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Immune System Strengthening Recipes:

The Cold & Flu Killing Master Plan

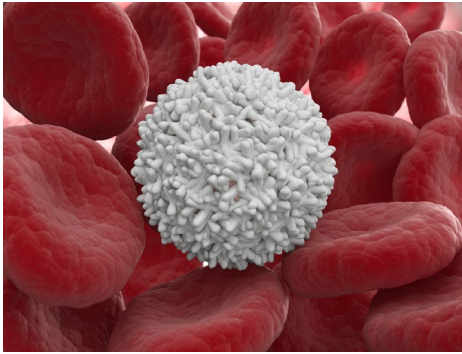


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We often talk about illness and disease as being something out of our control. Like we are unwilling victims of overaggressive germs and bacteria. These feelings of being vulnerable lead us to doubt the amazing capabilities of the

human body not only to defend against foreign invaders but also to heal and restore health once it has been compromised. So, we have come to rely on prescription drugs rather than put our faith in our immune system like we should.

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It's all too easy. We can eat anything we want, live a sedentary life and walk into the doctors office for a magic fix when we don't feel well. The problem with this is multifaceted.

In the first place, we don't actually ever fix the problem if we keep putting a bandaid on it. Secondly, pumping the body full of antibiotics reduces resistance. Thirdly, the chemical concoctions that we pop like candy are toxic, and the toxins accumulate over time in the body.



So, while living a life without taking personal responsibility for our health and using a drug as the first line of defense may seem logical, it is anything but. It is not until we truly realize that immunity is, in fact, a choice and we can do many things to boost the body's ability to stay healthy, that we will be able to reduce our dependence on dangerous pharmaceuticals.

Your body, like any fine tuned automobile, requires fuel to operate. We don't expect to put chocolate milk in our gas tank and drive our car, so why do we think we can load the body full of nutrient void foodstuffs and demand that it never get sick or tired?

When the human body is fed nutrient dense foods it responds in remarkable ways. Many people have no idea what it feels like to feel really great because they have never given their body the opportunity to be at its best.

Building up immunity starts with a healthy diet, rich in whole foods that are designed to support bodily functions, heal and defend. Would we expect an army to win a battle with Nerf guns?

The human body needs ammunition in the form of nutrients in order to win the battle that it faces on a daily basis. Nutrients come from whole foods, not processed foods, so ditching the Americanized diet is essential if you want to boost immunity.

Here are some of our favorite immune boosting foods and recipes to help strengthen your natural defenses and keep illness at bay.

Enjoy!

Note: We highly recommend that you use local and organic ingredients whenever possible for all recipes.





Burdock Root

Burdock root (*Arctium lappa*) is the root of a hardy plant that has grown across much of Europe and Asia since ancient times. Also known as wild rhubarb, stick button, hardock and beggar's buttons, this member of the daisy family often grows along roadsides, riverbanks, fields and fences, and has many notable nutritional benefits.

This plant is thought to have been introduced to North America by French and English colonists when they made the journey across the Atlantic in the 1700's. Along with the root, the seeds were often used in traditional and folk remedies. One of the most popular uses of the dried root was for blood purification, though it was also used as a diuretic and to treat skin conditions,

gout and rheumatism. Burdock seeds were used in folk remedies for various viruses, as well as for the treatment of arthritis and throat conditions.

The burdock plant grows to about three to four feet tall, and has wide, green leaves with hairy stems and tubular purple flowers. As the flowering season ends, the flowers mature into spiny burrs. Burdock root, often harvested when it is young and therefore more tender, has a brown outside and crispy white flesh. It has a sweet flavor that is reminiscent of parsnip.

Nutritional Profile

These sweet roots are rich in:

- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Folate
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Pantothenic acid
- ◆ Phosphorus



- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Protein
- ◆ Selenium
- ◆ Vitamins B1, B2, B3 and B6
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Vitamin K
- ◆ Zinc

Health Benefits

Burdock root contains a variety of antioxidants, including anti-inflammatory flavonoid antioxidants, as well as tannins, which have been shown to have antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal properties.

Due to its unique blend of antioxidant compounds, it has been the subject of research, primarily performed in India and Russia, exploring its anti-cancer properties.



This root contains inulin, a prebiotic which can greatly benefit healthy gut

bacteria, leading to an optimally functioning immune system. When healthy gut bacteria outnumber the harmful bacteria in the gut, along with digestion running smoothly, it can prevent a wide array of acute and chronic conditions from the common cold to full blown diabetes.

The fiber content of burdock root also aids in supporting good gut bacteria, and also provides cardiovascular benefits. Its potassium content also benefits the heart by helping to keep blood pressure and heart rate stable.

Burdock root possesses both laxative and diuretic characteristics, making it an ideal part of a detox regimen. It is this diuretic capacity, along with antioxidant richness, which could support its use for blood purification, as well as its traditional role in promoting liver and gallbladder health. It has also been used to stimulate the appetite and soothe stomach pain and discomfort.

Burdock leaves are sometimes applied to the skin to relieve the pain of burns and to help reduce their healing time;



this is accomplished by keeping moisture away from the burn and through its antibacterial properties. These leaves may also help ease the symptoms of dry skin, psoriasis and eczema.

In Europe, the essential oil derived from burdock root, sometimes called Bur oil, is used as a hair and scalp treatment to strengthen and nourish the hair, and also to promote hair growth.

Burdock Veggie Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 cup burdock root, sliced
- ◆ 2 carrots, sliced
- ◆ 1 sweet potato, cut into cubes
- ◆ 2 broccoli stalks, cut into cubes
- ◆ 3 celery stalks, sliced
- ◆ 1 cup cauliflower, chopped
- ◆ 1/3 a cup of fennel, chopped
- ◆ 2 organic beets, peeled and cut into cubes
- ◆ 1/2 an onion, sliced



- ◆ 2 inches of fresh ginger root, finely chopped
- ◆ 3 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- ◆ 2 teaspoons turmeric
- ◆ 2 teaspoons cumin
- ◆ 1 teaspoon of cinnamon
- ◆ 1 teaspoon of sea salt

Instructions:

1. Place all of the ingredients in a pot and cover with water.
2. Bring mixture to a boil and simmer for 45 minutes.
3. Process half the soup through a blender then pour back into soup for a thicker consistency.



Burdock Root Tea

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 burdock root
- ◆ 1 teaspoon raw honey

Instructions:

1. Use a vegetable peeler to shred root into thin strips.
2. Place the shreds in a paper towel lined bowl and allow to dry out.
3. Heat the dry burdock shreds in a skillet on low heat for 10 minutes. Be careful not to let the burdock burn.
4. Put a pinch of the burdock strips in a cup of boiling water.



Allow to steep for 3 minutes, then remove burdock. Stir in honey and enjoy.

Glazed Burdock

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 lemon
- ◆ 4 cups water
- ◆ 2 tablespoons coconut sugar, divided
- ◆ Sea salt to taste
- ◆ 2 burdock roots
- ◆ 1 teaspoon rice wine vinegar
- ◆ 1 tablespoon miso

Instructions:

1. Squeeze the juice from the lemon into a saucepan with the water. Add 1 tablespoon of sugar and a bit of salt.
2. Peel the burdock roots under cold water. Cut into thin strips and add to the pot.
3. Bring to a boil and simmer for 30 minutes.
4. Drain, and cool slightly.
5. Place the burdock back in the saucepan with the remaining sugar, vinegar and miso.
6. Cook over medium heat until glossy. Serve over organic salad greens.



Chicken Burdock Stew

Ingredients:

- ◆ 4 free range chicken breasts, cut in chunks
- ◆ 2 burdock roots, cut into strips
- ◆ 2 carrots, sliced
- ◆ 2 potatoes, cubed
- ◆ 1 large onion, sliced
- ◆ 2 organic leeks, sliced
- ◆ 2 tablespoons miso paste
- ◆ 2 tablespoons of garlic, chopped
- ◆ 1/2 cup fermented, gluten-free soy sauce
- ◆ 1/2 cup rice wine
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Fry garlic in a pot until fragrant. Stir in miso paste and cook for 1 minute.
2. Add chicken chunks and cook for 3 minutes.
3. Add vegetables and cook for another 3 minutes.
4. Add wine and soy sauce and enough water to cover the mixture.
5. Bring to a boil and simmer for 40 minutes. Season to taste.



Shredded Carrot and Burdock Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 teaspoon coconut oil
- 1 burdock root, shredded
- 1 carrot, shredded
- 1 tablespoon fermented, gluten-free soy sauce
- Salt and pepper to taste

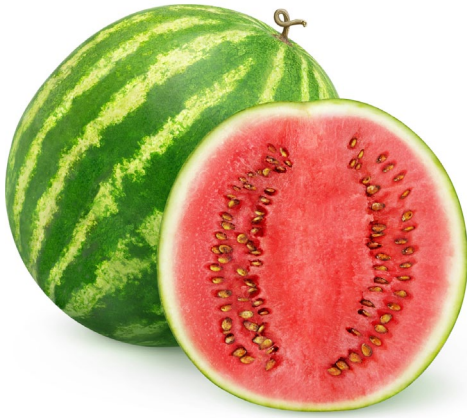
Instructions:

1. Soak burdock in water for several hours. Drain.
2. Melt oil in a skillet on medium heat.
3. Add burdock and carrot shreds to the skillet. Cook until soft.
4. Add soy sauce, salt and pepper and any other desired seasonings.
5. Serve over rice or organic free range chicken breast.

Notes:

- Look for fresh burdock root at your local whole food grocer or Asian market in the cold produce section
- Burdock should be cylindrical sticks that are about $\frac{3}{8}$ to 1 inch thick and 12 inches long with dark skin like that on a russet potato.
- Root should be firm - do not purchase soft burdock.
- Store wrapped in the refrigerator in order to prevent moisture loss - can be kept for a week like this.
- To use, rinse the root and gently peel/cut.





Watermelon

Practically synonymous with summer, the watermelon is a favorite among young and old alike. The sweet juicy fruit is most noted for its refreshingly high water content. In fact, early explorers often used the watermelon as a canteen.

Recorded history first makes mention of the watermelon some 5,000 years ago in Egypt. Over time, the vine-ripened fruit made its way through Africa to Asia some time around 900 A.D. and then onward to Europe around 1300 A.D. The fruit arrived in North America with the early European settlers and today accounts for the most-consumed melon by weight in the United States.

The United States produces over four billion pounds of watermelon annually. Yet that only accounts for approximately five percent of global production. China is the lead producer of watermelon, contributing more than half of all the watermelon produced worldwide.

Up to 1,200 different varieties of watermelon exist, yet only about 50 are commonly consumed. While the red-fleshed melon is the most common, white, pink, orange and yellow varieties exist as well. The size and shape of watermelons can also vary. Some smaller more round melons are often referred to as “personal” watermelons while the larger ones can be oblong or oval in shape. The heaviest watermelon ever recorded weighed in at over 280 pounds.



Nutritional Profile

Round, red and super sweet, watermelon is a staple fruit in many summertime dishes. But along with being a fun handheld treat, watermelon is packed with nutrients including:

- ◆ Choline
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Lycopene
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Selenium
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamin B1 and B6
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Zinc

Health Benefits

Tomatoes are the fruit most often associated with the antioxidant lycopene, yet watermelon accounts for the highest intake of lycopene in the United States. Most red-hued fruits and vegetables get their rich shades from anthocyanins, yet the watermelon can attribute its coloring from a high concentration of lycopene.

Watermelon is loaded with vitamin A that is not only important for eye health but also boosts immunity by enhancing the infection-fighting power of white blood cells. The vitamin B6 found in this sweet summer treat helps the body produce antibodies to fight disease and of course vitamin C also bolsters the immune system and keeps free radicals, that accelerate aging and disease, at bay.

Lycopene is a powerful carotenoid phytonutrient with anti-inflammatory properties. Along with cucurbitacin E, another anti-inflammatory compound unique to watermelon, lycopene is known to inhibit inflammatory processes and decrease the expression of pro-inflammatory enzymes. A unique aspect of the lycopene content of watermelon is that it doesn't easily deteriorate. Cubed watermelon can retain its lycopene concentration for several days when refrigerated. Only a six to 11 percent breakdown occurs after seven days of proper storage.

Watermelon is also a very good source of the amino acid citrulline. Once



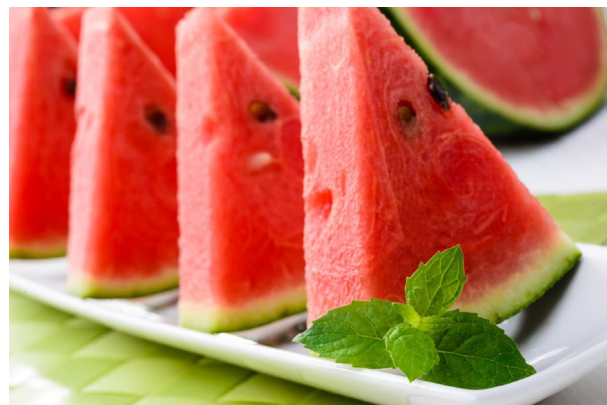
consumed, citrulline is converted into another amino acid, arginine by the kidneys. Arginine is an extremely important amino acid that some individuals don't make enough of on their own. It helps improve blood flow and aids in multiple aspects of cardiovascular health. Arginine is also an important compound for athletes as it aids in muscle recovery as well. Researchers are currently evaluating arginine's role in preventing fat accumulation in fat cells.

Along with high concentrations of vitamins A and C, watermelon boasts another key nutrient, choline. Choline aids in numerous bodily functions including sleep, muscle movement and memory and learning comprehension. It also helps maintain the structure of cell membranes and acts as an anti-inflammatory.

The high concentrations of antioxidants and phytonutrients in watermelon certainly qualify it as a healthy summertime snack option. The potency of these compounds is known

to increase with ripeness. The deeper red varieties boast higher concentrations than the pink or white-colored melons, yet concentration remains consistent throughout the entire melon, stretching far into the rind as well.

The seedless watermelon is the product of hybridization and not genetic engineering which is a common misconception. The cross-breeding of a diploid melon (two sets of chromosomes) with a tetraploid (four sets of chromosomes) results in a triploid (three sets of chromosomes) melon, which is seedless. Eighty-five percent of the watermelons produced in the United States today are of the seedless variety, though the seeds can be a source of zinc and fiber.





Zippy Watermelon Juice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 cups watermelon, diced and seeded
- ◆ 1 lime, peeled
- ◆ 1 lemon, peeled

Instructions:

Process all ingredients through your juicer. Pour over ice and enjoy.

Minty Watermelon Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 3 tablespoon lemon juice
- ◆ 2 teaspoons sea salt
- ◆ 1 teaspoon Tabasco
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon ground pepper
- ◆ 1 8-lb watermelon seeded and cut into chunks
- ◆ 1/2 pound feta cheese, crumbled
- ◆ 1 1/4 cups pitted olives, chopped
- ◆ 1 red onion, diced
- ◆ 1 cup mint leaves, chopped

Instructions:

1. Place the olive oil, lemon juice, salt, Tabasco and pepper in a bowl. Whisk well to combine.
2. Add the watermelon cheese, olives, onion and mint. Toss to evenly coat in the liquid.
3. Chill before serving.



Cold Watermelon Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 6 pounds watermelon, diced and seeded
- ◆ 2 tablespoons mint leaves, chopped
- ◆ 1 tablespoon sugar
- ◆ 2 tablespoons lime juice
- ◆ 1 cup sweet white wine
- ◆ 1 teaspoon chopped ginger
- ◆ 1/4 cup sparkling water

Instructions:

1. Mix 1 cup of watermelon with the mint and sugar. Allow to sit.
2. Blend the remaining ingredients together in a blender. Place in the fridge for 1/2 an hour.
3. Strain the soup and serve into bowls. Top each serving with a bit of the set aside watermelon.

Watermelon Salsa

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 cups diced watermelon with seeds removed
- ◆ 2 jalapeno peppers, seeded and minced
- ◆ 1/3 cup chopped cilantro
- ◆ 1/4 cup lime juice
- ◆ 1/4 cup minced red onion
- ◆ 1/4 sp. sea salt

Instructions:

Blend watermelon, jalapenos, cilantro, lime juice and onion in a medium bowl. Stir well and season with sea salt. Chill, or serve at room temperature.



Lime Watermelon Popsicles

Ingredients:

- ◆ 5 cups diced watermelon, seeded
- ◆ 1/4 cup lime juice
- ◆ 2 tablespoons honey

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a blender. Process until smooth.
2. Pour into popsicle molds, cover, add sticks and freeze.

Strawberry Watermelon Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 cups watermelon, seeded
- ◆ 2 cups frozen strawberries
- ◆ 1 1/2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
- ◆ 1 1/2 teaspoons lime juice

Instructions:

Place all ingredients in your blender. Pulse until smooth. Best if served right away.

Notes:

- ◆ Contrary to what you might think, it is best to pick a dull looking melon - a shiny melon may be underripe.
- ◆ A good watermelon will have a creamy spot where it was lying on the ground. The darker the creamy spot the longer it was left on the vine to ripen.
- ◆ Give your melon a little tap with your knuckles - a dull thud indicates that the melon is under-ripe. Your knuckles should bounce off of the surface which should be firm.
- ◆ Check to be sure the melon is well shaped - odd bumps here and there may indicate that the melon received unequal amounts of sun or water.
- ◆ Though the rind is not consumed, washing the melon prior to slicing is suggested as bacteria on the outside can contaminate the flesh as the knife passes through.



- ◆ Store uncut watermelons in a cold and dark place for up to four days.
- ◆ Cut melon covered in plastic wrap will store for a few days in the fridge - longer in an airtight container. Also, consider freezing for longer storage.



Chlorella

Chlorella (*Chlorella vulgaris*) is a single-celled microalgae that is thought to be one of the oldest organisms on Earth, originating in the Precambrian period thousands of millions of years ago. It is also thought to have been used in China for hundreds of years to provide sustenance in times of famine.

In the West, Chlorella was discovered and bred in the early 1900's by Martinus Willem Beijerinck, a Dutch microbiologist, who began recommending this algae for its nutritional

potential. It was employed in Europe during the post-war period to fend off starvation. Today, it is widely recognized as a superfood and powerful detoxification agent. In Japan, it is one of the most common nutritional supplements.

While chlorella is a microscopic, unicellular algae, today it is bred into plants of approximately 5 centimeters in diameter. It grows in water, and is usually available in capsule or powder form.

Nutritional Profile

This ancient, superstar algae contains:

- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Folic acid
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Omega-3 fatty acids
- ◆ Pantothenic acid
- ◆ Phosphorus
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Protein



- 💧 Vitamin A
- 💧 Vitamins B2, B3, B6 and B12
- 💧 Vitamin C
- 💧 Vitamin D
- 💧 Vitamin E
- 💧 Vitamin K
- 💧 Zinc

Health Benefits

Serving for serving, chlorella contains more chlorophyll than any other plant. This powerful pigment, which is responsible for the photosynthesis process, has been linked to potent healing properties. These include detoxifying the liver and blood, supporting optimal oxygen processing in the body, repairing tissues, fighting fungal infections and possibly repairing damaged DNA.

The molecular structure and microscopic size of chlorella is what makes it a unique and powerful detox aid. In the body, it is able to bond to chemicals, pesticide residues and even heavy metals such as mercury.

It then carries these pollutants out of the body through the digestive process, as well as other bodily elimination processes. Remarkably, while removing harmful toxins, chlorella does not bind to and flush out necessary minerals and other nutrients.

Chlorella is composed of 50 percent protein, making it a richer protein source than meat. It contains omega-3 fatty acids, which support heart and brain health, and have been linked to the stabilization of blood pressure, and the improvement of depression, diabetes and asthma symptoms. This algae has also been associated with the reduction of hypertension and blood cholesterol levels, and the overall improvement of the immune system.

Additionally, chlorella is rich in antioxidants, including lutein and vitamin A, which are important for eye and skin health, as well as for fighting oxidative stress. It is also widely used to boost energy and focus, balance pH levels in the body, restore depleted nutrients and freshen breath.



Chlorella Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup orange juice
- ◆ 1 banana
- ◆ 1/2 cup frozen blueberries
- ◆ 1 teaspoon chlorella powder
- ◆ 1/2 cup ice

Instructions:

Place all ingredients in your blender and blend until smooth. Serve right away.

Chlorella Limeade

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 limes
- ◆ 5 tablespoons maple syrup
- ◆ 4 teaspoons chlorella powder

Instructions:

1. Squeeze the juice from the limes into a mason jar.
2. Add remaining ingredients.
3. Fill the rest of the jar with water and shake before serving.

Chlorella Breakfast or Dessert Sauce

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 cup honey or maple syrup
- ◆ 3 teaspoons chlorella powder
- ◆ 3 teaspoons tahini

Instructions:

1. Place the honey in a bowl. Add the chlorella and whisk until well combined.
2. Stir in the tahini a little at a time - add more or less depending on your desired consistency.
3. Store in an airtight container in the fridge. Serve drizzled over fresh fruit, oatmeal, ice cream or any other breakfast and dessert dishes.



Chlorella Chia Pudding

Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 cup almond milk
- 1/4 cup hemp seeds
- 5 pitted dates
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon chlorella powder
- 3 tablespoons chia seeds

Instructions:

1. Place the milk, hemp seeds, dates, vanilla and chlorella in a blender. Mix until well combined.
2. Pour chlorella mixture over chia seeds, stir and refrigerate for 1 hour, stirring occasionally.

Chlorella Limeade

Ingredients:

- 2 limes
- 5 tablespoons maple syrup
- 4 teaspoons chlorella powder

Instructions:

1. Squeeze the juice from the limes into a mason jar.
2. Add remaining ingredients to the jar.
3. Fill the rest of the jar with water and shake before serving.



Chlorella Cream Cheese Veggie Dip

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 package cream cheese
- ◆ 1 teaspoon fresh basil, chopped
- ◆ 1 teaspoon dry coriander
- ◆ 1 teaspoon chlorella powder

Instructions:

1. Allow cream cheese to soften to room temperature in a bowl.
2. Add other ingredients and mix.
3. Serve with fresh sliced vegetables.

Notes:

- ◆ Look for "broken cell wall" chlorella, as this is the type that is absorbable by the body.
- ◆ It is also key to choose organically-grown chlorella, as some strains may be grown in contaminated or polluted waters.
- ◆ Before starting a detox regimen with chlorella, it is best to speak to a natural health professional, as it is very potent.



Oranges

Oranges are quite possibly the most popular citrus fruit enjoyed in the Western world, though they originally hail from China, and have been celebrated in the East for thousands of years. While many people tend to enjoy their oranges in the form of juice, eating the whole fruit - along with its zest - can offer many more benefits - as many antioxidants are concentrated in the pith and peel.

These fruits were first grown in the West in the late 1400s, after being introduced to the Caribbean Islands by Christopher Columbus. They were historically eaten on special occasions, including Christmas, before becoming



a more everyday fruit after the 20th century. Today, oranges are produced each season in California and Florida.

Citrus fruits such as oranges grow on small evergreen trees, in tropical or semitropical climates. Oranges weigh approximately half a pound (though this can vary), are round, and have either thick or thin skin depending on the variety. Inside is the segmented fruit, which can be either sweet or bitter - though sweet oranges are the most common.

Nutritional Profile

Every section of a succulent orange is home to:

- 💧 Calcium
- 💧 Copper
- 💧 Fiber
- 💧 Folate
- 💧 Pantothenic acid
- 💧 Potassium
- 💧 Vitamin A
- 💧 Vitamins B1, B3 and B6
- 💧 Vitamin C

Health Benefits

Without question, the most popular benefit of oranges is their high vitamin C content.

This anti-inflammatory vitamin helps to support the optimal functioning of the immune system, and may help to fight off seasonal illness, as well as aiding in the prevention of various forms of chronic disease. It is also paramount to skin health, may help prevent the oxidation of cholesterol (which can lead to plaque buildup in the arteries), and has been tied to reduced cancer risk.

Oranges are rich in other antioxidants as well, including limonoids, which have been linked to anticarcinogenic properties. They also contain a wealth of flavonoid antioxidants. One of these is hesperidin, which is mainly concentrated in the peel. Hesperidin has been linked to lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels in some studies, and has also been associated with combating various cancers. Vitamin A and other carotenoid antioxidants are



also contained within oranges, which further add to their anti-inflammatory properties, and help to promote eye health.

The cardiovascular benefits of oranges are noteworthy - they contain potassium, which is important in blood pressure regulation, as well as fiber and folate, which both work to reduce the risk of heart disease. Fiber is also important in keeping digestion running smoothly, and maintaining stable blood sugar levels. One type of fiber in oranges, known as pectin, helps to protect the lining of the colon, and may also help to reduce cholesterol levels.

On top of that, consuming oranges has been linked to a lower risk of developing calcium oxalate kidney stones.



Tropical Orange Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup organic milk
- ◆ 2 oranges, peeled and sliced
- ◆ 1 banana, frozen
- ◆ 2 tablespoon honey
- ◆ Pinch of salt
- ◆ 1 cup greek yogurt
- ◆ 4 ice cubes

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in your blender. Process on high until smooth.
2. Pour into chilled glasses and serve.



Orange Beef Stir Fry

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- ◆ 1/4 cup cold water
- ◆ 1/4 cup orange juice
- ◆ 1 tablespoon fermented, gluten-free soy sauce
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon sesame oil
- ◆ Dash of crushed red pepper flakes
- ◆ 1/2 pound boneless beef sirloin, cut into thin strips
- ◆ 2 tablespoons coconut oil, divided
- ◆ 3 cups stir fry vegetable blend, if frozen, thaw first
- ◆ 1 clove garlic, minced
- ◆ 1 cup rice, cooked

Instructions:

1. Combine the cornstarch, water, orange juice, soy sauce, oil, and red pepper flakes in a bowl. Whisk to mix well.
2. Melt 1 tablespoon coconut oil in a skillet. Stir fry the beef strips until done. Remove from pan.
3. Add remaining coconut oil to pan. Stir fry vegetables until soft. Stir in orange mixture and beef. Cook until warm.
4. Serve over rice.



Orange Salad Dressing

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- ◆ 1/4 cup olive oil
- ◆ 1/4 cup orange juice
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a jar. Close the lid and shake to combine.
2. Store dressing in the fridge, shake before drizzling over your favorite salad.



Cherry Orange Juice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 apple, cored
- ◆ 1 pear, cored
- ◆ 1 orange, peeled
- ◆ 1/2 cup cherries, pitted

Instructions:

1. Process all ingredients through your juice machine.
2. Pour over ice and serve immediately.

Simple, Quick Pineapple Orange Pops

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups orange juice
- ◆ 2 cups frozen pineapple

Instructions:

1. Place the juice and pineapple in a blender. Pulse until smooth.
2. Pour mixture into popsicle molds, cover, add sticks and freeze.





Acai

The acai berry (*Euterpe oleracea*) grows in the Amazon rainforest, which spans several South American countries, including Brazil, Venezuela, Peru and Ecuador. These little berries grow on tall palm trees from which the ‘hearts of palm’ vegetable is also sometimes derived. Indigenous cultures of the area have used acai berries for generations for a nutritious food source, immune support and increased energy, as well as for treating skin conditions and fevers.

Today, the acai berry is growing in popularity in the West, due to its dense antioxidant content. The berries are small, round and have a deep purple hue. They are quite tart, and some say they have an undertone of a chocolate-esque flavor. While it may still be

difficult to find acai at most grocers, there are online retailers that carry organic acai berries, which are well worth the search.

Nutritional Profile

Some of the nutrients that acai berries bring to the table are:

- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Ellagic acid
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Omega-3 fatty acids
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Protein
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6 and B12
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Vitamin K



Health Benefits

Acai berries have a huge concentration of antioxidants - twice the amount found in blueberries, which are themselves highly antioxidant rich. The various antioxidants found in acai work together to combat inflammation and help prevent chronic diseases, as well as protecting the body from damaging oxidative stress, which can lead to premature aging of the cells and a weakened immune system.

One of the antioxidant groups abundant in acai is the anthocyanin group. Anthocyanins have been strongly associated with cardiovascular health, as they are linked to nurturing the circulatory system by relaxing blood vessels, helping to prevent blood clotting and lowering LDL 'bad' cholesterol levels. These antioxidants have also been shown to have significant anti-aging potential.

Another way that acai can boost your heart health is through the presence of omega-3 fatty acids, in the form of

monounsaturated oleic acid, the same compound found in olive oil. Along with supporting cardiovascular function, oleic acid is associated with better functionality of neurotransmitters, hormones and insulin receptors.

The vitamin C content of acai berries makes them an immune-boosting powerhouse, which helps keep seasonal colds and flus away, as well as more serious infections. The combination of vitamin C and ellagic acid, also found in acai, has been linked to the possibility of suppressing tumor growth. Acai's vitamin A content helps support healthy vision and can help to prevent macular degeneration.

On top of that, acai berries are high in fiber, which keeps your digestive system running smoothly, benefits healthy gut bacteria, keeps blood sugar levels stable, and is a key component to healthy weight loss.



Acai Parfait

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 frozen organic bananas
- ◆ 1 cup fresh strawberries
- ◆ 1/2 cup fresh blueberries
- ◆ 1/2 cup acai puree
- ◆ 1 cup fresh blackberries
- ◆ 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- ◆ 1/2 cup almond or coconut milk

Instructions:

1. Soak the chia seeds in the almond or coconut milk for at least 1 hour in the fridge.
2. Mix the banana and strawberries in a blender until combined. Pour mix into the bottom of 2 serving dishes.
3. Spoon the chia mix on top of the banana mix.
4. Blend the blueberries and acai puree in the blender and pour on top of the chia mix.
5. Top the parfait with the fresh blackberries and serve.

Berry Blast Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 cup almond milk
- ◆ 1/2 cup greek yogurt
- ◆ 1/2 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- ◆ 1/2 cup fresh or frozen raspberries
- ◆ 1/2 cup fresh or frozen blackberries
- ◆ 1 tablespoon acai powder
- ◆ 1 frozen banana

Instructions:

Place all ingredients in a blender and pulse until smooth. Serve in chilled glasses.



Acai Salad Dressing

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 ounces organic acai juice
- ◆ 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- ◆ 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 2 tablespoons tahini

Instructions:

1. Whisk all ingredients together.
2. Store in a closed jar, shake before pouring over salad.



Chocolate Acai Bites

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 tablespoons coconut oil
- ◆ 2/3 cup acai powder
- ◆ 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- ◆ 4 tablespoons cocoa nibs
- ◆ 4 tablespoons coconut sugar
- ◆ 8 large dates
- ◆ 1 tablespoon almond butter
- ◆ 1 teaspoon sea salt

Instructions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor and mix until a dough forms.
2. Form dough into 1 inch balls and place on a cookie sheet.
3. Refrigerate balls for at least 1 hour before serving cold.



Acai Ice Cream

Ingredients:

- ◆ 7 ounces frozen acai
- ◆ 1 cup frozen mango
- ◆ 1 banana
- ◆ 1/4 cup granola
- ◆ 1/2 cup coconut milk
- ◆ Fresh fruit for topping
- ◆ Honey for topping

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a food processor and blend until well mixed.
2. Serve topped with fresh fruit and a drizzle of honey. Makes a perfect breakfast or dessert dish.



Notes

Purchase only high-quality, organic acai frozen pulp, powder or dried berries.



Arugula

Arugula (*Eruca sativa*) is a leafy green member of the Brassicaceae family. You may also have heard it referred to as rocket, garden rocket, rucola and roquette. Along with its cruciferous relatives, kale, cabbage and mustard greens, arugula provides a plethora of essential nutrients and phytochemicals.

This salad green has grown in the Mediterranean region since ancient times. During the reign of the Roman



empire, the leaves and seeds were eaten and used to flavor oils. According to the Cambridge World History of Food, the ancient Romans also used arugula seeds in aphrodisiac potions.

When arugula leaves are young, they are light green and are slightly reminiscent of spinach in appearance. As they mature, the leaves develop green veins and a somewhat rocket-like shape, hence their common moniker, 'rocket.' Younger leaves have a mild, sweet flavor, while older arugula leaves have a stronger, somewhat peppery flavor which adds a distinctive zing to salads and other recipes.

Nutritional Profile

Crisp, green arugula leaves are rich in:

- ◆ Beta-carotene
- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Folate
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Manganese

- ◆ Pantothenic acid
- ◆ Phosphorus
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Protein
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamins B1, B2, B3 and B6
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin K
- ◆ Zinc

Health Benefits

As is the case with other dark, leafy, cruciferous veggies, arugula contains an impressive range of antioxidants. Cruciferous vegetables especially show promise in helping to prevent and even combat certain cancers. Arugula contains indoles, isothiocyanates, thiocyanates, and sulforaphane, which in combination have been linked to inhibiting the growth of cancers with estrogen imbalances at their core - namely breast, cervical, prostate and ovarian cancers.

Adding to arugula's anticarcinogenic nature are beta carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin, which may help to reduce cancer risk. Beta carotene, which



converts to vitamin A within the body, and lutein are also important to optimal eye health and aid in the prevention of macular degeneration. Glucosinolates, another type of compound in cruciferous vegetables, including arugula, are currently under scientific scrutiny for their role in heightening immunity and preventing cancers.

A metabolic product of the indoles found in arugula, a compound known as di-indolyl-methane (DIM), is being studied as to its immune-boosting properties and its ability to combat microorganisms. Specifically, there have been positive results concerning DIM and possible treatment options for the respiratory symptoms caused by the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV).

Arugula contains some important vitamins, including vitamin K, which is important for the blood's ability to form clots and heal wounds. It also strengthens bones and may help to prevent cognitive decline, such as occurs with Alzheimer's disease.

The vitamin C content of arugula is essential for a healthy immune system, as well as for skin health.

All in all, replacing that iceberg lettuce in your salads for arugula and other leafy greens is a very wise choice.

Arugula and Spinach Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup of water
- ◆ 1/2 cup arugula leaves
- ◆ 1/2 cup spinach leaves
- ◆ 1 organic frozen banana
- ◆ 1/2 a cup frozen organic blueberries
- ◆ A pinch of sea salt
- ◆ 1 teaspoon of raw honey



Instructions:

Add all ingredients to your blender and mix until smooth. If desired, add ice for a thicker smoothie or more water for a thinner one.



Parmesan Pesto with Arugula

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups organic arugula leaves
- ◆ 1/2 cup walnut pieces
- ◆ 1/2 cup parmesan cheese
- ◆ 1/2 cup melted coconut oil
- ◆ 6 cloves organic garlic
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt

Instructions:

1. Brown the garlic cloves in a skillet with a teaspoon of oil. Allow them to cool, and remove skins.
2. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees F. Toast the nuts in the preheated oven for 10 minutes to bring out more flavor.
3. Add all ingredients to your food processor and process until smooth. Serve with pita chips or gluten-free crackers.

Arugula Quiche

Ingredients:

- ◆ Frozen gluten-free pie crust
- ◆ 12 ounces of fresh ricotta cheese
- ◆ 1 1/2 cups of organic whole milk
- ◆ 2 large organic free range eggs
- ◆ 1 1/2 tablespoons of freshly grated lime zest
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 2 cups baby arugula

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Whisk cheese, milk, eggs, lime, seasoning and arugula together in a bowl. Pour into the pie crust.
3. Bake for 45 minutes and let cool for 30 minutes before serving.



Chicken Arugula Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ Olive or coconut oil
- ◆ 1 shallot, peeled and sliced
- ◆ 2 pounds free range chicken breasts, cut into chunks
- ◆ Sea salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 1 green apple, sliced thinly
- ◆ 8 cups arugula leaves
- ◆ 1/4 cup of toasted walnuts
- ◆ 1/4 cup goat cheese, crumbled
- ◆ Lemon Juice

Instructions:

1. Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat.
2. Add shallots and saute until soft.
3. Cook chicken in pan until it is no longer pink inside.
4. Remove the chicken and shallots from the pan and allow to cool or chill in the fridge.
5. Toss all ingredients together to make the salad, add lemon juice to taste or use a different dressing.



Turkey Arugula Wraps

Ingredients:

- ◆ 4 8-inch spinach wraps
- ◆ 12 slices free range turkey breasts
- ◆ 2 cups baby arugula leaves
- ◆ 4 tablespoons goat cheese
- ◆ 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
- ◆ 1 tomato, thinly sliced
- ◆ 4 tablespoons italian style dressing

Instructions:

On serving plates, place the wraps, 3 slices of turkey, a handful of arugula, a tablespoon of cheese, 3 slices of onion, 3 slices of tomato, and a tablespoon of dressing on each wrap. Roll up the wraps, cut in half and serve.



Notes:

- ◆ Fresh arugula should be all green - no yellow at all.
- ◆ Because it is so delicate, it is best to use arugula within two days of purchasing.
- ◆ Store wrapped in the refrigerator until you are ready to eat.
- ◆ Rinse lightly before using but be sure to get rid of all moisture.



Kumquat

The kumquat (also spelled cumquat) is native to the South-eastern mountains of China, as well as to regions of Japan and the Philippines. In the Cantonese language, “kum” means golden, and “quat” means good fortune. This little citrus fruit is mentioned in ancient Chinese literature dating back to 118 BC.

Kumquats grow on subtropical ever-green shrubs, and are often used ceremonially and ornamentally across Asia. They are traditionally displayed during Chinese New Year.

Part of the Rutaceae (citrus) family, their genus name is *Fortunella*, after Robert Fortune, a botanist who brought these fruits to Europe in the mid-1800s. In the West, they have been cultivated in Hawaii since around this same time period, where they were likely introduced by Chinese immigrants.

One small kumquat tree can bear hundreds of kumquats each winter. A kumquat resembles a very small orange, with inner segments pressed close together, and one or two seeds inside, which are not usually eaten. Unlike most other citrus fruits, kumquats can be eaten whole along with the rind. Their flavor is sweet or tart, or a combination of the two, depending on variety.



Nutritional Profile

Each of these miniature delicacies contains:

- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Folate
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Pantothenic acid
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Protein
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamins B1, B2, B3 and B6
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin E

Health Benefits

Kumquats are loaded with flavonoid antioxidant compounds, including beta-carotene, lutein, quercetin, rutin and zeaxanthin. These compounds fight oxidative stress damage to cells, helping to prevent many chronic diseases and minimizing the effects of aging. Like other citrus fruits, kumquats contain a high amount of vitamin C, a potent antioxidant that supports the immune system in preventing and ridding the body of infections. Vitamin C is also important to healthy skin, helps the body to absorb iron, boosts cognitive function and may help to alleviate seasonal depression.

One of the main benefits of kumquats is that they can be eaten whole, with the entire peel intact. The peel is the source of the most concentrated antioxidants,



and also contains fiber and health-promoting essential oils. One of these essential oils is limonene, which has been linked to potent anti-inflammatory action. Limonene is also associated with improved digestion, better metabolic function, anxiety relief, liver detoxification and anti-carcinogenic properties.

Kumquats are a great part of a heart-healthy diet, as they may help to lower LDL 'bad' cholesterol and improve circulation. Their flavonoid content is also associated with reduction in blood sugar levels, and their fiber content contributes to this as well. In Vietnam, kumquat syrup is used to soothe sore throats. Kumquats are also traditionally used throughout Asia to treat respiratory conditions such as asthma, bronchitis and coughs, as their essential oils are antibacterial in nature and help to break up mucus.

Additionally, kumquats are great for freshening the breath, as the essential oils in the peel fight odor-causing bacteria in the mouth.

Tangy Kumquat Juice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 inch ginger root
- ◆ 12 kumquats
- ◆ 2 pears, peeled and cored

Instructions:

1. Process all ingredients through a Juicer.
2. Serve right away over ice.

Green Kumquat Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup spinach leaves
- ◆ 1 handful of cashews, soaked and drained
- ◆ 12 kumquats
- ◆ 1 apple, cored
- ◆ 2 inch ginger root, sliced
- ◆ 3 dates, pitted
- ◆ 1 cup water
- ◆ Ice as needed

Instructions:

Blend all ingredients in a blender until smooth. Add ice as desired.



Kumquat Kale Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/4 cup orange juice
- ◆ 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ◆ 1 clove garlic, minced
- ◆ Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- ◆ 1 1/2 teaspoons Dijon Mustard
- ◆ 1 tablespoon honey
- ◆ 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 1/2 pound kale, chopped
- ◆ 1/2 pound arugula
- ◆ Salt to Taste
- ◆ 3/4 cup kumquats, sliced and seeded
- ◆ 1/2 cup mushrooms, sliced
- ◆ 1/4 cup walnuts, chopped

Instructions:

1. Place the first 7 ingredients in a jar. Screw on the lid and shake to combine. This is the salad dressing.
2. Toss the remaining ingredients together for the salad.
3. Serve and drizzle with dressing.

Kumquat Chicken

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 whole chicken
- ◆ 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ◆ 1 tablespoon sea salt
- ◆ 1 head garlic
- ◆ 1/2 cup orange juice
- ◆ 1/2 cup water
- ◆ 2 tablespoons honey
- ◆ 1 tablespoon arrowroot powder
- ◆ 1 cup whole kumquats

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 425 F.
2. Rinse and pat the chicken dry. Place it breast up in a baking dish. Rub it with oil and sprinkle on the salt.
3. Stuff the garlic and a few kumquats into the chicken.
4. Combine the orange juice, water, honey and arrowroot in a bowl. Pour over the chicken.
5. Add the kumquats to the dish.
6. Bake for 20 minutes.
7. Lower the heat to 375 F and roast for 40 minutes.



Kumquat Carrot Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 tablespoons coconut oil
- ◆ 1 onion, chopped
- ◆ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ◆ 1 cup kumquats, chopped
- ◆ 2 pounds carrots, sliced
- ◆ 5 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Melt the coconut oil in a pan. Sauté the onion and garlic until soft. About 5 minutes.
2. Add kumquats and carrots and sauté for 10 minutes.
3. Add broth, bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 40 minutes.
4. Serve as is or pureed in blender.



Notes:

- ◆ Purchase only kumquats that have bright and smooth skins and feel slightly heavy.
- ◆ Do not purchase fruit that has bruises or cuts.
- ◆ Eat soon after purchase - kumquats don't have a long shelf life.
- ◆ Keep in paper bag in the fridge for up to three days after purchase.





Camu Camu

The camu camu berry (*Myrciaria dubia*) has been used by Amazonian native populations for hundreds of years, both for a food source and for its potent medicinal properties. This vibrant berry, also sometimes known as ‘rumberry,’ ‘cacari,’ ‘guayabo,’ and ‘guavaberry,’ has more vitamin C than any other plant known on Earth.

Native to the Amazonian rainforest, camu camu shrubs grow in swamps and flooded areas across Brazil, Columbia, Peru and Venezuela. In these countries, camu camu berries and leaves have been traditionally used to relieve pain, treat wounds, infections and rheumatism, as a longevity tonic, and also as a hair repair serum for split ends, as well as for restoring shine, strength and texture to hair.

Camu camu berries have a sour taste and are about the size of lemons. They can be either red, orange or purple on the outside, with yellow pulp inside.

Nutritional Profile

These rainforest superfruits are filled with:

- ◆ Amino acids
- ◆ Beta-carotene
- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Phosphorus
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Protein
- ◆ Vitamins B1 and B3
- ◆ Vitamin C

Health Benefits

Serving for serving, camu camu has a whopping 60 times the vitamin C content of an orange. Along with being a powerful immune system booster and helping the body fight off invaders such as bacteria and



viruses, vitamin C aids in the body's production of collagen, which makes up tendons and ligaments. Vitamin C is also paramount in healthy skin, hair and gums.

Besides their mighty dose of vitamin C, camu camu berries are unique because they contain three amino acids: valine, leucine and serine. Valine aids in the function of the nervous system, and also keeps muscles from breaking down.

Leucine supports the body's ability to manufacture growth hormones, and is also key for strong bone tissues and muscles. Serine plays an important role in digestion, as it helps the body to break down polypeptides and proteins.

Camu camu berries are rich in a variety of antioxidants, including anthocyanins and gallic acid. These all contribute to their anti-inflammatory properties, and their ability to protect the body from free radicals and oxidative stress. The anthocyanin content of camu camu is found in the skin of the berries.

These antioxidants have been the subject of pointed research linking them to anti-aging and anti-carcinogenic properties. The gallic acid in camu camu has been associated with antiviral and antifungal potential, and is thought by some to be beneficial against the herpes simplex virus, as well as the common cold.

On top of that, camu camu contains potassium, which is essential for heart health, and is often used as a source of natural energy. Some research has found that it can also improve focus and cognitive function, potentially protect against the onset of Alzheimer's disease, and may function as an antidepressant.

One word of caution: camu camu may interact with certain chemotherapy medications, so if you are taking these, consult a health professional before enjoying the benefits of these berries.



Camu Berry Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3/4 cup almond milk
- ◆ 1/2 cup orange juice
- ◆ 1 frozen banana
- ◆ 1/2 cup frozen blueberries
- ◆ 1 teaspoon camu camu powder

Instructions:

Place all ingredients inside a blender. Pulse until smooth. Blend for 40 seconds on low.



Camu Quinoa

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 cups cooked quinoa
- ◆ 3 tablespoons coconut oil
- ◆ 3 tablespoon raw honey
- ◆ 1 teaspoon maca powder
- ◆ 1 1/2 teaspoon camu camu powder
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- ◆ 3 tablespoon soaked goji-berries

Instructions:

Combine all ingredients together in a large bowl. Toss to mix. Serve hot or cold.



Camu Lemonade Cooler

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 tablespoons camu camu powder
- ◆ 3 tablespoons honey
- ◆ 1/3 cup lemon juice
- ◆ 1 quart water

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a blender. Mix until well combined.
2. Chill, then serve over ice.



Camu Raspberry Salad Dressing

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 teaspoons camu powder
- ◆ 1 1/2 cups raspberries
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoons sea salt
- ◆ 1/4 cup raw sunflower seeds
- ◆ 2/3 cup apple juice
- ◆ 2 tablespoon apple cider vinegar

Instructions:

1. Process all ingredients through your blender.
2. Store dressing in an airtight container in the fridge. Drizzle over your favorite salad to serve.



Camu Fall Apple Cider

Ingredients:

- ◆ 4 cups apple juice
- ◆ 1 cup orange juice
- ◆ 1 teaspoon camu camu powder
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon ginger
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

Instructions:

1. Mix all ingredients except camu camu together in a large saucepan.
2. Heat the mixture on low heat for 5 minutes.
3. Stir in camu camu powder before serving.

Notes:

Purchase high quality camu camu powder from a reputable dealer.



Pumpkin

Each year when autumn rolls around, you can be sure to see pumpkins appearing outside nearly every doorway. These well-known symbols of the harvest are useful for much more than jack o'lanterns, since they contain a wealth of nutritional benefits.

Pumpkins are members of the Cucurbitaceae (gourd) family, and are native to North, South and Central America. While sometimes thought of as vegetables, pumpkins are actually fruits. Today, over 100,000 acres of agricultural land across the US is dedicated to pumpkins.



These bright fruits grow on vines which creep across the ground, and grow very quickly. They can vary quite a bit in size - the small ones weigh under a pound, while giant pumpkins average about 10 pounds, but can grow to over 50 pounds in the right conditions. While they are usually orange, other varieties exist including yellow, white, red, gray, green and brown.

Inside the hollow center of the pumpkin, you will find a wealth of pumpkin seeds, sometimes called pepitas, which offer their own range of nutrients.

Nutritional Profile

Each delicious bite of pumpkin flesh contains:

- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Folate
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Pantothenic acid
- ◆ Phosphorus

- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamins B1, B2, B3 and B6
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Zinc

Health Benefits

One of the main benefits of pumpkins is their high concentration of vitamin A and carotenoid antioxidants, including beta-carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin. These antioxidants are known to help protect the eyes, maintain optimal vision and protect from ocular conditions such as age-related macular degeneration. On top of that, vitamin A is important for healthy skin, immune system function and mucous membranes.

Carotenoid antioxidants also have potent anti-inflammatory activity, and can help to prevent a wide range of chronic ailments. Foods rich in vitamin A and carotenoids have been linked to aiding in cancer prevention by a body of research.



Pumpkins are rich in fiber, which is necessary for the health of the cardiovascular system, and also helps to balance blood sugar levels. Due to their fiber content and minimal calories, they make a great dietary addition if you are trying to lose weight. On top of that, pumpkins contain potassium, which is not only important for regulating heartbeat, it can also help to balance the body's electrolytes, making pumpkin a perfect after-workout snack or lunch item.

Also, whatever you do, don't throw out the seeds. Pumpkin seeds contain many vitamins and minerals, heart and brain-healthy omega-3 fatty acids, as well as phytosterols, which have been linked to lowering LDL 'bad' cholesterol. These little seeds also contain tryptophan, which helps the body to produce serotonin, potentially giving you a mood boost, and helping you to get more quality sleep.

Pumpkin Cracker and Fruit Dip

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 can organic pumpkin
- ◆ 1 cup organic cashew butter
- ◆ 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- ◆ 3/4 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- ◆ 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- ◆ 1/3 cup coconut sugar
- ◆ Apple slices and gluten-free crackers for dipping

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients but fruit and crackers in a blender or food processor.
2. Blend until smooth and spoon into a dish.
3. Serve with apples and crackers for dipping.



Pumpkin Oatmeal

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of cooked steel cut oats
- 1/2 cup organic pumpkin puree
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 4 free-range egg whites
- 1/4 cup pecans
- 1/4 cup pure maple syrup

Instructions:

1. Cook the oatmeal following package instructions. In the last 5 minutes of cooking time, stir in egg whites and mix well.
2. Stir in the pumpkin and spice while oatmeal is hot.
3. Serve the oatmeal into dishes, top with pecans and drizzle with maple syrup.

Warm Pumpkin Warm Up

Ingredients:

- 1 cup whole, organic milk
- 1/4 cup pumpkin puree
- 1 tablespoon coconut sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a blender. Mix until well blended.
2. Pour mixture into a saucepan. Heat over medium high heat until mixture comes to a light boil. Pour into mugs and serve warm.



Pumpkin Pie Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 cup pumpkin puree
- ◆ 1/2 ripe banana
- ◆ 3/4 cup yogurt
- ◆ 3/4 cup vanilla yogurt
- ◆ 1 tablespoon honey
- ◆ 1/2 tablespoon pumpkin pie spice
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ◆ 1 cup crushed ice

Instructions:

1. Blend all ingredients together until smooth.
2. Pour into chilled glasses.
3. Serve as a breakfast.



Raw Pumpkin Pie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups walnuts
- ◆ 2 cups raisins
- ◆ 1 sugar pumpkin, peeled, seeded, and chopped
- ◆ 1/4 coconut oil, melted
- ◆ 3 tablespoons coconut sugar
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ◆ 1 1/2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice

Instructions:

1. Place the walnuts and raisins in a food processor. Blend until a sticky dough forms. Press into the bottom of a pie dish.
2. Blend remaining ingredients in a blender to make the filling. Spread into the crust.
3. Refrigerate pie until firm, slice and serve.



Baked Pumpkin Seeds

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 1/2 cups whole pumpkin seeds
- ◆ 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- ◆ 1 teaspoon salt

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 300 degrees F.
2. Place all ingredients in a large bowl. Toss to evenly coat the seeds in butter and salt.
3. Dump the seeds onto a baking pan.
4. Bake, stirring occasionally for 45 minutes.



Chili Peppers

No one will ever forget the first time they've mistakenly bitten into a chili pepper, expecting the cool crunch of a sweet bell pepper and instead experiencing the fiery heat of the chili.

Chili peppers are known for their heat or "hotness." The compound responsible for delivering that extra zip to many dishes is called capsaicin and is found in differing degrees among the hundreds of varieties of chili peppers available.

Chili peppers originated in regions of Central and South America over 7000 years ago. They were first cultivated primarily for their decorative appeal, but soon became used both as a food and medicinally among early civilizations.



Europeans weren't introduced to the heat of chili pepper until the 15th century when Christopher Columbus brought the first batch back from his travels in the Caribbean. Likewise, Ferdinand Magellan is credited with bringing the chili pepper to areas of Africa and Asia.

Hundreds of different chili peppers exist, each ranging in size, shape, flavor and degree of hotness. The peppers range in length measuring anywhere from one to six inches and one-half to one inch in diameter. They are either red or green in color with many of the red varieties boasting more heat, though this isn't always the case. Habanero, Scotch bonnet and Jalapeno are among the hotter varieties with Spanish pimentos and Anaheim and Hungarian cherry peppers examples of some of the milder versions.

Nutritional Profile

Though these peppers aren't for the squeamish, the bold bite of the chili pepper brings with it numerous health benefits. If you can stand the heat, you'll also get important nutrients such as:

- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamin B2, B3 and B6
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Vitamin K

Health Benefits

The compound responsible for the heat of the chili pepper is called capsaicin. Though an acquired taste for certain, capsaicin provides more than the fiery burn left on one's tongue.



Capsaicin inhibits the neuropeptide, Substance P. Substance P is associated with the body's inflammatory response. The more capsaicin a pepper contains, the hotter the pepper is and the more antioxidant benefits it contains.

Red chili peppers tend to be hotter than the green varieties, though this isn't always the case. Red peppers boast higher concentrations of beta-carotene and vitamin A. Regardless of color, capsaicin is a potent immune booster and also an anti-cancer compound promoting cell death of prostate, pancreatic and lung cancer cells. With prostate cancer, capsaicin has been found to trigger cell death in both types of cancer cells, those dependent on the male hormone testosterone and those not testosterone-dependent. The compound has also been proven to lessen the expression of Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) and decrease PSA levels in the body.

Capsaicin also provides cardiovascular support as it aids in reducing both blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels. The heat-producing compound also protects against blood fat oxidation. Once oxidized, these minute fat particles can accumulate on the walls of blood vessels, leading to heart disease.

Often, chili peppers are blamed for causing stomach upset or ulcers. However, a helping of chili peppers actually aids in decreasing the likelihood for ulcer development and promotes intestinal health. Chili peppers kill dangerous bacteria in the gut ingested from other foods. They also stimulate the cells of the stomach lining to produce protective buffering juices to protect it from acidic foods and drinks.



These heat-producing peppers are also an excellent option for dieters. They are naturally low in calories and high in fiber. Capsaicin is known to increase heat production in the body known as thermogenesis, which aids in calorie burn to a certain degree. And while this heat increase isn't quite enough to burn off large quantities of excess fat, the taste alone often decreases appetite and can lead one to slow their eating pace.

For those looking to enjoy the benefits of capsaicin but aren't a fan of spicy foods, numerous varieties of milder peppers are available. The heat shouldn't be too strong a deterrent since once the chili pepper is on the tongue the body releases a series of pleasure promoting endorphins, a phenomenon not quite fully understood.



Spicy Chili Green Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 1/2 cups water
- ◆ 1 bunch baby spinach leaves
- ◆ 1 frozen banana
- ◆ 1 pinch chili powder
- ◆ 1 teaspoon honey

Instructions:

Place all ingredients in a blender. Mix until smooth and serve.



Chili Salad Dressing

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 fresh chili, seeded and minced
- ◆ 1 garlic clove, minced
- ◆ 1 tablespoon lime zest
- ◆ 2 tablespoons chopped coriander
- ◆ 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
- ◆ 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ◆ 2 tablespoons lime juice
- ◆ 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a bowl and whisk to combine.
2. Transfer dressing to an airtight container. Store in the fridge and shake well before drizzling on your favorite salads.



Chili Carrot Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 4 cups vegetable broth
- ◆ 2 cups baby carrots
- ◆ 1 onion, chopped
- ◆ 4 ounce can chili peppers
- ◆ 1 teaspoon chili powder
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- ◆ 1 cup light cream

Instructions:

1. Place broth, vegetables and spices in a large pot. Cover and bring to a boil. Cook for 12 minutes.
2. Using a blender, puree the mixture in batches until smooth.
3. Stir in cream and serve.



Chili Bake

Ingredients:

- ◆ 6 chili peppers, seeded and cut into thin strips
- ◆ 1 egg
- ◆ 3/4 cup milk
- ◆ 8 ounces of sharp cheddar cheese, sliced
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- ◆ Dash of worcester sauce

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Arrange the chilis on the bottom of a baking dish.
3. Beat the egg and milk together, pour over chilis.
4. Arrange cheese slices on top.
5. Season with paprika and add a bit of worcester sauce.
6. Bake for 30 minutes. Serve as a warm dip.

Sauted Chilis

Ingredients:

- ◆ 8 small chili peppers
- ◆ 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 1 teaspoon chili powder

Instructions:

1. Heat a skillet over medium heat. Add oil and swirl to coat.
2. Add the peppers whole. Saute for 3 minutes.
3. Cover, reduce heat and cook for 5 minutes, turning chilis occasionally.
4. Sprinkle chili powder on top, toss to coat. Serve while warm.

Notes:

- ◆ Choose peppers that are bright and colorful with firm skin. Do not select wrinkled, bruised or soft peppers.
- ◆ Remember the longer the peppers ripen the hotter they become.



- ◆ If you purchase red peppers that have some green on them, they are not quite ripe, but they will continue to ripen off the vine.
- ◆ Chili peppers will stay on the shelf a long time. You can store them unwashed in the fridge for several weeks.
- ◆ The chili peppers that are the hottest can be topically toxic - be sure to remove contact lenses, and wear eyewear and vinyl gloves when working with them.
- ◆ Do not touch your face, eyes and nose while working with the peppers - always wash your hands right after touching them.
- ◆ Enjoy chili pepper in moderation as the taste can be overwhelming and excessive consumption can cause stomach upset.
- ◆ To reduce the heat, remove the seeds which contain the most capsaicin. Wear gloves when handling these parts and be sure not to get juice from the pepper in open wounds or the eyes as this can lead to burning.



Buckwheat

Considered by many to be a cereal crop, buckwheat is actually a fruit seed related to rhubarb and sorrel. The crop itself is thought to have originated in Asia sometime around 4000 B.C. The popularity of the grain-like seed grew and its cultivation spread throughout the world, making its way to North America with early European settlers.

Though a seed, from a culinary perspective buckwheat is often treated as a grain. Asian cultures incorporate buckwheat into a variety of noodle called soba noodles, while many European countries consume cooked buckwheat in a porridge-like fashion with oats and other ingredients.



France is known for their buckwheat crepes. In America, buckwheat is often found in a variety of health-conscious dishes. It can be ground into a flour and incorporated into pastas and other baked goods or cooked whole and included in salads or pasta dishes.

Nutritional Profile

With its grain-like characteristics, buckwheat can add a healthful boost to any dish thanks to its rich concentration of nutrients including:

- 💧 *Amino acids
- 💧 Choline
- 💧 Copper
- 💧 Fiber
- 💧 Magnesium
- 💧 Manganese
- 💧 Phosphorous
- 💧 Potassium
- 💧 Protein
- 💧 Vitamin B1, B2, B3 and B6
- 💧 Zinc

Health Benefits

The unassuming buckwheat kernel known as a groat, packs a mighty nutritional punch in comparison to true cereal crops. Buckwheat contains more protein than rice, wheat, millet or corn and contains the amino acids lysine and arginine that the other crops lack.

There is also a higher concentration of the minerals zinc, copper and manganese, all of which play important roles in many biological functions throughout the body. Studies reveal that these minerals are also more bioavailable, or easily absorbed and utilized by the human body, in buckwheat than when consumed from cereal crops.

Buckwheat is also an excellent source of plant lignans. This unique class of compounds are found in the cell walls of plants and converted to usable compounds by human gut-friendly bacteria.

Once such important variety of plant lignan, enterolactone, is found in abundance in buckwheat. Enterolactone



has been found to protect against hormone-dependant cancers including breast cancer when consumed regularly.

Incorporating buckwheat into the diet is also beneficial for cardiovascular health. Though abundant in many flavonoids, one particularly valuable one found in buckwheat is rutin. Rutin plays a key role in heart health as it helps lower blood lipids and keep LDL cholesterol from oxidizing.

LDL cholesterol oxidation can lead to the buildup of plaque on blood vessel walls. Rutin reduces the risk of this occurring and also aids in lowering blood pressure and relaxing blood vessels allowing for better blood flow and nutrient delivery.

Buckwheat is also a very good source of insoluble fiber which helps keep dieters fuller longer, increases nutrient absorption from food, regulates blood sugar levels and decreases the risk for certain cancers.

Buckwheat groats and flour can be incorporated into a number of dishes for an added nutrient boost. As it is a seed and not a cereal crop, it contains no gluten and is therefore a safe alternative for gluten-sensitive individuals as well as those with celiac disease.

Buckwheat Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/3 cup raw buckwheat, soaked
- ◆ 1/2 cup almond milk
- ◆ 1/2 cup frozen raspberries
- ◆ 4 fresh strawberries
- ◆ 1/4 cup lemon juice
- ◆ 6 slices of cucumber
- ◆ 1 tablespoon honey
- ◆ 1/2 of an avocado
- ◆ Sprinkle of nutmeg
- ◆ 1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger

Instructions:

Place all ingredients in a high speed blender. Blend for a few seconds or until smooth. Pour into glasses and enjoy.



Buckwheat Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup buckwheat, cooked and chilled
- ◆ 1 1/2 pounds sweet potato, baked, chilled and cut into cubes
- ◆ 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 1/4 cup rice vinegar
- ◆ 1/3 cup orange juice
- ◆ 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- ◆ 1 cup dried figs, chopped
- ◆ 1/2 cup red onion, chopped
- ◆ 3/4 cup celery, diced
- ◆ 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ Zest from 1 lemon
- ◆ 1 cup roasted almonds, chopped
- ◆ 3 sprigs green onion, diced
- ◆ Handful parsley, finely chopped
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- ◆ Black pepper to taste
- ◆ 6 cups arugula

Instructions:

1. Whisk the vinegar, juice, and syrup together in a sauce pan. Bring to a boil and stir in the figs. Remove from heat and let sit.
2. Combine the onion, celery, oil, lemon zest, almonds, green onion, handful of parsley, salt and pepper. Toss well. Add in the buckwheat and sweet potatoes.
3. Add the fig mixture and toss to combine. Let sit for 1 hour.
4. Divide the arugula amongst plates. Top with the buckwheat mixture and serve.



Buckwheat Stew

Ingredients:

- ◆ 6 cups beef broth
- ◆ 1/2 cup buckwheat, rinsed and strained
- ◆ 1 potato, peeled and chopped
- ◆ Coconut oil as needed
- ◆ 1 carrot peeled and chopped
- ◆ 1 onion, sliced
- ◆ 1 parsnip, peeled and chopped
- ◆ 1 piece of celery root, chopped
- ◆ 1 tablespoon sunflower oil
- ◆ Salt to taste

Instructions:

1. Heat the coconut oil in a skillet over medium heat. Saute the onions, carrots and parsnips until soft.
2. Place broth in a large pot and bring to a boil. Add onions and carrots, buckwheat and potatoes. Bring to a boil.
3. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cook until buckwheat and potatoes are done. Serve.

Buckwheat Porridge

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups buckwheat, soaked
- ◆ 1 1/4 cups almond milk
- ◆ 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- ◆ 1/4 cup maple syrup
- ◆ Pinch of salt
- ◆ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ◆ Fresh fruit for topping

Instructions:

1. Rinse and strain soaked buckwheat.
2. Place all ingredients in a blender. Mix until smooth.
3. Pour into bowls and top with fresh fruit. Serve right away.



Buckwheat Pancakes

Ingredients:

- 1 cup buckwheat flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4 cups buttermilk
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- Butter for cooking

Instructions:

1. Combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a bowl.
2. Whisk the buttermilk, egg and vanilla together.
3. Mix wet and dry ingredients until batter is slightly lumpy.
4. Heat a skillet over medium heat and melt a teaspoon of butter.
5. Measure 1/4 cup of batter onto the skillet to cook until the pancake edges start to bubble. Flip and cook until set on the other side. Repeat for other pancakes.

Notes:

- You will find it more economical to purchase buckwheat flour in bulk.
- The flour should keep well in a cool, dry location for a long time as long as it is not opened.
- You can also store flour in a tightly sealed bag or container in the freezer - just be sure to keep it sealed tightly.
- Never use buckwheat flour beyond its expiration date.

Mushrooms

Mushrooms have been prized since ancient times for both their culinary appeal and their medicinal qualities. In ancient Egypt, it was thought that mushrooms could grant immortality, and therefore were only eaten by pharaohs. They have also been a huge focus of traditional Chinese medicine for thousands of years.

This unique fungus has been around since the days of hunter-gatherers, who collected them for food, and likely



learned which ones were edible - and which were not - by trial and error. Historians speculate that mushrooms were first cultivated in Asia, and began to be cultivated in Europe in the 17th century.



There are over 10,000 different identified species of mushroom, and many more likely have not yet been discovered. Of these, it is estimated that most are either inedible, tasteless or may cause mild indigestion. Just under five percent are the tasty and nutritious morsels that we eat today, and about one percent are poisonous. In some cultures, Russia, for example, knowledge of which mushrooms can

be eaten, and which to avoid, is taught to children at a young age.

For the sake of brevity, we will focus on three different groups of mushrooms: button mushrooms (including white, crimini and portobello), shiitake and oyster mushrooms.

White, crimini and portobello mushrooms are different strains of button mushrooms, harvested at different times in their maturity. White mushrooms are harvested when they are very young.

Criminis, also known as brown mushrooms, baby portobello and mini bella, are 'middle aged,' and portobellos are mature button mushrooms. White mushrooms are the mildest in flavor, crimini mushrooms are brown and have a slightly deeper taste, and portobellos have a rich, steak-like quality.

Shiitake mushrooms originated in Asia, and are considered to be a symbol of longevity in many Asian countries. They grow naturally on the Parasol tree species, and are sometimes



referred to as ‘Black Forest mushrooms,’ after the German region where they also grow wild. Shiitake mushrooms are light to dark brown, and have a smoky flavor that holds up well against other flavors.

Oyster mushrooms are also thousands of years old, growing on conifer and deciduous hardwood trees. Their shape is reminiscent of trumpets, and they can have either gray, brown or reddish caps. When cooked, they have a mild flavor, and when served raw, they have a slightly peppery taste.

Nutritional Profile

While nutrient content varies depending on the species of mushroom, the basic nutrients that these mushrooms share are:

- ◆ Choline
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Folate
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Pantothenic acid
- ◆ Phosphorus
- ◆ Potassium

- ◆ Protein
- ◆ Selenium
- ◆ Vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6 and B12
- ◆ Zinc

Health Benefits

The unique blend of phytonutrients and antioxidants found in mushrooms give them potent anti-inflammatory and immune system protective properties. Scientists have isolated numerous different compounds from button, shiitake and oyster mushrooms that have been found to stimulate the immune system in various ways, protecting against chronic diseases including heart disease, cancer and autoimmune conditions.

Crimini mushrooms have been found to support the optimal functioning of white blood cells, and have been especially studied in terms of arthritis protection. Shiitake mushrooms have been used in traditional Chinese medicine as an immune-boosting tonic, among other functions, and oyster mushrooms contain natural lovastatin,



a compound that, besides supporting optimal heart function, has been found to be potentially beneficial against breast and colon cancers.

Crimini mushrooms (and other button mushrooms) contain conjugated linolenic acid (CLA), a fatty acid that has been linked to decreasing the production of estrogen, making it potentially effective against breast cancers. Shiitake mushroom extracts have been the subject of many studies for their anti-carcinogenic potential, as some of their components have been found to cause programmed cell death (apoptosis) of tumor cells. It is currently thought that there are over 100 compounds present in shiitake mushrooms, including non-polysaccharide substances, which team up to fight cancers.

The vitamins and minerals found in mushrooms are vital to optimal well-being. The B-vitamins that they contain are not produced naturally by the body and must therefore be obtained from food. These help support the nervous

and digestive systems, are important in the health of red blood cells, and are also key in skin health.

As far as mineral content, the potassium found in mushrooms is essential for proper nerve, muscle and heart function, and also helps to keep blood pressure levels stable. Selenium protects the body's cells from damage, and also aids the immune system. Copper is necessary for the production of red blood cells, as well as nerve and bone health. Shiitake mushrooms also contain iron, which is necessary for the health and production of red blood cells.

Mushrooms have been the subject of research in relation to heart disease for some time, and it has been found that button, shiitake and oyster mushroom extracts can help lower the risk of aorta damage from immune cells binding to the lining, and can promote healthy blood flow to and from the heart. They have also been found to help lower cholesterol levels.



A particularly unique benefit of mushrooms is their contribution to environmental health. As they are in the fungus family, mushrooms do not require soil or light, and can thrive on almost any organic material. This makes them a very sustainable food. Shiitake mushrooms can be 'forest farmed' on hardwood logs that naturally occur in wooded areas, so that they take up no extra space in their cultivation.

Oyster mushrooms can actually degrade certain environmental toxins, including hydrocarbon pollutants. They can also eat nematode worms. This means that they are not subject to these pests feeding on them, and may one day be able to replace certain pesticides in agriculture, as they could possibly control rootworms naturally if employed in the right conditions.

Due to the fact that mushrooms can be grown on various mediums, conventional mushrooms are grown in a wide variety of ways, some of which involve the heavy use of pesticides. To avoid potential exposure to harmful chemicals, it is important to purchase organic mushrooms.

Mushrooms - whichever type you choose - can both accent and absorb a wide variety of flavors, and the unique benefits that they add to your meals could greatly improve your overall well being in a number of ways.



Mushrooms and Rice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup long grain rice
- ◆ 1/4 cup butter
- ◆ 1/2 cup celery, finely chopped
- ◆ 1/2 cup onion, finely chopped
- ◆ 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- ◆ 1 can chicken broth
- ◆ 1/3 cup water
- ◆ 2 tablespoons fermented gluten free soy sauce
- ◆ 1 tablespoon dried parsley

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 350 F.
2. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat and saute the rice until brown.
3. Add the celery and onion to the rice and cook for 2 minutes.
4. Add mushrooms and cook until tender.
5. Pour mixture into a baking dish. Mix in the broth, sauce and parsley.
6. Bake in preheated oven for 45 minutes and serve warm.



Sauteed Mushrooms

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 tablespoon butter
- ◆ 2 cloves garlic
- ◆ 1 1/2 lbs mushrooms, sliced
- ◆ 1/4 cup gluten free soy sauce
- ◆ Garlic powder, sea salt and black pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Melt the butter in a skillet over medium heat.
2. Add the garlic to the pan and saute for 2 minutes.
3. Add the mushrooms with the garlic, stir and cook for 5 more minutes.
4. Add soy sauce and stir.
5. Add seasonings as desired. Cook for 10 more minutes. Serve while warm.



Creamy Mushroom Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 8 ounces mushrooms, sliced
- ◆ 2 tablespoons onions, chopped
- ◆ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ◆ 2 tablespoons butter
- ◆ 3 tablespoons gluten free flour, divided
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon xanthan gum
- ◆ 2 cups chicken broth
- ◆ 1 cup half and half cream
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon salt
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

Instructions:

1. Melt the butter in a skillet.
2. Put the onions, garlic, and mushrooms in the skillet and cook until the onions are translucent.
3. Add the 2 tablespoons of the flour and 1/8 teaspoon of xanthan gum and stir to combine.
4. Stir in the broth and heat until thickened.
5. In a separate bowl, stir together cream, remaining 1 tablespoon flour, 1/8 teaspoon xanthan gum and seasonings. Stir into soup.
6. Serve while warm.



The vitamins and minerals found in mushrooms are vital to optimal well-being. The B-vitamins that they contain are not produced naturally by the body and must therefore be obtained from food.



Mushroom Chicken Bake

Ingredients:

- ◆ 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- ◆ 1/4 cup gluten free flour
- ◆ 3 tablespoons butter
- ◆ 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- ◆ 1/2 cup chicken broth
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon salt
- ◆ 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- ◆ 1/3 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded
- ◆ 1/3 cup parmesan cheese, shredded
- ◆ 1/4 cup green onion, sliced



Instructions:

1. Put the chicken and flour in a plastic bag. Shake to coat the chicken evenly.
2. Melt butter in a skillet.
3. Add the chicken to the skillet and cook until brown. Transfer to a baking dish.
4. Preheat your oven to 375 degrees F.
5. Saute the mushrooms in the same skillet until they are soft.
6. Add broth and seasonings to the skillet and boil for 5 minutes.
7. Spoon the mushroom mixture over the chicken.
8. Bake, uncovered in the preheated oven for 15 minutes.
9. Add the cheese and green onions on top of the chicken and bake for 5 more minutes.



Vegetarian Mushroom Burgers

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 can kidney beans, drained
- ◆ 1/2 cup rolled oats
- ◆ 1/2 cup mushrooms, chopped finely
- ◆ 1/4 cup onion, chopped finely
- ◆ 1 carrot, shredded
- ◆ 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- ◆ 1 clove garlic, minced
- ◆ 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- ◆ Black pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Mix all the ingredients in a food processor or blender until well combined.
2. Pulse until all ingredients are coarsely chopped.
3. Chill the mixture in the fridge until it is easy to form into patties.
4. Form the mixture into 4 patties.
5. Cook patties in a skillet for 5 minutes on each side.
Note: patties can be stored in the freezer to cooked later.

Notes:

- ◆ Seeking out wild mushrooms is only encouraged if you are going with an experienced forager, as there are a few varieties that can be toxic.
- ◆ Keep unopened mushrooms in their package in fridge for up to a week.
- ◆ If you are only going to use a few mushrooms, put a small cut in the plastic, take out what you need and re-wrap the container in plastic.
- ◆ Loose mushrooms that you don't use can be put in a container and covered with plastic to store in fridge. Even better, once opened from their package, store them in a brown paper bag.





Pear

Pears are a member of the rose family, Rosaceae, which also includes apples, apricots, peaches, plums, tree nuts and the fragrant flower themselves. While numerous varieties of pear exist, the pears most commonly found in the United States fall under the category of European pears.

A round body with a tapered neck defines the European pear in contrast to the more uniform roundness of the Asian pear.

Popular European pear varieties include:

- ◆ **Bartlett:** The most popular variety in the United States, these are green, yellow or red in color and most often used in canning.

- ◆ **Bosc:** Defined by their brown skin and longer neck than other varieties.
- ◆ **Anjou:** Compact body with a short neck, may be green or red in color.
- ◆ **Seckel:** Small in size with a yellow skin and red patches throughout.
- ◆ **Starkrimson:** Bright red skin with a narrow neck, commonly used in salads.

The European pear has a firm skin with a soft juicy flesh whereas the Asian pear, also referred to as the “apple-pear,” “Chinese pear” or “sand pear” has a more crisp texture - closer to that of an apple.

Pears first made their way to North America in the 1500s thanks to European settlers. Throughout the early colonization of America, pears continued to be imported primarily from Europe. Today, however, most imported pears consumed in the United States come from Argentina,



Chile, South Korea and New Zealand with China being the largest grower of pears worldwide.

In the United States, Washington State accounts for more than half of the cultivated domestic pears, followed by Oregon, California, New York and Pennsylvania.

Nutritional Profile

Though multiple varieties exist, each provides an ample source of:

- ◆ Boron
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Folate
- ◆ Omega 3-Fatty Acids
- ◆ Pectin
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamin B2
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Vitamin K

Health Benefits

Pears are loaded with a wealth of phytonutrients including hydroxybenzoic acids, hydroxycinnamic acids, flavonols and carotenoids. The red-skinned varieties are also rich in anthocyanins, a potent antioxidant that is responsible for the darker hue. The flavonoid content of pears is higher in concentration than that of any other fruit and these compounds work synergistically to buffer the immune system and protect against a wide variety of acute and chronic conditions.

Along with apples, pears are an excellent source of the soluble fiber known as pectin. Pectin binds with fatty substances and aids in the elimination of various toxins. Pears have a higher concentration of this important nutrient than apples, though much credit is often bestowed upon the apple in terms of health benefits.

Pears are true cancer-fighting fruits. The pectin found in pears also has the unique ability to bind with not only bile acids, but harmful secondary bile



acids that often lead to colon cancer if allowed to remain in the digestive tract. And cinnamic acids such as coumaric, ferulic and 5-caffeoylquinic acids have been found to be especially beneficial at reducing the risk of gastric and esophageal cancer.

Vitamins C and K as well as copper all act as antioxidants that help protect against free radical damage and vitamin K plays an especially important role in blood clotting.

One pear contains 11 percent of the recommended daily intake of vitamin C and close to 10 percent of the recommended daily intake of copper as well as 212 milligrams of potassium, which plays a key role in heartbeat-regulation and muscle function.

Pears are also considered a hypoallergenic fruit, meaning there is an extremely low chance of any adverse reaction. These highly digestible fruits are often recommended as one of the first fruits to be introduced to infants.

Cucumber Ginger Pear Juice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 pear, cored and chopped
- ◆ 1 inch piece ginger
- ◆ 1 cucumber
- ◆ 3 stalks celery

Instructions:

1. Process all ingredients through your juicer.
2. Pour over ice and serve.



Spinach Pear Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 cup black walnuts, roasted
- ◆ 10 ounces spinach leaves
- ◆ 10 ounces romaine lettuce, torn
- ◆ 1/2 cup balsamic vinaigrette
- ◆ 8 large strawberries, sliced
- ◆ 2 pears, peeled and sliced
- ◆ 6 ounces crumbled feta
- ◆ 3 tablespoons balsamic vinaigrette

Instructions:

Place all ingredients in a large salad bowl. Toss to combine. Serve.



Pear Apple Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- ◆ 3 apples, peeled and chopped
- ◆ 3 pears, peeled and chopped
- ◆ 5 cups vegetable broth
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon sage, rubbed
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- ◆ 1 bay leaf
- ◆ 1 1/2 teaspoons pureed ginger
- ◆ 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped

Instructions:

1. Melt the oil in a saucepan. Turn the heat on medium and add the apples and pears. Cook for 5 minutes.
2. Add broth, sage, pepper and bay leaf to the pan. Bring to a boil.
3. Reduce the heat to low. Cover and cook for 20 minutes.
4. Pour half of the soup into a blender and puree. Repeat with the other half of the soup.
5. Garnish soup with parsley.



Green Pear Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 cup water
- ◆ 1 cup frozen green grapes
- ◆ 1 orange peeled
- ◆ 1 pear, chopped
- ◆ 1 frozen banana
- ◆ 1 cup kale

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a high powered blender.
2. Mix on high until smooth. Serve right away.

Notes:

- ◆ Avoid canned pears as there is a diminished nutrient content as well as syrups and sugars added during the canning process.
- ◆ To check for ripeness, apply gentle pressure to the end of the pear with the stem using your thumb. The pear should give slightly to gentle pressure if it is ready to eat.

- ◆ If you want to speed up the ripening process, put hard pears in a paper bag and leave them at room temperature for a few days.

Carrots

The carrot (*Daucus carota*) is the most popular root vegetable eaten in the United States - and for good reason; its health benefits are abundant. The bright orange carrot as we know it, however, has only been in existence since the 15th or 16th century. Other types of carrots, which started out in yellow and red hues, have been around for thousands of years and are native to parts of Europe and the Mediterranean.



These nutrition-packed roots belong to the Umbelliferae family, also known as the Apiaceae family, along with parsley, cumin, dill and fennel. Since their origins, they have been cultivated



in Asia and the Middle East. Cultivation in Europe took off around the 15th century, and white, orange and purple carrot varieties were born.

Depending on variety, carrots can be anywhere from about two inches to about three feet long, and are elongated and somewhat conical in shape. Their leaves are clustered above ground and grow in an ‘umbrella’ shape, hence their family name. Carrots are mildly flavored, both sweet and savory, and the greens have a somewhat bitter flavor.

Nutritional Profile

These icons of good health contain:

- ◆ Biotin
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Folate
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Molybdenum
- ◆ Pantothenic acid
- ◆ Phosphorus

- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamins B1, B2, B3 and B6
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Vitamin K

Health Benefits

Carrots are rich in various antioxidants, including the carotenoids alpha-carotene, beta-carotene and lutein. Carotenoids are famous for the vast benefits they have for eye health. Inside the body, beta-carotene is converted into vitamin A by the liver. Vitamin A is linked to a lower risk of cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration, and to healthy eyesight in general. The retina of the eye converts vitamin A into a purple pigment called rhodopsin, which allows for optimal night vision.

Vitamin A also protects the body from oxidative stress, helping to prevent many chronic diseases, and offers a multitude of skin-protecting benefits. These include protection from sun



damage, and aiding in the prevention of wrinkles, acne and uneven skin pigmentation. This important vitamin also helps to reduce fat and bile in the liver, keeping it clear of toxic build-up.

Carrots also contain phytonutrients known as polyacetylenes, two of which are falcarinol and falcarindiol. These polyacetylenes have been associated by a body of research to helping to reduce the risk of colon, lung and breast cancers, as well as to potentially fighting the growth of existing colon cancer cells.

The combination of carotenoids and polyacetylenes in carrots is mutually supportive, and make carrots a powerful superfood in the prevention of heart disease, as well; they help prevent red blood cells from clumping together. In addition, the other antioxidants found in carrots can help to reduce system-wide inflammation, which is at the root of many chronic conditions. Purple carrots have the added benefit of anthocyanins, which have been linked to anti-aging and heart-protecting properties.

Additionally, carrots can help keep your mouth clean and healthy. Chewing on a raw carrot helps remove plaque from teeth, and can aid in neutralizing oral bacteria that leads to cavities.

Carrot Orange Juice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 pounds organic carrots
- ◆ 8 organic oranges, peeled

Instructions:

1. Run all the carrots and oranges through your juicer.
2. Serve the juice over ice. Best if consumed immediately.



Ginger Carrot Soup

Warm or Chilled

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 tablespoons organic butter
- ◆ 7 organic carrots, peeled and sliced thinly
- ◆ 2 organic onions, chopped
- ◆ 1 teaspoon sea salt
- ◆ 1 teaspoon ginger powder
- ◆ 2 cups organic chicken or vegetable broth
- ◆ 2 cups water
- ◆ 2 tablespoons orange zest
- ◆ Chopped herbs for garnish

Instructions:

1. Melt the butter in a large stock pot. Saute the carrots and onions in the butter until soft.
2. Stir in the ginger and salt.
3. Add broth, water and zest to the pot. Bring to a boil then simmer for 20 minutes.
4. Remove the zest from the soup.
5. Process the soup through a blender in batches. Serve warm or chilled.



Carrot Cake in the Raw

Ingredients:

- 1 cup organic carrots, chopped
- 2 cups walnuts
- 1 cup organic sun-dried raisins
- 1/2 cup organic shredded coconut
- 1 tablespoon raw sunflower seeds
- 1/8 teaspoon raw honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 tablespoon water
- 1 cup cashews
- 2 tablespoons organic lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons raw honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon water

Instructions:

1. Place the first 9 ingredients in a food processor. Process until well combined and a few chunks remain. This is the cake portion, the remaining ingredients will be the icing of the cake.
2. Press the cake mixture into the bottom of a glass baking dish.
3. Place all the icing ingredients in a blender. Process until the mixture is smooth and has an icing texture.
4. Spread icing thinly over the cake.
5. Refrigerate for 2 hours before serving cake.

“ The combination of carotenoids and polyacetylenes in carrots is mutually supportive, and make carrots a powerful superfood in the prevention of heart disease. ”



Carrot Cucumber Summer Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/4 cup rice vinegar
- ◆ 1 teaspoon coconut sugar
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon ginger powder
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- ◆ 1 cup organic carrots, sliced
- ◆ 2 tablespoons organic green onion, sliced
- ◆ 2 tablespoon organic red bell pepper, minced
- ◆ 1 organic cucumber, sliced

Instructions:

1. Mix the vinegar, sugar, olive oil, ginger and salt together in a bowl. Whisk until sugar dissolves. Set aside.
2. Toss the carrots, onions, pepper and cucumbers together.
3. Drizzle dressing over salad, toss to evenly coat. Chill before serving.

Pineapple Carrot Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3/4 cup organic frozen pineapple chunks
- ◆ 1/2 cup ice
- ◆ 1/3 cup organic orange juice
- ◆ 1/4 cup organic carrot slices
- ◆ 1/2 organic frozen banana

Instructions:

Place the ingredients in a blender. Process until smooth. Serve in chilled glasses.

Notes:

- ◆ Look for carrots that are firm, straight and bright in color.
- ◆ Thicker carrots have a larger core and are usually sweeter.
- ◆ If greens are attached, be sure they are brightly colored.
- ◆ Don't use limp or rubbery carrots.



- ◆ Store carrots in the refrigerator in a plastic bag - be sure to get all of the air out of the bag first.
- ◆ Keep carrots away from apples, pears and potatoes - the ethylene gas produced by these foods will make your carrots bitter tasting.
- ◆ Do not wash carrots before storing.
- ◆ Rinse carrots under cold water before using - do not soak as the nutrients will leach into the water.
- ◆ If you wish to eat carrots raw - slice them first as they are easier to digest this way.

Nectarine

The nectarine is a member of the Rosaceae family which also contains both peaches and plums.

The nectarine is somewhat larger than the plum but lacks the fuzzy coating of the peach yet all are characterized as drupes, or fruits with a central pit.



The fruit originated in China and slowly made its way across the globe. Spanish explorers introduced the tender sweet fruit to North America and today the crop is cultivated worldwide with India, Greece and Italy being among the top exporters. California is the largest producer of nectarines in the United States.

There are over 100 varieties of nectarines, all being classified as either a clingstone or a freestone. The clingstone variety produce a flesh that adheres strongly to the central pit. These are most often utilized in canning. Freestone nectarines' flesh easily pulls away from the pit and this variety are best enjoyed freshly picked.

The tart fruit often sweetens with ripeness and both flesh and skin can range in color. The flesh ranges in hues from white to a soft yellow to a deep rich red color and is surrounded by a smooth outer skin with a blend of yellow and orange shades. Though similar to the peach, the nectarine is more delicate and tends to bruise more easily.



Nutritional Profile

Though similar to its cousin the peach, the nectarine boasts a stronger nutritional concentration and is a rich source of several vitamins and minerals including:

- 💧 Fiber
- 💧 Phosphorus
- 💧 Potassium
- 💧 Vitamin A
- 💧 Vitamin C
- 💧 B-Complex Vitamins
- 💧 Vitamin E
- 💧 Vitamin K
- 💧 Zinc

Health Benefits

The vibrant yellow/orange hue of the nectarine is due to the rich concentration of the antioxidant beta-carotene in both the flesh and skin. Beta-carotene plays many roles in human health. As an antioxidant, it protects our cells from free-radical oxidation that can lead to numerous diseases and cancers. Once

consumed, beta-carotene is converted to vitamin A, another vital nutrient the human body needs.

Vitamin A aids in building and maintaining healthy skin, teeth, bone, soft tissue, muscle and mucous membranes. The combination of vitamin A and the antioxidant lutein aid in eye health as well. A majority of the lutein found in the human body resides in the macular pigment of the eye. Lutein helps to protect the delicate retinal tissue from oxidative damage and high wavelength light, thus preventing eye diseases like macular degeneration and cataracts.

Lutein also works in combination with vitamin C to keep skin young and healthy. These antioxidants protect the skin from harmful UV exposure and aid in the production of collagen, which provides skin with its elasticity.

Nectarines are an excellent source of several bioactive compounds including polyphenols, anthocyanins, catechin, chlorogenic acid and quercetin.



Together, these compounds work synergistically to combat numerous obesity-related conditions including metabolic syndrome, diabetes and heart disease. This unique blend has also been found to prevent the formation and proliferation of colon cancer cells.



Along with the abundance of numerous bioactive compounds, nectarines are an excellent source of many vitamins and minerals. They are an especially rich source of potassium, a key mineral for overall health. Potassium plays a role in several processes in the human body including electric cell stimulation and function, energy metabolism, pH

balance, protein synthesis and carbohydrate digestion.

Nectarines are an extremely delicate fruit and should be consumed quickly once ripe. They make an excellent addition to summertime desserts and fruit salads or can be a sweet ingredient in jams, chutneys, spreads and more.

Though the flesh is teeming with nutrition, the highest concentration of antioxidants are found in the skin, so selecting organic nectarines is a must. The pit of a nectarine should never be consumed as it contains a small concentration of cyanogens. Cyanogens are metabolized into cyanide in the human body and though rare, consuming large quantities can result in cyanide poisoning. If using the nectarine in a juicer or blender, remove the pit first to avoid any contamination.



Nectarine Berry Yogurt Parfait

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups yogurt
- ◆ 2 teaspoons honey
- ◆ 1/2 cup blackberry
- ◆ 1/2 cup chopped nectarine
- ◆ 1/4 cup granola

Instructions:

Layer the yogurt, honey, fruit and granola in two parfait glasses. Serve right away.

Nectarine Fruit Pops

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup pomegranate juice
- ◆ 1 cup frozen raspberries
- ◆ 2 nectarines, peeled and chopped

Instructions:

1. Place the juice and fruit in a blender. Blend until smooth.
2. Pour mixture into popsicle molds. Cover, add sticks and freeze until solid.

Carrot Nectarine Juice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 pounds carrots
- ◆ 6 nectarines
- ◆ 2 inch chunk of ginger, peeled

Instructions:

1. Process all ingredients through your juicer.
2. Pour juice over ice and serve right away.



Nectarine Shake

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 1/2 cups frozen nectarine chunks
- ◆ 1/2 cup almond milk
- ◆ 1 tablespoon honey
- ◆ 1/3 cup yogurt
- ◆ 1/2 cup ice

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth.
2. Pour into a glass and serve.



Nectarine Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ◆ 1/4 cup fresh mint, finely chopped
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 7 ounces feta cheese
- ◆ 8 cups arugula leaves
- ◆ 3 nectarines, sliced

Instructions:

1. Whisk the oil, lemon juice, mint and salt and pepper together.
2. Toss the feta cheese with the arugula. Arrange the nectarines on top and drizzle on the dressing.



Notes:

- ◆ Select fruit that gives to light pressure and has no large bruises or soft spots.
- ◆ If the fruit is green, especially near stem, it is not ripe.
- ◆ Fruit that is an orangey-gold color will be the sweetest.
- ◆ Leave unripe fruit on the counter for a couple of days and it will ripen up.
- ◆ Do not refrigerate until the fruit is completely ripe - otherwise they will have no flavor.

