - which aids in explaining why as a species, they have an unusually sweet tongue compared to many other nations - which can make Lorath cuisine sickly if prepared with inferior low-complex sugars, as opposed to the slow burning sugars of ducq'loss.

Forms of Ducq'loss

Unusually, Ducq'loss goes through a slow cycle of ripening and fermentation in which its flavor undergoes massive chemical change, changing color from green, to red, to purple and finally to white.

For this reason, ducq'loss' different forms are usually treated as completely different vegetables - with particular strains being bred and fertilized with specific ingredients to excel in a particular role rather

than be a better overall fruit - with massive differences region to region.

Unripe (green q'loss)

Known as q'loss, unripened unripened Ducq'loss has a tough hard fibrous exterior (which is gradually broken down into a softer sugar-dense form). In this form, the husk contains a large number of tiny sacs of foltic and citric acids, granting it an incredibly sour flavor similar to lemon or lime, with an equally high acidic content.

The interior of q'loss has a texture similar to potato, though it has very little taste, since its flavor has yet to fully develop. This interior is known colloquially as 'the bumps' of a duqc'loss.

Seeds have not yet formed. Known as the 'sour' stage of Duqc'loss.

Consumption of unripe Ducq'loss

The flavor of ripe duqcloss rind is described as 'at first a very sharp refreshing tang akin to lemon or lime' which is caused by microcapsules of citric acids.

Unripe duqc'loss is considered unfit for consumption when raw but its rind is 'very sobering' and is used as an ingredient in many recipes (known simply as husk). It can be diced, breaded and fried or blended to form potent sour flavoring sauces, similar to picallili or pickled lime.

Raw and pickled rinds are often served at bars, similar to the trade culture of ta'pas, along with boiled eggs and sweet meats. The pickle-juice from the rind is usually kept.

Ripened (red q'loss)

Ripened Ducq'loss has a soft exterior with a sweet-sour flavor and a rich fruity flavor. Its interior is segmented into many small grains, separated by sweet watery fluid, with a texture very similar to that of rice. The seeds have formed, but not the alcohol content of the fruit.

Eating a ripened duqc'loss is described as 'at first a very sharp refreshing tang akin to lemon or lime' which is caused by microcapsules of citric acids inside its rind. Its main body is clumped of many smaller 'grains', bonded by 'somer' high complexity sugars that lilt on the tongue - with a dense packed body of what can be describable as 'a sweet rice or grained potato'.

Known as the subtle stage, where sweet and sour flavors are perfectly balanced and the fruit's flavor is not overwhelming. Toward the end of the ripened stage, it becomes extremely sweet.

Consumption of ripened Ducq'loss

The husk of ripened Ducq'loss is described as having 'an unexpected meat like textured' and is often

shredded and fried in a wide variety of meats, either alongside or as a substitute for various meats. The sweetened form of the husk is often washed in vinegar, with the resulting fluid being a common ingredient in carbonated beverages for children.

The interior body is clumped and grained, with a texture and flavor akin to rice. It is commonly used to prepare slow-cook paella-like dishes with various meats and spices in butters and oils with boiled eggs (known as Hanloss, a very popular family dish for its opioid content which gets family members chatty) or is used as a bulking agent in many recipes.

When sweetened, ducq-loss is blended into a slow tangy rich syrupy sauce which compliments vegetables and meats which does not cloy the throat, known colloqually as 'red sauce' - not to be confused with ketchup. Its fermented form is known as 'black sauce', which has a bittersweet scent of the sea, as it is prepared with reeds and fish, complimenting rice and fish dishes - with a flavor similar but not quite like soy-sauce.

Fermented ('duqla')

Fermented ducq'loss (ducqi) is very soft and fleshy - with a texture akin to a wilted tomato and an interior texture similar to that of ripened melon (known as ha'sl) - dense in juice with an alcoholic wisp depending on how long it has been fermented for. Seeds are fully formed, with their opioid content at its very highest - and are ready to be harvested and processed.

Eating a fermented ducq'loss is described as taking a bite into a fragile tomato to discover its interior lush watery melon - with the skin often falling off as one eats it. The watery juices have an alcoholic tang - with a flavor similar to dragonfruit. It is common practice to swallow the seeds when eating.

In this form, the opioids ooze from the seeds into the surrounding flesh. This is known as the sweet-stage of Ducq'loss.

Consumption of fermented ducq'loss

Left to ferment into duqla, these dense areas liquify, becoming soft, fleshy and juicy with a much sweeter less savory flavor - seemingly going from a vegetable to a fruit in a matter of days. In this form, it is usually chilled, sliced into quarters and dabbed with salt, sugar and a dash of pepper-spice if preferable - or served with red-sauce and fried meats.

The husk of duqla is very sweet and is often served to children - pickled or otherwise - or boiled, dried and powdered into l'uoss, a saffron like powder which is often used as a base component in many sauces and even used in some cocktails.

The entire duqla can be pickled and blended into tsuqloss, a strongly alcoholic beverage described by foreigners as 'a deceptively sweet vodka' which is much less sophisticated than most Lorath wines - but sometimes used as an ingredient - and a critical component in many Lorath cocktails and recipes.

Many restaurants ferment and pickle their own special varieties of duqla for specialty recipes - with many being well guarded family secrets. An unusual use is 'black jelly' which is used to line the interior of

water-pipes and cooking pots - used as a non-stick and a stabilizer for many more complex flavors, especially when frying food. It can also be served mixed with buttermilk for a creamy treat or chilled into a very sickly form of ice-cream given to very young children.

The Duqs

Seeds of duqla are distilled and powdered to produce high opiate content substances, ideal for insufflation (commonly known as 'the duqs') - or used to garnish foods in their final stages, since the duqs contain an incredibly spicy flavor (meaning when inhaled, the user often cries involuntarily, similar to onions). Alternatively, if boiled with the pickled-juices of ducq'loss for several hours, it will first produce oxymorphone and then naloxone - a powerful opioid antagonist.

An important product is Tsuboxone - an anti-addictive is present in all ducq'loss fruit components with the exception of processed seeds - meaning they are highly addictive. For this reason, Lorath are often confused when they try foreign opioids and experience the symptoms of addiction.

Toxicity

Unfortunately, consumed in large numbers, fermented ducq'loss and particularly duqs can cause opioid overdose.

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