



84 Brain Boosting Recipes:

Eating Your Way to Beating Alzheimer's, Dementia & More

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The ability to enjoy, perceive, sense and experience life is dictated by the neuron firing rate and health of your brain. Without a well-functioning brain you could not appreciate art or music, smell a flower or feel the heat of the sun on your face. Everything meaningful in life is mediated by the operation center of the body, the brain.

However, many people are more apt to worry about the aspects of physical health that you can see with your eyes, such as the fact that your size 9 jeans no longer button up, or that you can actually feel your thighs slapping together when you move?

While these are sure signs that you may be carrying a little extra weight, which could increase your chances of developing some serious health problems, there are also other aspects of health that are equally, if not more, important.

Symptoms of malfunction or stress in the body may be subtle, yet it is important to stay in tune with all parts of your body in order to identify when something just isn't right. Brain health is one of those things that does not present itself with visible symptoms (ones we can see with our eyes). Memory, computation, forgetfulness and reaction time are just some of the brain functions that may be hindered when things upstairs are not functioning as they should.

Like all parts of your body, the brain needs proper fuel to operate efficiently.



This is not fast food, junk food, sugar-laden food or highly-processed food-stuff, but rather whole, pure and true food that the body knows how to translate into the kind of fuel it needs to be as healthy as possible.

While eating healthy is important at any age, new research from the University of Eastern Finland highlights just how important a healthy diet during middle age is to preserving brain health.

A study published in 2014 found that those who ate the healthiest diets at the median age of 50 were nearly 90 percent less likely to experience dementia within the 14-year follow up, compared to those who ate the least healthy diets. Healthy diets included such foods as fruits, vegetables, fatty fish and unsaturated fats.

Unhealthy diets included foods such as sweets,

sugary beverages and wheat-based foods.



This latest study is not the only one to find that dietary health during middle age can be linked to dementia. A 2011 study performed at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden linked middle-aged obese and overweight individuals with a higher risk of dementia later in life. While it is true that not all instances of excess weight are linked to diet – some are rooted in other unrelated health issues – nevertheless, much of the time, a poor diet is the culprit.

Feeding your brain is not as difficult as it may seem. If you stick to a whole food diet, and reduce your dependence on canned, packaged or fast food, your brain will be the happiest.

Here are some of our favorite recipes using whole and delicious brain boosting foods.

Enjoy!

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





Artichokes

The artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*) is thought to be one of the oldest vegetables ever cultivated on Earth. Also called the globe artichoke, the green artichoke and the French artichoke, it is actually the immature bud of a type of thistle, a flower in the sunflower family.

Artichokes are thought to hail from the Mediterranean region, as well as the Canary Islands, and have been celebrated by numerous traditions for their medicinal properties. To ancient Egyptians, they were a symbol of fertility, and ancient Greeks and Romans used them as an aphrodisiac. In various cultures around the world, artichokes have been used for liver and gall-bladder cleanses.

The artichoke plant, when fully grown, measures about four feet tall. The bud, when mature, blossoms into a large, purple or pink flower. The immature bud, what we know as the artichoke itself, consists of scale-like leaves surrounding a center 'heart,' which is the part that is most commonly eaten. However, the flesh at the bottom of the leaves is also packed with nutrients.

Nutritional Profile

These green, spiky delights contain:

- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Folic acid
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Pantothenic acid
- ◆ Phosphorus
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Protein



- 💧 Vitamins B1, B2 and B3
- 💧 Vitamin C
- 💧 Vitamin K
- 💧 Zinc

Health Benefits

Artichokes contain an array of phytonutrients, including the flavonoid antioxidants beta carotene, lutein, quercetin and rutin. They also contain gallic acid and cynarin. The combination of these antioxidants helps to protect the body from many chronic diseases, and some research indicates that artichokes have notable anticarcinogenic potential. Additionally, beta carotene and lutein can help to support healthy vision. Cynarin, along with sesquiterpene-lactones, have been shown to help reduce cholesterol levels in the blood, making artichokes beneficial to heart health.

One of the principal benefits of artichokes, one that has been known for many generations, is their positive impact on liver health. They have been linked to aiding with liver cell regeneration, as well as detoxing the liver

from the buildup of impurities that can come from eating unhealthy foods or drinking alcohol in excess. This makes artichokes a perfect food to add to your diet if you are just switching to a healthy foods, and need to rid your body of toxins to make a fresh start.

Artichokes also positively impact digestion, and have been used traditionally to ease stomach pain. They may also help the digestive system to operate more smoothly by stimulating gallbladder function. The fiber content of artichokes is important for easing digestive disturbances, such as constipation and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), and they also support the proliferation of healthy gut bacteria.

Among many other vitamins and minerals, artichokes contain vitamin K, which is important to bone health, and can also protect the health of the brain, possibly aiding in the prevention of degenerative cognitive conditions such as Alzheimer's disease.





Artichoke Tea

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 whole artichoke
- ◆ 8 cups water
- ◆ 1/2 cup lemon juice
- ◆ 1/4 cup honey

Instructions:

1. Place the artichoke and 8 cups of water in large stock pot. Boil, covered for 20 minutes.
2. Remove from heat, and allow tea to steep for 20 more minutes.
3. Remove artichoke and stir in lemon juice and honey. Store in the fridge. Drink heated, or over ice.

Chicken Couscous Artichoke Dish

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 1/4 cups of water, divided
- ◆ 1/2 cup sun-dried tomatoes
- ◆ 2 cups vegetable broth
- ◆ 2 cups uncooked brown rice couscous (gluten free couscous)
- ◆ 3 cups free range cooked and chopped chicken breasts
- ◆ 1/2 cup parmesan cheese
- ◆ 1 cup parsley leaves
- ◆ 12 ounces marinated artichoke hearts
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Combine the 2 cups of water and tomatoes in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove from heat, cover and let sit for 10 minutes. Drain.
2. Place 1/4 cup of water plus the vegetable broth in a pot. Bring to a boil, add couscous and simmer for 8 minutes. Remove from heat, stir ingredients together and serve while warm.



Artichoke Pea Skillet

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 tablespoons coconut oil
- ◆ 3 cups frozen artichoke hearts, thawed, halved
- ◆ 2 tablespoons butter
- ◆ 1/4 cup chopped organic shallots
- ◆ 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 2 tablespoons parsley
- ◆ 1 tablespoon torn mint leaves
- ◆ 6 organic lemon wedges

Instructions:

1. Heat a skillet over medium heat. Add oil and swirl to coat pan.
2. Add artichokes and saute for 4 minutes. Remove from pan.
3. Add butter and shallots to pan and saute for 3 minutes. Stir in artichokes, peas and seasoning. Saute for 30 seconds then remove from heat.
4. Serve with lemon wedges.



Artichoke Spinach Dip

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- ◆ 1/2 cup sour cream
- ◆ 1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- ◆ 1 can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
- ◆ 5 ounces frozen spinach thawed and drained
- ◆ Baked pita chips or gluten free crackers

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Stir all ingredients together and place in a baking dish. Bake for 30 minutes.
3. Serve with baked pita chips or gluten free crackers.



Roasted Artichokes with Garlic and Butter

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 cans artichoke hearts
- ◆ 4 organic garlic cloves, chopped
- ◆ 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ◆ 2 tablespoons organic butter

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Drain and rinse artichokes.
2. Mix garlic and olive oil in a bowl, add drained artichokes.
3. Toss the mixture and pour into a baking pan.
4. Roast for 1 hour, tossing occasionally.
5. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and drizzle with lemon juice and melted butter.



Notes:

- ◆ Look for artichokes that are heavy for their size, and have firm and tightly packed green or green and purple leaves.
- ◆ Don't purchase artichokes that are soft, dry, split, pitted or are brown on the top.
- ◆ To store, don't rinse or cut, simply sprinkle stems with water and store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for 3-5 days.





Beets

The beet (*Beta vulgaris*), that deep red, tangy root vegetable that is prominent in Eastern European cuisine, has become more popular in the Western world lately, due to its potent nutritional benefits. Some researchers have even speculated that beets are largely responsible for the centenarian population of Russia throughout history.

A relative of swiss chard, spinach and quinoa, the beet has edible roots and leaves. The wild beet, from which modern beets descended, has been traced back to prehistoric uses in North Africa, as well as in Europe and

Asia. At first, ancient civilizations only ate the beet greens. It wasn't until the time of the Roman Empire that people began to enjoy the roots, as well.

When we think of beets, we generally think of the common variety, with green leaves and deep red, round roots. However, some varieties of beets have yellow or white roots, and some are multi-colored.

Nutritional Profile

These richly flavored root veggies provide:

- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Folate
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Phosphorus
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Vitamin B6
- ◆ Vitamin C



Health Benefits

Beets have the benefit of a unique blend of antioxidants and phytonutrients. One of these phytonutrient groups is known as betalains. While most deep red fruits and vegetables receive their pigments from anthocyanins, beets are colored by betalains, which are concentrated in the roots. These antioxidants have been found to have distinct anti-inflammatory properties. They also characterize beets as an excellent food to add to a detox regimen.

Research has found that the betalains found in beets have a lot of anti-carcinogenic potential. Lab studies have found positive results involving the interaction of betalains and colon, lung, breast, prostate, testicular, stomach and nerve tumor cells. Along with the other nutrients found in beets, betalains may also help to prevent heart disease, as well as birth defects.

The vitamin C content of beets also helps to fight chronic inflammation, boost the immune system and prevent an array of diseases.

The juice from fresh beets has been linked to lowering blood pressure. This is thought to be because of the natural nitrates found in beets. These nitrates become nitric oxide inside the body, which helps to relax blood vessels. This benefits your entire circulatory system, and may also help prevent hypertension, heart attacks and strokes. Natural nitrates can also help give you more energy for your daily exercise, as it is thought to decrease the “oxygen cost” of exercising.

The high fiber content of beets is excellent for a healthy digestive system, and also benefits healthy gut bacteria. This can prevent digestive disturbances such as constipation, and can also help regulate blood sugar



levels. Healthy gut bacteria are also crucial for preventing a host of detrimental health conditions.

Beet greens are also rich in nutrients, and not to be missed. They are filled with antioxidants, including the carotenoid antioxidants beta carotene and lutein. These have both been found to combat chronic inflammation, as well as to support optimal eye health. Several studies have found that beet greens may also strengthen bones, support the immune system, and help prevent degenerative cognitive conditions such as Alzheimer's disease. The greens from young beets also have higher iron content than spinach.

Simple Beet Juice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 small organic beet root
- ◆ 2 large organic carrots
- ◆ 2 organic celery stalks

Instructions:

Peel and wash vegetables. Slice beets, carrots and celery and process through your juicer. Serve over ice.



Orange Roasted Beet Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 6 medium organic beets with greens
- ◆ 2 large organic oranges, peeled and sliced
- ◆ 1 organic onion, sliced
- ◆ 1/3 cup red wine vinegar
- ◆ 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 2 organic garlic cloves, minced
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon grated orange peel



Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Remove greens from beets. Chop the green's leaves and set aside.
3. Wrap each beet in foil and place directly on oven rack. Roast for 1 hour and 30 minutes.
4. Remove beets from oven and cut each into wedges.
5. Cook beet greens in boiling water until tender then drain and cool. Add in with the beets.
6. Stir orange slices and onion in with the beets and greens.
7. Mix vinegar, olive oil, garlic and orange peel together with a whisk. Drizzle over the beet mixture.



Garlic and Beet Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 1 onion, chopped
- ◆ 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- ◆ 6 organic beets, peeled and chopped
- ◆ 2 cups organic beef broth
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ Organic heavy cream to taste



Instructions:

1. Warm olive oil in a stock pot on medium heat. Saute onion and garlic for 5 minutes. Stir in the beets and cook for 1 minute.
2. Stir in the beef broth, season with salt and pepper and bring to a boil. Cook for 30 minutes, remove from heat and cool slightly.
3. In batches, process the soup through a blender or food processor until smooth. Serve swirled with a bit of heavy cream.

Delicious Sauteed Beets

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 medium fresh organic raw beets
- ◆ 4 organic garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- ◆ 1 small organic onion, thinly sliced
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ Coconut oil for cooking

Instructions:

1. Clean the beets well and place in a pot of boiling water. Boil until the skin can easily be removed, then drain. Allow to cool, peel and cut into bite size chunks.
2. Heat onion and oil in a skillet and cook until onions are soft. Add garlic and cook for 2 minutes. Add beets, salt and pepper and saute for 8 more minutes. Serve while warm.



Savory Beet Ice Cream

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 organic beets
- ◆ 1 cup organic orange juice
- ◆ 12 organic free range egg yolks
- ◆ 3/4 cup coconut sugar
- ◆ 2 vanilla beans
- ◆ 2 1/2 cups organic cream
- ◆ 1 cup organic heavy cream
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cayenne

Instructions:

1. Roast the beets in a 350 degree F oven for 2 hours to soften them.
2. Peel and cut beets into small pieces.
3. Blend beets and orange juice together in a blender until smooth.
4. Scrape the seeds from the vanilla beans into the the cream and scald.
5. Whisk the egg yolks and sugar together and stir into the cream mixture. Cook on low heat for 10 minutes then remove from heat.
6. Stir in beet mixture and spices.
7. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and process according to manufacturer's instructions.
8. Transfer ice cream into storage container and freeze until set.

Notes:

- ◆ Look for medium sized beets with firm roots, smooth skin and deep color.
- ◆ If you do not plan on using beets right away, cut the stems off and place them in a plastic bag before refrigerating.
- ◆ Do not wash before storing.
- ◆ Wash beets under cool running water.
- ◆ If you are roasting beets, wait until after they are cooked to remove the skin.
- ◆ When cooking beets, be sure to cook them for the shortest amount of time necessary for your recipe, as longer cooking times can deplete the betalain content.



- Because they are quite fibrous, shaving the beet roots into small strips, or adding them to juices, are two great ways to enjoy them raw.

Brown Rice



Rice supplies approximately half of the daily calories of more than half of the world's population.

This nutrient-rich grain has been a staple in many civilizations' diets for over 9,000 years. Originally cultivated in China and throughout many ancient Asian civilizations, rice was primarily an Asian food source until it was introduced to the ancient Greeks via Arab travelers. Slowly the grains made their way around the world thanks to explorers, crusaders and missionaries.

Today, Asia remains the top producer of rice as the grain plays a major role in much of the cuisine. Thailand, Vietnam and China are the three largest exporters of rice globally.

Brown rice differs greatly from a nutritional standpoint from the white variety often consumed in restaurants. When the rice is harvested, the first step in processing is to remove the outermost layer of the kernel known as the hull. For brown rice, the processing stops at this point and much of the nutritional value remains intact.

White rice is the product of both bran and germ removal as well as the polishing process. The removal of the bran and germ results in a 67 percent reduction of vitamin B3, an 80 percent reduction of vitamin B1 and a 90 percent reduction of vitamin B6. One half the concentrations of both manganese and phosphorous and 60 percent of the concentration of iron is also lost. The final step of processing includes the polishing which removes all of the



essential fatty acid content, leaving a nutritionally inferior version of this nutrient-rich grain.

Nutritional Profile

Opting to select brown rice over white means you will be receiving a wide range of valuable nutrients including:

- ◆ B-complex vitamins
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Essential Fatty Acids
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Phosphorous
- ◆ Selenium

Health Benefits

Brown rice contains a host of B-vitamins, such as riboflavin, which helps produce energy for the brain. Niacin, thiamin, and inositol, along with other B-vitamins are also necessary for optimal brain function.

Similar to most grains, much of the attention is given to rice's high fiber content. Fiber plays an important role in a healthy digestive system as well as blood-sugar regulation and cardiovascular health. Yet researchers now note the undervalued antioxidant and phytonutrient concentration existent in brown rice.

Fruits and vegetables are often the most-recognized food groups when it comes to phytonutrient and antioxidant activity. This is primarily because these important compounds are found in their free form in fruits and vegetables, meaning they are immediately absorbed into the bloodstream when consumed. In grains, however, these same compounds are only available via a bound form which requires intestinal bacteria to release it before it can be fully absorbed.

In the past, researchers believed these bound phytonutrients weren't as potent as the free variety, yet this theory is changing as more studies are being



conducted that examine the effectiveness of bound phytonutrients.

One such phytonutrient present in brown rice are lignans. Plant lignans are converted to usable lignans during the digestive process. Enterolactone is a plant lignan that, upon conversion, helps protect against hormone-dependent cancers like breast cancer.

Along with fiber and several other phytonutrients, brown rice is an excellent source of some very important nutrients. Manganese plays a major role in producing energy from proteins and carbohydrates. It is also involved in the synthesis of fatty acids and the production of cholesterol. Adequate levels of cholesterol are necessary for optimal brain function as well as for the production of sex hormones. Manganese is also an important component of superoxide dismutase, an enzyme found in the mitochondria that protects this energy-producing cell component from free radical damage.

Selenium is also found in high concentrations in brown rice. Selenium is vital for thyroid hormone metabolism and brain health. This important nutrient also provides anti-cancer benefits by aiding in DNA repair of damaged cells as well being present in glutathione peroxidase, which aids in cancer prevention, cancer cell death and liver detoxification.

The magnesium provided by brown rice is a cofactor in over 300 enzymes including those that play a role in glucose and insulin regulation and secretion. Much of the magnesium in the human body is found in the bones. A fair amount remains inside the bones to provide structure and strength while the rest sits outside waiting for absorption by the bloodstream when needed by the body to aid in various functions.

Brown rice is by far the healthiest choice when it comes to rice selection. Its ease of digestibility and its nutrient-rich profile make it an excellent first food for babies.



Brown Rice Pudding

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups brown rice, cooked
- ◆ 1 1/2 cups organic milk
- ◆ 1/2 cup honey or maple syrup
- ◆ 2 cups raisins
- ◆ 1 tablespoon butter
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a saucepan. Stir to combine. Bring mixture to a boil.
2. Reduce the heat of the pot. Cover, and let cook on low for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Serve while warm garnished with a little cream or yogurt.



Beans and Rice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 8 cups water
- ◆ 1 pound bag dried beans, rinsed and drained
- ◆ 1 jalapeno, halved and seeded
- ◆ 2 onions, quartered
- ◆ 5 garlic cloves, smashed
- ◆ 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 2 cups cooked brown rice

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients except rice in a large pot. Stir to combine.
2. Cook beans, stirring every now and then for 1 1/2 hours or until beans are soft.
3. Dish rice onto plates and scoop beans on top to serve.



Brown Rice and Pomegranate Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup pomegranate seeds
- ◆ 2 cups baby kale, chopped
- ◆ 2 cups cooked brown rice
- ◆ 1/4 cup walnuts, toasted
- ◆ 1/4 cup feta cheese
- ◆ 1/2 cup minced onion
- ◆ 2 tbsps extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 2 tablespoons water
- ◆ 2 tablespoons honey
- ◆ 1/2 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon salt
- ◆ 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Instructions:

1. Toss the first 5 ingredients in a large bowl. Chill in the fridge.
2. Saute the onion in the olive oil over medium heat until soft.
3. Pulse remaining ingredients in a food processor with the onion.
4. Drizzle with dressing before serving.

Lentil and Rice Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 5 cups chicken broth
- ◆ 3 cups water
- ◆ 1 1/2 cups lentils
- ◆ 1 cup brown rice
- ◆ 3 cans diced tomatoes
- ◆ 3 carrots, chopped
- ◆ 1 onion, chopped
- ◆ 1 stalk celery, chopped
- ◆ 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- ◆ 1 bay leaf
- ◆ 1/2 cup fresh parsley, minced
- ◆ 2 tbsps apple cider vinegar

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients except parsley and vinegar in a large stock pot and bring to a boil.
2. Cover and simmer for 45 mins or until lentils and rice are done.
3. Stir in parsley and vinegar. Serve warm or store in freezer.





Chicken and Rice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 4 chicken thighs
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 1 large onion, sliced
- ◆ 2 celery stalks, chopped
- ◆ 2 carrots, chopped
- ◆ 1 3/4 cups water
- ◆ 1 bay leaf
- ◆ 1 cup brown rice

Instructions:

1. In a heavy pot, heat the oil over medium heat.
2. Season chicken with salt and pepper. Place in the pot, skin down. Cook until brown on both sides.

3. Pour all but 1 tablespoon of the chicken fat out of the pot.
4. Add the onion and celery to the pot, cover and cook for 20 minutes on low.
5. Add remaining ingredients to the pot. Cook covered until rice absorbs almost all liquid.
6. Let sit for 10 minutes before serving warm.

Notes:

- ◆ To save money, purchase rice in bulk.
- ◆ When purchased from a bulk-food bin, be sure to rinse off before preparing and avoid if the bin appears to be wet.
- ◆ Before purchasing bagged rice, be sure that the rice bag is sealed and smells fresh.
- ◆ Brown rice can sit in your pantry in a sealed container for about six months.
- ◆ Refrigerate or freeze uncooked rice in a sealed container for longer storage.





Brussels Sprouts

When it comes to Brussels sprouts (*Brassica oleracea gemmifera*), people generally either love them or hate them. While everyone has their own preferences, nutritionally, there is a whole lot to love.

It is thought that these cruciferous vegetables were first cultivated in Italy by either the ancient Romans or the ancient Etruscans. However, they were not named 'Brussels' sprouts until they were raised on a larger scale in Brussels, Belgium in the late 16th century. It was not until after World War I that they were widely known outside of this region. They were introduced to the United States in the 1800s, but were relatively slow to catch on as a popular food in the West.

Brussels sprouts grow in bundles of approximately thirty heads per stem, on plants which grow to about three feet in height. Their appearance is reminiscent of tiny cabbages, and while they are usually deep green, some have a slightly reddish tint. They have a fresh, distinctive flavor. Some popular varieties include Jade Cross, Confidant, Genius and Cobus.

Nutritional Profile

Loaded with nutrients, Brussels sprouts contain:

- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Choline
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Folate
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Omega-3 fatty acids
- ◆ Pantothenic acid
- ◆ Phosphorus
- ◆ Potassium



- ◆ Protein
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamins B1, B2, B3 and B6
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin K
- ◆ Zinc

Health Benefits

Brussels sprouts boast an impressive concentration of antioxidants, vitamins and minerals, which help to reduce the risk of a host of chronic diseases. These antioxidants include vitamin K and folate.

This combination makes Brussels sprouts an anti-inflammatory and heart healthy food, and a great addition to an anti-inflammatory diet.

Folate, along with benefiting the heart by reducing homocysteine levels, is essential for pregnant women, as it has been found to help prevent many birth defects.

The tryptophan and essential omega fatty acids found in the sprouts are crucial to healthy brain and heart functioning.

Like other cruciferous vegetables, Brussels sprouts contain compounds known as glucosinolates, which convert to isothiocyanates within the body. Research has found that these compounds have significant promise in both preventing and possibly combating cancer. Specifically, Brussels sprout intake has been linked to the prevention of breast, ovarian, prostate, bladder, colon and lung cancers.

Brussels sprouts have a higher concentration of glucosinolates than



many of their cruciferous relatives, including broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and even kale. Aside from their anticarcinogenic properties, glucosinolates can be highly beneficial in detoxing the body. The detox power of Brussels sprouts is augmented by their vitamin C content, as well as their high amount of magnesium.

Vitamin C also stimulates the immune system and supports oral and skin health. Magnesium is important for numerous bodily processes, including muscle function, nerve function, blood sugar and blood pressure regulation, and the transport of the minerals calcium and potassium to the cells.

Additionally, Brussels sprouts are high in fiber, which is essential for healthy digestion, cardiovascular protection and keeping blood sugar levels stable. Eating Brussels sprouts may also help improve thyroid function.



Oven Roasted Brussel Sprouts

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 1/2 pounds organic brussel sprouts, trimmed
- ◆ 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste.

Instructions:

1. Mix all ingredients in a bowl and toss to evenly coat.
2. Spread brussel sprouts on a baking sheet.
3. Roast for 30 minutes, stirring the sprouts every 5 to 10 minutes for an even roast.



Green Brussel Sprout Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ ½ cup spinach
- ◆ ½ cup shredded brussel sprouts
- ◆ 1 apple, chopped
- ◆ 1 frozen banana
- ◆ 2 cups almond milk

Instructions:

1. Blend the spinach and brussel sprouts together to shred them.
2. Add remaining ingredients and blend until smooth.



Brussel Sprout Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 4 cups kale, torn
- ◆ 2 cups brussel sprouts, shredded
- ◆ 1/3 cup toasted almond slivers
- ◆ ½ onion, sliced
- ◆ 1/4 cup parmesan cheese, grated
- ◆ 1/4 cup oil-base dressing

Instructions:

1. Toss kale, brussel sprouts, almonds, onion, and cheese together.
2. Drizzle with dressing, toss lightly to coat greens and serve.



Brussel Sprout Beef Stew

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 pound grass fed beef, cooked and cubed
- ◆ 6 cups vegetable broth
- ◆ 3 cups diced tomatoes
- ◆ 24 brussel sprouts, trimmed
- ◆ 1 onion, chopped
- ◆ 1 cup baby carrots
- ◆ 4 ounces mushrooms, sliced
- ◆ 6 cloves garlic, minced
- ◆ Extra virgin olive oil as needed
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon chilli powder
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon ginger
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon sea salt

Instructions:

1. Heat 3 tablespoons of olive oil in a large sauce pan. Add onions and garlic and saute until soft.
2. Pour in broth and tomatoes. Bring to a boil.

3. Add meat, mushrooms and vegetables. Stir in spices.
4. Cook on low heat, covered for 30 minutes.

Notes:

- ◆ Pick sprouts that feel hard and compacted when you squeeze them.
- ◆ The smaller sprouts are sweeter and the larger sprouts taste more like cabbage.
- ◆ Sprouts will keep for up to three weeks in the fridge.
- ◆ As with other cruciferous vegetables, it is best not to overcook Brussels sprouts, as this may deplete many of their active compounds.





Cashew

The cashew is a much-loved nut appreciated for its delicate flavor. Related to the pistachio, the cashew is actually a kidney-shaped seed that grows from the bottom of the fruit of the cashew tree, known as the cashew apple.

The cashew apple grows to about two to four inches in length. Practically unknown in North America, the cashew apple is a delicacy in areas of Brazil and the Caribbean where the cashew tree flourishes.

The cashew nut is double-shelled and sprouts from the bottom of the apple. When ripe, the cashew apples are allowed to fall from the tree for harvesting. The nuts are gathered and allowed to sun-dry for two days prior to being shelled.

Cashew nuts are always sold shelled. The double shell is difficult to crack and the interior is filled with a resin called cashew balm. The resin is highly caustic and used in the industrial sector to make products such as insecticides and varnishes. Once the shell is removed the nuts are cleaned and an outer brown coating is removed. Often cashews are oiled or dry-roasted but health food stores and specialty shops carry the raw variety.

Nutritional Profile

Though a tough shell to crack, the cashew offers all the health benefits associated with the many varieties of nuts including:

- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Monounsaturated fat
- ◆ Phosphorus
- ◆ Protein
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Zinc



Health Benefits

Vitamin E, found in cashews, is often referred to as the overlooked nutrient. It is actually a highly potent antioxidant that has a tremendous impact on brain health and cognitive function. In a three year study of over 3,000 people over the age of 65, it was found that those participants who had the highest vitamin E intake from food, demonstrated a 37 percent less decline on tests dealing with memory, abstract thinking and attention. In addition, they also had a 70 percent less chance of developing Alzheimer's.

Cashews are lower in fat than most other nut varieties, yet of the fat they have, it is 82 percent unsaturated fat. Sixty-six percent of the fat is of the heart-healthy monounsaturated variety, which has been found to lower blood triglyceride levels. Triglycerides build up from a diet high in processed carbohydrates and fat, and can lead to plaque buildup and eventually contribute to heart disease. When

incorporated into a healthy diet plan, monounsaturated fats can help reduce the amount of triglyceride buildup in the blood.

Cashews are also an excellent source of copper, a key mineral that plays several roles in the body. Copper is responsible for aiding in bone and connective tissue production and growth. It is also associated with many enzymatic processes throughout the body, one of which is producing the hair and skin pigment, melanin. A copper deficiency is associated with osteoporosis, iron deficiency anemia, joint pain and irregular heartbeat.

Along with their high concentration of heart-healthy fats, researchers believe the combination of monounsaturated fat, protein and high concentration of antioxidants aid in the cashew's cardioprotective qualities. One class of compounds called proanthocyanidins, are flavanols found in abundance in the cashew nut. These compounds have been found to provide antioxidant support and stop the growth of cancer



cells. Foods high in proanthocyanidins have been linked to a decreased risk for colon cancer.

Cashews are also a very good source of magnesium. Magnesium works in conjunction with calcium in a number of different ways in the body. Two-thirds of the body's magnesium is found in the bones. A good portion is housed in the bones themselves while the remaining is found on the bone surface, waiting to be utilized in other areas. Magnesium helps regulate the calcium-induced stimulation of nerve and muscle cells. Without this regulation, calcium would overstimulate the nerves and muscles causing cramping, pain and spasm.

Cashews are known for their delicate mild flavor. Raw cashews are a healthier option than roasted since some of the nutrients can be lost during the roasting process. Cashew butter is also an excellent swap for peanut butter but be sure to avoid heavily processed nuts or nut butters that incorporate added sugars, sweeteners or fillers.

Cashew Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/4 cup raw cashews
- ◆ 1/2 cup water
- ◆ 1 cup ice
- ◆ 1 banana
- ◆ 1 tablespoon maple syrup

Instructions:

1. Place cashews in a bowl and cover with the 1/2 cup water. Soak the nuts for at least 4 hours.
2. Transfer the soaked nuts to the blender and add remaining ingredients. Blend until smooth. Serve right away.





Cashew Butter

Ingredients:

- ◆ 5 cups cashews
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon sea salt

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a food processor.
2. Begin chopping the nuts. Stop every minute to scrape the sides of the processor.
3. Continue mixing until the butter comes to a proper consistency. Store in an airtight container in the fridge.

Cashew Salad Dressing

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups cashews
- ◆ 2 cloves garlic
- ◆ 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- ◆ Sea salt
- ◆ 2 stalks green onion
- ◆ 1/2 cup water

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a blender. Mix until smooth.
2. Store in an airtight container in the fridge. Shake well before drizzling on your favorite salad.



Cashew Energy Bars

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups cashews
- ◆ 2 cups medjool dates, pitted and chopped
- ◆ 1 cup almonds, soaked
- ◆ 2 tablespoons ground flax
- ◆ 2 tablespoons maca root powder
- ◆ 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- ◆ 1 teaspoon salt
- ◆ 2/3 cup coconut flakes
- ◆ 3 tablespoons water

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a high powered blender or food processor. Mix until well combined.
2. Line a baking dish with parchment paper. Spread the dough into the pan.
3. Allow the bars to harden for 1 hour in the fridge. Slice into bars and enjoy.

Raw Cashew Cookies

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups pitted dates
- ◆ 1 cup cashews
- ◆ 2 teaspoons almond butter
- ◆ 2 teaspoons chia seeds
- ◆ 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- ◆ 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- ◆ 2 teaspoons coconut sugar

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a food processor. Blend until a dough forms.
2. Line a baking sheet with wax paper. Form the dough into cookies and place on the sheet.
3. Harden in the fridge for at least 1 hour before serving.



Notes:

- ◆ To save money, purchase cashews in bulk.
- ◆ Store in a tightly sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 3 months.

Dandelion

Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) is often considered an annoying weed. Yet this nutrient-dense herb has been cultivated for centuries and used to treat a number of health conditions.



Originally cultivated in Central Asia, hundreds of species of dandelion now exist and can be found growing in the temperate regions of Europe, Asia and North America. Dandelion leaves were

first introduced to New England in the 1600s as a salad ingredient. The plant is incredibly hardy and grows vigorously in grassy areas.

Dandelion consists of a stout root, dark green leaves and a hollow stalk with a yellow flowering head. When full-grown, a typical dandelion measures 45cm in height. A milky liquid will spill from any cut or injured site of the plant.

The root of a dandelion is quite sturdy. Its outer dark brown skin protects an inner white pulp that closely resembles the flesh of a yam as well as a milky substance that is bitter tasting with an unpleasant odor. For medicinal use, roots should be harvested during summer months, while for drying they are best harvested during the fall.

The hollow stem or stalk contains a sweet nectar attractive to bees. From the stem sprout dark green leaves similar in appearance to those of chicory. The leaves are flat and shiny with a jagged appearance. Each leaf is deeply notched and dark green in



color. The grooves on the leaves act as a funnel to direct water down to the roots.

The head of the plant is topped with a bright yellow flower that opens each morning with the sun and closes during the evening hours. The feather-like flower will bloom from late spring through the fall months.

Nutritional Profile

The dandelion plant can be used in its entirety, each component supplying ample sources of:

- ◆ Beta Carotene
- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin D
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Vitamin K
- ◆ Zinc

Health Benefits

Dandelions have been utilized in a variety of ways throughout history. Ancient Chinese used dandelion to treat various stomach conditions and to help induce lactation in nursing women. Native Americans boiled the whole herb in water and used the tea to treat kidney disease, swelling, skin conditions as well as digestive issues. Early Europeans incorporated components of dandelion in several remedies used to treat fever, boils, diabetes and diarrhea.

Dandelion is one of the richest sources of vitamin A among all culinary herbs supplying over 330 percent of the daily recommended intake. Vitamin A is an antioxidant that plays an important role in skin and eye health as well maintaining mucus membranes throughout the body.

The dark leaves are an excellent source of numerous flavonoids including beta carotene, which is converted to vitamin A in the body, as well as lutein, cryptoxanthin and



zeaxanthin. These compounds work synergistically to protect and maintain vision and eyesight.

Dandelion can also protect against osteoporosis as it is an incredibly rich source of Vitamin K, supplying over 560 percent of the recommended daily intake. Vitamin K aids in bone growth by promoting bone cell production. Recently, vitamin K has been found to fend against brain cell damage and has been utilized in treating Alzheimer's disease.

Dandelion root often aids in digestion and can have a mild laxative effect. The dried or fresh root can also act as an appetite stimulant.

Historically, dandelion has been used as a diuretic, which helps remove excess fluid from the body, detoxifying both the liver and gallbladder. This effect can help lower blood pressure and aid in proper kidney function.

Dandelion can be harvested just about anywhere, but it is safer to procure it from a known source such as a health food store. The leaves can be incorporated with other greens into sandwiches, salads or cooked in a method similar to spinach or kale. Teas most often utilize dried leaves and portions of the flower while roots can be toasted and ground and incorporated into coffee. The flowers can be made into a wine or added to baked goods, which is popular in Arab cuisine.



Dandelion Juice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups dandelion greens
- ◆ 2 celery sticks
- ◆ 1 lemon, peeled
- ◆ 2 green apples
- ◆ 1 cucumber

Instructions:

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

Spicy Sauteed Dandelion

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 teaspoons sea salt, divided
- ◆ 1 pound dandelion greens
- ◆ 2 tbsps extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 1 tablespoon butter
- ◆ 1/2 onion, sliced thinly
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- ◆ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 1 tbsp parmesan cheese, grated

Instructions:

1. Soak the dandelion greens in a bowl of cold water and 1 teaspoon of salt for 10 minutes. Drain.
2. Bring a large pot of water and 2 teaspoons of salt to a boil. Cook greens for 4 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold water.
3. Heat olive oil and butter in a skillet. Cook onion and red pepper for 5 minutes.
4. Stir in garlic and saute for 30 seconds.
5. Add greens and cook for 4 minutes.
6. Remove from heat, season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with cheese and serve.



Dandelion Tea with Honey and Lemon

Ingredients:

- ◆ 6 teaspoons dried dandelion greens
- ◆ 6 cups boiling water
- ◆ 3 tablespoons raw honey
- ◆ 1/2 cup lemon juice

Instructions:

1. Pour boiling water over dried dandelion greens. Allow to steep for 4 minutes.
2. Pour the tea through a sieve to remove leaves.
3. Stir in honey and lemon juice and serve hot or chilled.



Dandelion Salad With Raspberries

Ingredients:

- ◆ 4 cups dandelion leaves
- ◆ 1 cup red onion, chopped
- ◆ 2 tomatoes, sliced
- ◆ 1 teaspoon dried basil
- ◆ 1 cup fresh raspberries
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ Raspberry Dressing to taste

Instructions:

1. Toss dandelion greens, onions, tomatoes, basil and raspberries together in a large bowl.
2. Season with salt and pepper, drizzle with dressing and serve.





Dandelion Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 cup water
- ◆ 1/2 cup orange juice
- ◆ 3 cups frozen strawberries
- ◆ 1 cup dandelion leaves
- ◆ 1/4 cup pecans, soaked
- ◆ 1 cup dates
- ◆ 1 cup oats
- ◆ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Instructions:

1. Place ingredients in the blender in the order listed.
2. Pulse until smooth. Pour into glasses and serve garnished with a dandelion flower.

Notes:

- ◆ Dandelion is generally considered safe to consume. However, those with an allergy to ragweed, chrysanthemums, marigold, chamomile, yarrow, daisies or iodine should exercise caution when handling or consuming the plant.
- ◆ If you are harvesting your own dandelions, be sure they are not in an area where pesticides have been sprayed.
- ◆ When purchasing from a store be sure that the plants are green, not brown or wilted.
- ◆ Although you can store greens in a plastic bag in the coldest part of your fridge for a couple of days, it is best to eat them right away.





Gooseberry

Although the name may be deceiving, the gooseberry has nothing to do with the bird but has often been utilized in dressings and sauces that dress poultry, fish and other meat dishes.

Gooseberries grow from shrubs that range from three to four feet in height. Over 200 different varieties of berries exist, yet all are classified as either “American” or “European” gooseberries. Regardless of classification, all gooseberries originated from the European variety and share many similarities.

Gooseberries are a far cry from more traditional berries such as raspberries or blueberries. Rather, gooseberries are known for their sour, tart and rather acidic taste though some varieties are sweeter than others.

European varieties tend to be a larger berry with more potent flavor. They originated in areas of North Africa but grew to popularity in the United Kingdom in the nineteenth century. The American gooseberry is indigenous to the northeastern region of the United States. The berries tend to be smaller with less flavor but more resistant to disease and pests than their European cousins.

Gooseberries can be either green, yellow, white or red in color. In general, red berries are more acidic while the lighter hued berries are a bit sweeter with less of a sour bite.

Nutritional Profile

Though raw gooseberries can certainly make lips pucker, their nutritional content is outstanding. Utilized in sauces, jams and dressings, these complements to any meal add a nutritional boost that includes:

- ◆ B-Complex Vitamins
- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Chromium



- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Phosphorus
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamin C

Health Benefits

The gooseberry is most known for its outstanding concentration of vitamin C. One cup will supply 55 percent of the recommended daily intake for women and 46 percent for men.

Similarly, gooseberries are also an excellent source of vitamin A, which is found in carotenoid form in the berries. Carotenoids are potent antioxidants that help combat numerous conditions such as heart disease, certain cancers and neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease. They are also responsible for aiding in cell DNA regeneration and red blood cell production as well as aid in eye health.

The combined vitamin A and C content of the gooseberry have helped it gain recognition as an important aspect of hair health. Gooseberries are often used in hair tonics to stimulate hair growth and pigmentation and the oil has been shown to aid in preventing hair loss and thinning.

Gooseberries are also a diabetic-friendly fruit as they are a very good source of chromium and fiber. Chromium plays an important role in insulin regulation as it stimulates the cells responsible for insulin production and secretion. The high fiber content of the tart berries also aids in diabetes management. Gooseberries contain both soluble and insoluble fiber. Soluble fiber consumption is associated with reduced blood fat and glucose levels. Insoluble fiber aids in regulating bowel movements and digestion which can help prevent colon cancer. Health experts recommend consuming both types of fiber daily.



One cup of gooseberries provides 6.4 grams of fiber or 26 percent of the daily recommended intake.

Gooseberries can aid in bone strength as well. They are a very good source of manganese which aids in calcium absorption. This important mineral is utilized in many other functions in the body including energy metabolism, blood sugar regulation and antioxidant function. Insufficient intake is often associated with osteoporosis, diabetes and arthritis.

Gooseberries are rarely consumed freshly picked like other sweeter varieties of berries. Rather, they are most often utilized in dressings, jams and sauces for savory meat dishes such as poultry, beef and fish. Nineteenth century English cooking incorporated gooseberries into a number of popular dishes as the berries reached their height during this time. However, a mold epidemic wiped out much of the gooseberry population during the early

part of the 20th century and the berry was all but forgotten. Thanks to celebrity and specialty chefs, gooseberries are enjoying a resurgence and are being incorporated more frequently once again.

Though tart, the berries also are used in numerous dessert dishes as they complement sweet flavors. The USDA notes that canned gooseberries are nutritionally very similar to fresh berries. Since the growing season for fresh gooseberries is very short, the canned version is often an adequate substitute.



Gooseberry Fruit Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 cups strawberries, sliced
- ◆ 1 1/2 cups gooseberries
- ◆ 1 cup grapes
- ◆ 2 tablespoons honey
- ◆ 2 tablespoons lime juice

Instructions:

1. Toss the berries and grapes together in a large bowl.
2. Whisk the honey and lime juice together. Drizzle over fruit to evenly coat.
3. Place fruit salad in the fridge for 1 hour before serving.

Blueberry Yogurt Gooseberry Shake

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 cup fresh gooseberries
- ◆ 1/2 cup frozen blueberries
- ◆ 1 frozen banana
- ◆ 1/2 cup yogurt
- ◆ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ◆ 1/2 cup organic milk

Instructions:

1. Mix all ingredients in blender. Mix until thick and creamy.
2. Pour into chilled glasses and enjoy.





Green Gooseberry Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup gooseberries
- ◆ 1 cup orange juice
- ◆ 1/2 cup spinach
- ◆ 1/2 cup ice cubes
- ◆ 1/2 cup plain yogurt
- ◆ 2 tablespoons honey
- ◆ 1 tablespoon chia seeds

Instructions:

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

Gooseberry Pops

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 pint gooseberries
- ◆ 2 tablespoons water
- ◆ 1/4 cup coconut sugar
- ◆ 2 tablespoons organic butter
- ◆ 2 eggs
- ◆ 1 egg yolk

Instructions:

1. Place gooseberries and water in a sauce pan. Cook over medium heat for 20 minutes.
2. Puree the cooked gooseberries in a blender.
3. Return mixture to the pan and stir in remaining ingredients.
4. Heat until the mixture reaches 170 degrees F. Cover and chill in the fridge.
5. Pour the chilled mixture into popsicle molds, cover and add sticks. Freeze until solid.



Gooseberry Sorbet

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 pints gooseberry juice
- ◆ 3 tablespoons vodka
- ◆ 3/4 cup coconut sugar

Instructions:

1. Mix all ingredients together with a whisk until sugar is dissolved.
2. Pour mixture into your ice cream maker and follow manufacturer's instructions.
3. Freeze to desired consistency.

Notes:

- ◆ Gooseberry bushes are easy to grow and will thrive in all types of soil.
- ◆ If you purchase gooseberries, look for berries that are rich in color.
- ◆ Although green berries are not as ripe, they are good for jams or in pies.
- ◆ Refrigerate berries for up to 2 weeks - they will continue to turn pink and get softer.



Macadamia Nuts

Macadamia nuts are native to Australia where they are also referred to as either jindilli or kindal nuts, but are also cultivated in abundance in Hawaii. The macadamia genus was discovered by John Macadam and is a member of the family Proteaceae. Most members of this family produce poisonous plants. There are eight species of the macadamia, yet only two produce edible nuts.

The macadamia tree was introduced to Hawaii in the 1880s. The trees were quite prolific and thrived in the Hawaiian climate. Soon the nuts became a popular food item in the state and today the nuts are closely identified with Hawaiian culture.



The edible nuts of the macadamia tree are enclosed in a hard shell. The shell is incredibly difficult to crack, which is the main reason why macadamia nuts are more costly than other nut varieties. Inside the shell lies the ivory-colored buttery-tasting nut. Thanks to the high fat content of the macadamia, the nut is a bit more creamy than other commercially available tree nuts.

Nutritional Profile

Though difficult to crack the tough shell, the effort is well worth it as each nut provides numerous nutritional benefits including:

- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Monounsaturated Fat
- ◆ Omega-3 fatty acids
- ◆ Omega-7 fatty oil
- ◆ Phosphorous
- ◆ Protein
- ◆ Selenium
- ◆ Vitamin E

Health Benefits

Macadamia nuts are high in oleic acid, the same fat that is found in olive oil. Researchers tell us that oleic acid keeps your brain healthy by keeping the blood pressure low and preventing strokes. In addition, the fatty acid palmitoleic acid is also in macadamia nuts and has been found to be an important component of myelin, the fatty layer that protects and insulates nerve cells in the brain. Because of this, these nuts may help contribute to healthy early brain development along with optimal brain function.

Like all nuts, macadamia nuts are naturally high in fat. Yet, this particular nut is an excellent source of monounsaturated fat. Fat content is 85 percent healthy fat, so macadamia nuts are the most-concentrated source of monounsaturated fat than any other naturally occurring food. Monounsaturated fats reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and other inflammatory diseases by suppressing dangerous LDL (bad)



cholesterol and increasing HDL (good) cholesterol in the body.

Macadamia nuts are also a complete protein source, meaning they supply all of the essential amino acids as well as a number of the non-essential amino acids. Protein plays numerous roles in the body including muscle repair, connective tissue health and maintenance of skin, hair and nails.

Vitamin E derivatives, tocopherols and tocotrienols, are concentrated in macadamia nuts as well. Along with selenium, these potent antioxidants help protect against free radicals that both damage healthy cells and oxidize blood fats. Over time, free radical damage can lead to increased risk for developing breast, cervical, gastrointestinal, lung, stomach and prostate cancers.

The combination of manganese, phosphorous and calcium found in macadamia nuts helps maintain proper bone mass, which is especially important for postmenopausal women, and promotes strong teeth and dental

health. Furthermore, the omega-3 fatty acid content also helps strengthen bones, offering even more protection from bone demineralization, and can help reduce the severity of diseases like arthritis.

Coconut Macadamia Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 1/2 cups coconut milk
- ◆ 1/4 avocado
- ◆ 1 frozen banana
- ◆ 10 macadamia nuts
- ◆ 1/2 cup coconut shreds
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ◆ 1 teaspoon honey

Ingredients:

Place all ingredients in a blender. Pulse until smooth. Pour into a glass and serve.



Macadamia Pumpkin Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- ◆ 3 ounces macadamia nuts, chopped
- ◆ 3 onions, chopped finely
- ◆ 2 tablespoons ginger, grated
- ◆ 1 pear, cored and chopped
- ◆ 2 1/2 cups pumpkin, pureed
- ◆ 1 tablespoon curry powder
- ◆ 3 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- ◆ Sour cream for garnish
- ◆ Whole macadamia nuts for garnish

Instructions:

1. Toast the chopped macadamia nuts in a skillet and set aside.
2. Heat the oil in a skillet and add onion and ginger. Saute for 3 minutes.
3. Add pear to the skillet and cook for 2 more minutes.
4. Transfer mixture to a food processor. Add remaining ingredients and blend until smooth.
5. Pour mix into a pot and heat for 5 minutes before serving. Top with sour cream and a few macadamia nuts.

Macadamia Fudge

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup raw macadamia nuts
- ◆ 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- ◆ 1 tablespoon raw honey
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon sea salt

Instructions:

1. Place the nuts in a blender and blend until buttery consistency.
2. Add remaining ingredients to the blender and mix until smooth.
3. Smooth the mixture onto the bottom of the wax paper lined baking dish. Place in the freezer and freeze for 30 minutes.
4. Remove from freezer and slice into bite size pieces.



Strawberry and Macadamia Nut Milkshake

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/3 cup macadamia nuts
- ◆ 1 cup heavy cream
- ◆ 1/2 cup frozen strawberries
- ◆ 1 frozen banana
- ◆ 1/2 avocado
- ◆ 1 tablespoon honey

Instructions:

1. Process the nuts in a blender until a smooth butter forms.
2. Add remaining ingredients and blend until desired consistency.
3. Serve in chilled glasses.



Macadamia Waldorf Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 green apple, sliced
- ◆ 1 red apple, sliced
- ◆ 1/2 cup raisins
- ◆ 1 cup grapes
- ◆ 1/2 cup walnuts
- ◆ 1/4 cup mayonnaise

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a bowl. Toss to combine.
2. Chill for 30 minutes then serve.

Notes:

- ◆ Macadamia nuts are often sold shelled due to the strength of their protective covering.
- ◆ They can be purchased either raw or roasted, though roasting can decrease their nutrient-content. Avoid the salted variety if you have high blood pressure.



- Macadamia nuts tend to go rancid quickly thanks to their high fat content. Unopened, the nuts can remain in a sealed container in the freezer for up to one year or in the refrigerator for six months. Once opened, the nuts should be refrigerated and should be consumed within two months. Once their light ivory color begins to darken they are no longer safe to consume.

Okra

Okra was once considered a prized vegetable among ancient Egyptians and its cultivation can be traced back 3,500 years. It is sometimes referred to as “lady finger” or “gumbo” and is a perennial flowering plant belonging to the Malvaceae family.



Okra is cultivated in various tropical regions throughout the world including West Africa and South Asia but most commonly in the southern United States and West Indies. The Okra plant stands between three and six feet tall and bears numerous dark green fibrous fruits known as pods.

The pods measure between five and 15 centimeters and are best-consumed just before they hit full maturity. The unique fruit releases a gum-like gelatinous fluid when cooked, making it a staple in many soup, stew or gumbo dishes around the world.

Nutritional Profile

The gel-like texture of cooked okra is not a favorite for everyone, yet those daring enough shouldn't hesitate to try it as the pods are rich in many important nutrients including:

- B-Complex Vitamins
- Calcium
- Fiber
- Folate
- Iron



- 💧 Magnesium
- 💧 Manganese
- 💧 Phosphorous
- 💧 Vitamin A
- 💧 Vitamin C
- 💧 Vitamin K

Health Benefits

A staple ingredient in many southern United States' cuisines, okra is unique in that it is one of the very few green plants to provide high concentrations of beta-carotene and the antioxidants lutein and xanthin. These potent antioxidants are more commonly found in orange or red fruits and vegetables, but okra provides ample amounts of these nutrients that play key roles in skin and eye health as well as protect the body against certain cancers such as oral cavity and lung.

These aren't the only antioxidants present in the gelatinous pods. Catechin, epicatechin, procyanidin B1 and B2, quercetin and rutin are all powerful

antioxidants found in okra. Together, they help protect the body's cells from the damage caused by free radicals and other environmental toxins.

One cup of okra represents a mere 33 calories, making it an excellent choice for dieters. Even though it is low in calories, the pods' nutrient capacity is impressive. One cup contains 2.5 grams of fiber, much of which is soluble.

Soluble fiber has been found to be more efficient at lowering blood cholesterol and blood pressure than the insoluble variety - the kind often found in fruits and vegetables. A diet high in fiber also helps protect against colon cancer and other stomach and digestive conditions.

People in Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Far East Asia report that they consume okra regularly because it helps improve brain function.



Okra is also a very good source of several key B vitamins including niacin, pyridoxine, thiamine and pantothenic acid. B vitamins play key roles in several metabolic processes in the body and are necessary for optimal health.

Okra should be included in the diet of pregnant women or those looking to become pregnant as it is an excellent source of folate. One cup yields 11 percent of the recommended daily intake of this vital nutrient, which plays a key role in cell production and maintenance. Folate is necessary to protect developing fetuses from birth defects such as spina bifida and women are often provided with a supplement to ensure ample amounts. Okra is also rich in vitamin C, which works synergistically with folate to offer further protection.

Like many green plants, okra pods are a good source of minerals like calcium, magnesium, manganese and

phosphorus. One of the two beneficial forms of Vitamin K is also found in ample amounts in okra. Vitamins K1 and K2 are natural forms of the vitamin and play an important role in blood clotting and bone health. One cup provides 50 percent of the recommended daily intake. Vitamin K3 is a synthetic form of the vitamin and less beneficial.

Once cooked, okra pods tend to become gel-like, making them a perfect ingredient for soups and stews. Quickly frying or sauteing them with acidic ingredients such as lemon juice or vinegar reduces this tendency. Pods can also be enjoyed raw or pickled and the leaves can be prepared as other greens or added to salads or sandwiches.



Green Okra Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 1/2 cups coconut milk
- ◆ 1 frozen banana
- ◆ 1 peach, sliced
- ◆ 1/2 cup frozen pineapple
- ◆ 4 raw okra
- ◆ 3 kale leaves
- ◆ 1 cup ice
- ◆ 1 tablespoon hemp seeds

Instructions:

Place all ingredients in your blender. Pulse until combined. Process on low until smooth. Serve right away.



Garlic Roasted Okra

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 lb okra, rinsed, trimmed and dried
- ◆ 1 clove garlic, cut in half
- ◆ 2 tablespoon grapeseed oil
- ◆ Sea salt to taste

Instructions:

1. Heat a pan over medium heat. Add grapeseed oil and heat for 30 seconds.
2. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute.
3. Stir okra in and cook for 8 minutes.
4. Add salt to taste and serve while warm.



Chicken Okra Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 4 tablespoons coconut oil, divided
- ◆ 2 pounds boneless skinless chicken thighs, quartered
- ◆ 1 habanero pepper, chopped
- ◆ 1 1/2 cups bell pepper, chopped
- ◆ 1 cup onion, finely chopped
- ◆ 2/3 cup celery, chopped
- ◆ 2 1/2 cups tomato, chopped
- ◆ 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
- ◆ 1 tablespoon fresh oregano, chopped
- ◆ 3/4 teaspoon salt
- ◆ 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ◆ 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- ◆ 1 can organic chicken broth
- ◆ 1 pound okra, cut into 1 inch pieces

Instructions:

1. Heat 2 tablespoons of coconut oil in a dutch oven over medium heat. Add half of the chicken. Cook until brown. Remove chicken and repeat with the other half. Remove from pan.
2. Add remaining oil to pan. Place peppers, onion, and celery in the pan. Cook until soft.
3. Add tomato and cook for 3 more minutes.
4. Add seasonings and broth. Bring to a boil and cook for 10 minutes.
5. Add okra, cover, and cook for 15 minutes before serving.



Sauteed Okra Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- ◆ 1/2 cup green onions, chopped
- ◆ 1 clove garlic, minced
- ◆ 1 cup okra, sliced
- ◆ 1 cup bell pepper, chopped
- ◆ 1 cup fresh corn kernels
- ◆ 1 can black beans, drained
- ◆ 1/3 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste.

Instructions:

1. Melt the oil in a skillet.
2. Add onions and garlic and saute for 1 minute over medium heat.
3. Add the okra. Cook for 3 more minutes.
4. Add peppers and cook for 5 minutes.
5. Add corn, cook for 5 minutes.
6. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cook for 2 minutes.

Tomato Okra Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- ◆ 1 tablespoon butter
- ◆ 4 green onions, sliced
- ◆ 1 clove garlic, minced
- ◆ 1 stalk celery, sliced
- ◆ 2 cups organic chicken broth
- ◆ 1 can diced tomatoes
- ◆ 4 cups okra, sliced
- ◆ 1 cup corn kernels
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cajun seasoning
- ◆ Salt and Pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Heat coconut oil in a saucepan.
2. Add the onion, garlic and celery. Cook until the celery is soft.
3. Add Remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil.
4. Cover and cook for 20 minutes or until okra is soft.



Notes:

- ◆ Select only smooth, unblemished pods.
- ◆ Green okra should be bright green with a bit of fuzz on the surface.
- ◆ Purple and red okra should also look fresh and brightly colored.
- ◆ Don't purchase pods with brown spots or dry ends.
- ◆ Although you can store okra in a loose plastic bag in the fridge for a few days, it is best to use fresh.

Olives and Olive Oil

The olive tree or *Olea europea* is native to the Mediterranean and bears tiny round fruits known as olives. Hundreds of varieties of olive trees exist with some capable of living several hundred years.

The fruits of the tree are known as drupes. Drupes are fruits with a central pit surrounded by flesh known as the pericarp. Other drupes include cherries, peaches, apricots, nectarines, plums, almonds and pistachios.

Olives come in hundreds of varieties. The most common commercially produced olives in the United States are Manzanillo, Sevillano, Mission, Ascolano and Barouni, all of which are grown in California. While many can be grouped into categories such as “black” or “green,” the Kalamata olive is unique in that only olives grown from the Kalamat tree in southern Greece can legally be called a “Kalamata.” This unique variety enjoys the labels of “Protected Geographical Status” and “Protected Designation of Origin.” Olives grown outside southern Greece can be marketed as “Kalamata-style,” but all true Kalamata olives are grown in their country of origin.



Olives have been cultivated for over 5,000 years in various regions of the Mediterranean. Their unique nutritional make up has provided these early civilizations with vibrant health that can still be seen today in areas where olives and their oil are consumed with frequency.

Nutritional Profile

Though small in size, olives and their oil provide a wealth of nutrients not often seen in such a high-fat food.

These include:

- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Monounsaturated fat
- ◆ Omega 3-Fatty acids
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Vitamin K
- ◆ Zinc



Health Benefits

Olives are considered a high-fat food as approximately 85 percent of their content is comprised of fat. However, the quality of their fat is what stands out and grants them superfood status.

Approximately 75 percent of the fat found in olives is monounsaturated with smaller concentrations of omega 3 fatty-acids present as well. Monounsaturated fat has been associated with countless benefits including cancer prevention, decreased risk of heart disease, increased brain health and obesity and diabetes prevention to name just a few of the chronic conditions this unique fat helps protect against.

While the benefits of monounsaturated fats are well-documented, perhaps one of the most unique components of olives and their oil is the concentrations of various phytonutrients not often seen in high-fat foods.



All olive varieties contain unique blends of numerous compounds including phenols, antioxidants, anthocyanins, flavones, terpenes, hydroxybenzoic acids, hydroxyphenylacetic acids and flavonols.

Oleocanthal is a phytonutrient found to closely mimic the anti-inflammatory effects of the medication Ibuprofen. When consumed in combination with two other compounds found in olives, squalene and lignans, oleocanthal has been linked to cancer prevention and brain health. Researchers have linked this unique phytonutrient with aiding in the removal of abnormal proteins in the brain. Beta-amyloid is the compound researchers believe is responsible for the development of Alzheimer's disease. Oleocanthal boosts production of specific enzymes capable of breaking down and removing beta-amyloid from brain tissue.

Oleuropein is an antioxidant found only in olives. This unique compound is capable of preventing the oxidation of cholesterol in the blood. When cholesterol is oxidized, particles can build

up on blood vessel walls and lead to atherosclerosis or hardening of the arteries over time.

Oleuropein also helps combat nitric oxide in the body that causes oxidative stress and primarily targets nerve cells. The compound has also been shown to decrease nitric oxide synthase, an enzyme associated with increased inflammation.

Olives and their oil are a major component of the Mediterranean diet, which many experts attribute to the outstanding health enjoyed by a majority of the population in these regions.

Worldwide, Greeks consume the most olive oil at 24 liters per person annually followed by Spaniards at 15 liters and Italians at 13 liters. The anti-atherogenic effects of olive oil help explain the low instances of cardiovascular disease among these people even though their diet is high in fat.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) is not a member of the International Olive Council, the committee



responsible for designating grades to the various olive oils. In America, the USDA grades olive oil based on flavor, odor, absence of defects and acidity. These ratings include:

U.S. Extra Virgin Olive Oil - has an excellent flavor and odor, and a free fatty-acid content of 0.8 percent.

U.S. Virgin Olive Oil - has a reasonably good flavor and odor, and a free fatty-acid content of two percent.

U.S. Virgin Olive Oil Not Fit For Human Consumption Without Further Processing refers to virgin oil of poor flavor and odor.

U.S. Olive Oil - is an oil mix of both virgin and refined oils.

U.S. Refined Olive Oil - is an oil made from refined oils with some restrictions on the processing.

Olives are far too bitter to be consumed directly from the tree. Rather, they are harvested and then undergo a curing process before they are fit to be consumed. Processing,

harvesting and color are unique to the variety of olive and color should not be considered an indicator of age or ripeness.

Marinated Olives

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup sliced pitted olives
- ◆ 1/2 cup feta cheese, diced
- ◆ 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ◆ Zest and juice from 1 lemon
- ◆ 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- ◆ 1 teaspoon fresh rosemary, chopped
- ◆ Pinch of crushed red pepper
- ◆ Freshly ground black pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a large bowl. Toss to combine.
2. Chill for 30 minutes before serving on gluten-free crackers or pita chips.



Olive Rice Pilaf

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- ◆ 6 garlic cloves, minced
- ◆ 10 cups water
- ◆ 3 cups brown rice
- ◆ 1 sprig thyme
- ◆ 1 bay leaf
- ◆ Salt to taste
- ◆ 1 1/2 cups pitted olives, halved
- ◆ 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- ◆ 1 tablespoon grated lemon zest
- ◆ Ground pepper to taste
- ◆ 4 ounces goat cheese, shredded

Instructions:

1. Heat the oil in a large pot. Add the onions and garlic and cook for 8 minutes.
2. Pour water and rice into the pot. Stir the thyme and bay leaf in.
3. Bring mixture to a boil. Remove from stove, cover and let the rice absorb the water for 30 minutes.
4. Stir in remaining ingredients and serve garnished with goat cheese.



Olive Chicken

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 can diced italian spiced tomatoes
- ◆ 1 1/2 cups frozen spinach, thawed
- ◆ 1/3 cup halved green olives
- ◆ 1 tablespoon capers, rinsed
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- ◆ 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ◆ 4 chicken breasts
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Put the tomatoes, spinach, capers, olives and red pepper in a bowl. Stir to combine.
2. Heat the oil in a skillet. Add the chicken and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook until done (no pink meat).
3. Serve chicken topped with the olive mixture.

Olive Almond Spread

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 cup pitted olives
- ◆ 1/4 cup almonds, toasted
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon dried tarragon
- ◆ 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- ◆ 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

Instructions:

1. Place olives, almonds and tarragon in a food processor. Blend until well combined.
2. Stir in lemon juice or olive oil. Let sit for 30 minutes before serving with gluten-free crackers or pita chips.



Olive and Green Bean Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 pounds green beans, trimmed
- ◆ 3 ears corn, kernels removed
- ◆ 1/2 red bell pepper, chopped
- ◆ 1 red onion, chopped
- ◆ 1 cup black olives, pitted and halved
- ◆ 1/3 cup fresh basil, chopped
- ◆ 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- ◆ 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- ◆ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ◆ Hot sauce to taste
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Bring beans and corn to a boil in a pot of water. Drain and immediately plunge into ice water. Transfer to a bowl.
2. Add remaining ingredients to the bowl with the beans and corn. Toss to combine. Place in the fridge to chill before serving.



Notes:

- ◆ Although olives are usually sold in jars and cans, you can also buy them in bulk.
- ◆ You can store olives in a sealed container in your refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

Peas

Peas are unique in that they are one of the only members of the legume family, plants that bear fruit formed in pods containing edible seeds, that are often sold and prepared as a vegetable.

Peas are thought to be one of the first food crops cultivated by humans as their origin dates back several thousand years. Native to Asia and the Middle Eastern regions, the earliest



humans mostly consumed peas in their dried form. It wasn't until the 16th century that peas became a more popular crop thanks to improved European farming and cultivation practices.

Today peas are grown throughout the world with Canada being the leading producer of these green legumes. The three pea varieties that are most commonly consumed are garden peas, snow peas and snap peas.

Garden peas are a vibrant green color with slightly rounded pods. The peas themselves are fleshy with a sweet and somewhat starchy taste. Snow peas have smaller pea seeds contained in a flatter pod and snap peas are a cross between the garden and snow varieties, mimicking characteristics of both. The pods and seeds of the snow and snap peas are generally eaten together as the pod is sweet and crisp. Though edible, green pea pods are usually discarded and only the pea seeds consumed.

Nutritional Profile

Whether you shell them or not, peas and their pods contain a wealth of nutrients including:

- ◆ Choline
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Omega 3 Fatty-acids
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Protein
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Vitamin K
- ◆ Zinc



Health Benefits

Peas are high in numerous phytonutrients and antioxidants. All varieties are a concentrated source of the polyphenol coumestrol. Coumestrol has been found to be especially beneficial in protecting against stomach cancer. A daily two-milligram serving of coumestrol has been shown to provide this anti-cancer benefit, yet one cup of peas contains 10 milligrams of this potent polyphenol.

The nutrients found in peas help us to make a number of brain chemicals, such as neurotransmitters that are involved in nerve communication along with hormones necessary for the regulation of brain activity.

A unique class of compounds known as saponins are found only in peas. These include pisum saponins I and II and pisomosides A and B. Combined with peas' concentration of phenolic acids and the flavonols catechin and epicatechin, peas of all varieties

have been proven to exhibit anti-inflammatory properties and greatly lower the risk of developing type II diabetes thanks to their unique blend of phytonutrients.

Though very low in fat, the small amount found in peas is of high quality and aids in the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins. The minute amount of fat found in peas is of the highly desirable omega 3-fatty acid type. This tiny amount allows for better absorption of the vitamin A and vitamin E that are found in these green legumes.

Peas are also a very good source of B-vitamins which play a key role in many of the metabolic functions of the body. They are an especially good source of choline, which is essential to cardiovascular health.

Ninety-five percent of peas sold today are either in cans or frozen. Frozen peas can maintain their nutritional quality for up to three months after harvesting if frozen right away. The



nutrient content of canned peas can be hindered during the canning process and often, frozen peas maintain more desirable color and consistency than the canned variety.

Green Pea Juice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 apples, cored
- ◆ 3 oranges, peeled
- ◆ 1/2 cup sugar snap peas
- ◆ 1/2 cup sweet peas
- ◆ 1/4 cup cilantro
- ◆ 1 avocado, peeled and pitted

Instructions:

1. Process all ingredients except the avocado through your juicer.
2. Pour juice into blender with avocado and puree.
3. Pour juice over ice and serve.

Pea Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup spinach
- ◆ 1/4 cup frozen peas
- ◆ 1 teaspoon honey
- ◆ 1 cup almond milk
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- ◆ 1 tablespoon flax seed

Instructions:

Blend all ingredients together. Pulse until smooth. Pour into glasses and serve right away.



Slow Cooker Pea Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 cups green split peas
- ◆ 8 cups vegetable broth
- ◆ 2 potatoes, chopped
- ◆ 2 stalks celery, chopped
- ◆ 2 carrots, sliced
- ◆ 1 onion, diced
- ◆ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ◆ 1 teaspoon dried mustard
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cumin
- ◆ 1 teaspoon sage
- ◆ 1 teaspoon thyme
- ◆ 3 bay leaves
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in your slow cooker. Stir to combine.
2. Cook on low for 4 hours. Remove bay leaves before serving.



Pea Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 can peas
- ◆ 1/4 cup onions, chopped
- ◆ 2 hardboiled eggs, crumbled
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 2 tablespoons real mayonnaise

Instructions:

1. Drain peas and place them in a bowl.
2. Add the onions, crumbled eggs and seasonings. Toss to combine.
3. Stir in the mayonnaise to evenly coat peas.
4. Chill in the fridge before serving.



Sauteed Snap Peas

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 1/2 pounds sugar snap peas
- ◆ 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Remove the stem and string from each snap pea.
2. Heat the oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add peas and salt and pepper. Cook, tossing occasionally for 5 minutes. Serve while warm.

Notes:

- ◆ Both canned and frozen peas may be packaged with salt, so labels should be checked before making a purchase. The best way to consume peas is fresh from the vine, however, it is critical to choose only organic snow and snap peas since the entire pod will be eaten.
- ◆ Purchase peas that are firm and bright in color.

- ◆ You can wash, shell (unless using edible shell peas) and freeze peas for winter use. Simply place peas in a boiling pot of water for about 90 seconds and then transfer them to a bowl of ice cold water for 90 seconds and drain. Once dry, place peas in a freezer bag. They will stay good for up to a year this way as long as the bag is airtight.

Astragalus

Astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*) is a root prized in Traditional Chinese Medicine since ancient times. It also goes by the names milk vetch root, ogi and Huang Qi, and is a member of the pea family. While it is still not widely known in the Western world, astragalus shows promise for many therapeutic applications.

The astragalus plant is native to China, Korea and Mongolia. The plants can reach up to three feet tall, and have hair-covered stems with leaflets emerging in pairs. The root is usually



considered mature and ready for use when the plant is four years old. The root is then dried and sliced, or made into teas, powders and tinctures.

Astragalus root has a sweet flavor, and can be incorporated into various recipes. One traditional preparation in Traditional Chinese Medicine is roasting these roots in honey.

Nutritional Profile

These potent roots contain:

- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Zinc



Health Benefits

Astragalus has adaptogenic properties, and is rich in antioxidants. These include polysaccharides that stimulate the immune system. For this reason, and due to its antibacterial and antiviral nature, astragalus is traditionally used to support optimal immune system health.

Because of its immune-boosting activity, this root is linked to aiding in the prevention of seasonal illnesses and allergies, as well as to warding off various infections.

A brain deprived of oxygen is what causes a stroke. In China, studies have shown that the inflammation that is caused by these conditions is eased by astragalus. Astragalus contains compounds that help to re-initiate blood supply to the brain. This makes it a valuable tool in stroke prevention and recovery.

Some research has found that astragalus shows promise in combating cancers and protecting against HIV. In Traditional Chinese Medicine,



it is often employed to help lower blood pressure, protect the liver from damage, aid in the treatment of heart and kidney conditions, alleviate fatigue, improve the symptoms of asthma and provide energy.

Traditional Chinese Medicine also attributes warming properties to astragalus, as well as the ability to build up protective qi. It is sometimes used in combination with other herbs to promote longevity. Astragalus has diuretic properties, and may help the body to release retained fluids.

Note: Consult a health professional you trust before beginning to use astragalus in your recipes. This root has been found to interact with certain medications. It is not suitable for pregnant or breastfeeding women, or individuals with bleeding disorders.

Astragalus Vanilla Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/4 cup raw macadamia nuts
- ◆ 1 cup organic coconut milk
- ◆ 8 organic pitted dates
- ◆ 1 teaspoon raw honey
- ◆ 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ◆ 1 teaspoon astragalus powder
- ◆ 1 cup crushed ice

Instructions:

1. Place the nuts, coconut milk and dates in your blender and process until smooth.
2. Add remaining ingredients and blend until desired thickness is reached.



Astragalus Vegetable Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- ◆ 1 organic onion, chopped
- ◆ 4 cloves organic garlic, chopped
- ◆ 1 teaspoon turmeric
- ◆ 8 organic mushrooms, trimmed and sliced
- ◆ 4 cups of organic chicken or vegetable broth
- ◆ 1 cup freshly chopped organic kale leaves
- ◆ 1 cup chopped organic butternut squash
- ◆ 8 slices organic astragalus root
- ◆ 2 tablespoons organic lemon juice

Optional: Add organic free range chicken, or grass fed beef for a hearty stew.

Instructions:

1. Melt oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook onions and garlic in oil until soft.

2. Add turmeric and mushrooms and cook for 3 more minutes.
3. Add remaining ingredients and simmer covered 15 minutes.
4. Remove from heat and let sit for 5 minutes before serving.

Astragalus Ginger tea

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 tablespoons dried organic astragalus
- ◆ 1 tablespoon dried ginger
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon dried lemon peel
- ◆ 1 tablespoon raw honey

Instructions:

1. Boil 1 quart of water. Simmer the astragalus and ginger in the water for 20 minutes.
2. Remove from heat, add lemon peel and honey. Cover and let sit for 20 more minutes.
3. Store in fridge, heat before drinking.



Astragalus Beef Slow Cooker Roast

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 1/2 pounds organic grass fed beef
- ◆ 1/2 cup dried nettle root
- ◆ 8 slices organic astragalus
- ◆ 2 cans organic diced tomatoes
- ◆ 1 large organic onion, chopped
- ◆ 4 organic cloves garlic, chopped
- ◆ 2 cups organic baby carrots
- ◆ 6 cups organic small red potatoes
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 1 teaspoon thyme
- ◆ 4 bay leaves

Instructions:

1. Place meat in the bottom of slow cooker.
2. Pile all remaining ingredients on top of meat.
3. Cook on low for 8 hours and serve.

Astragalus Broth and Rice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 4 cups water
- ◆ 8 organic astragalus slices
- ◆ 1 organic garlic clove, sliced
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 4 cups cooked rice

Instructions:

1. Place the water, astragalus, garlic and seasonings in a pot.
2. Bring to a boil and simmer for several hours until the garlic is soft.
3. Pour over rice and serve.

Notes:

- ◆ If you grow astragalus from seeds you will have to wait several years to use the root.
- ◆ You can also purchase the root online from a number of health and herb shops.
- ◆ Fresh astragalus should be deep yellow in color.





Goji Berries

Goji berries have become one of the most popular superfoods in the United States in recent years. However, their cultivation dates back many centuries to ancient China and Tibet, where they have been long celebrated for both culinary and medicinal purposes.

A commonly used ingredient in Traditional Chinese Medicine, goji berries also grow wild in Tibet, Mongolia and some parts of Europe. They grow on sturdy shrubs, which are quite resistant to heat and cold, with the berries available for harvest in mid-summer.

Goji berries are red, orange or pinkish in color, have a flavor that is both sweet and sour, and are usually found dried in the Western world. They can be added to recipes either in dried form, or rehydrated.

Nutritional Profile

Each tiny, tart goji berry contains:

- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Protein
- ◆ Selenium
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamin B2
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Zinc

Health Benefits

One primary reason behind goji berries' superfood status is their high concentration of antioxidants. These include beta-carotene, zeaxanthin, cryptoxanthin, lutein and lycopene, which have all been found to have potent anti-inflammatory properties.

Beta carotene, zeaxanthin and lutein are closely associated with protecting eye health, and lycopene is linked to



noteworthy anticarcinogenic potential. Additionally, goji berries are rich in vitamin C, which is important for optimal immune system function, and vitamin E, which is imperative to skin health.

Goji berries are a complete protein, as they contain all eight essential amino acids. They are also very beneficial to the cardiovascular system, as they contain fiber, which helps to keep arteries clear and aids in lowering heart disease risk, as well as potassium, which is needed to maintain stable blood pressure.

In Tibet, goji berries are traditionally used as a health tonic for a wide range of conditions. These berries, known as Tibetan Lycium, are a different variety from Chinese goji berries (*Lycium barbarum*). Tibetan goji berries have a long history of use as a youth elixir, and with promoting longevity.

Traditional Chinese Medicine associates goji berries with supporting the yin of the kidneys, which is closely tied to hormonal balance and healthy adrenal glands. In China, these berries are used to improve circulation, treat coughs and fevers, support vision and lower high blood pressure. Chinese goji berries are also sometimes known as wolfberries.

On top of that, goji berries have been found to help support the immune system and skin health, as well as to boost mental clarity and cognitive function.

Note: Goji berries may interact with some blood thinning medications. If you are taking these types of medications, check with your doctor before making goji berries part of your diet.



Green Goji Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 frozen banana
- ◆ 1 kiwi, peeled
- ◆ 3 tablespoons goji berries
- ◆ 1 tablespoon cacao powder
- ◆ 1 stalk celery, chopped
- ◆ 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- ◆ 1 cup baby spinach
- ◆ 1 cup coconut water
- ◆ Handful of Ice cubes

Instructions:

1. Place the coconut water, berries and cacao powder in a blender. Mix until well combined.
2. Add remaining ingredients and pulse until smooth.

Raw Goji and Ginger Balls

Ingredients:

- ◆ 8 dates
- ◆ 1 cup pecans
- ◆ 1/4 cup coconut flakes
- ◆ 1/4 cup goji berries
- ◆ 1 teaspoon ginger, minced
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ◆ A pinch of salt

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a food processor. Mix until well combined.
2. Use your hands or an ice cream scoop to form the dough into balls.
3. Chill for a few hours before serving.



Goji Ice Pops

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup goji berries
- ◆ 2 cups water
- ◆ 1 cup orange juice

Instructions:

1. Place the goji berries in a bowl and pour water on top. Place in the fridge to soak overnight.
2. Place the berries and orange juice in a blender and mix until smooth.
3. Pour mixture into popsicle molds, add a stick, cover and freeze.

Goji Berry Chicken Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 tablespoons echinacea root, diced
- ◆ 3/4 cup water, boiled
- ◆ 5 tablespoons dried goji berries
- ◆ 8 1/2 cups of chicken broth
- ◆ 3 organic free range chicken thighs

- ◆ 12 shiitake mushrooms
- ◆ 4 inches of ginger root, shredded
- ◆ 2 chillies, sliced
- ◆ 2 onions, sliced
- ◆ 8 cloves garlic, chopped

Instructions:

1. Place the echinacea root in the boiling water to steep while you cook the rest of the soup.
2. Place the goji berries in a bowl. Add just enough water to cover. Allow to soak while you continue to cook the soup.
3. Place the broth and chicken in a large pot. Add mushrooms, ginger, chillies and onions. Simmer on low for 2 hours.
4. Strain the echinacea pieces out of the water and pour into soup. Mix in goji berries and garlic. Best if served right away.



Notes:

- ◆ You can buy organic goji berries in bulk and store them in a dry and cool location away from heat.
- ◆ Dried berries will keep for up to a year without refrigeration, however, if you put them in the fridge they will last longer.
- ◆ You can also grow goji berries in your garden. They do great in containers and are hardy up to zone 3.



Seaweed

Seaweed is a member of the algae family which consists of numerous varieties. Edible seaweeds are generally grouped into one of three categories, brown, red or green with the brown varieties of kelp and wakame and the red nori being among the most commonly consumed.

While the Asian cultures are most-noted for their use of seaweed in much of their cuisine, the Japanese are particularly creative at incorporating over 20 different varieties into their dishes. Many coastal civilizations throughout history have incorporated various seaweeds into their diet as well.

Vikings and Celts were known to eat dried seaweed (dulse) before going into battle as it was thought to provide energy and sustenance. Seaweed was a common addition to Ancient Greek meals while Polynesian and Hawaiian cultures established kelp farms to harvest these precious sea vegetables. There is even mention of edible seaweed in early Norse epic tales.

Today edible seaweeds are a major part of Asian cuisine, but are becoming more common in American fare as well, especially as researchers note the unparalleled health of those cultures who consume sea vegetables regularly.



Nutritional Profile

Though not the most common food you'll find at the grocery store, edible seaweeds are becoming more commonplace on American tables thanks to the wealth of important nutrients including:

- ◆ Calcium
- ◆ Fiber
- ◆ Folate
- ◆ Iodine
- ◆ Iron
- ◆ Lignans
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin K



Health Benefits

One of seaweed's greatest nutritional contributions is its high iodine content. Iodine plays an essential role in proper thyroid function. The thyroid gland is located in the neck and is responsible for hormone production and regulation.

When the thyroid isn't functioning properly, a number of side effects can result. Often these are difficult to diagnose as they can be symptoms of many conditions. Fatigue, muscle weakness, depression, weight gain and high cholesterol account for some of the less serious side effects while goiter, heart palpitations and impaired memory and brain function are some of the more serious.

Manufacturers began adding iodine to salt in the 1920s to help control iodine deficiency. By 1993, the World Health Organization called for the standardized practice of iodizing salt which resulted in the near eradication of iodine deficiency.



Recently, however, thanks to iodine-blocking toxins in the environment and the use of poor quality un-iodized salt in processed foods, iodine deficiency has made a comeback over the past few years.

Edible seaweeds can provide between five and 50 times the recommended daily intake in one gram for this vital nutrient. The concentration of iodine depends upon the waters it was grown in, yet even at the lowest end of the spectrum, seaweed will still supply ample amounts.

Seaweed consumption on a regular basis has been found to support many aspects of female health. Seaweed contains compounds that regulate estrogen and estradiol levels, two hormones that are responsible for the development and function of sex organs. Seaweeds have also been found to ease symptoms of the menstrual cycle and can improve female fertility. The lignans found in seaweed act as phytoestrogens in the

body, combating estrogen-dependent cancer cells like breast cancer.

While seaweed is known for its high iodine content, it is also a very good source of Vitamin K, calcium and iron. Vitamin K plays an important role in blood clotting while calcium regulates muscle contractions and is a part of the compound hydroxyapatite, the mineralized tissue that comprises bones.

Adequate iron levels are necessary to produce the energy needed for simple daily activities. Iron nourishes the circulatory system and improves blood flow to the various tissues of the body, including the brain. Low iron levels, which is most common in women, can account for fatigue, reduced body temperature and paleness.

While it's true seaweed is a healthy contribution to a well-balanced diet, there are a few considerations that need to be noted. Seaweed contains high levels of iodine. While the nutrient



is necessary for thyroid function, too much iodine can lead to other side effects including thyroid cancer. Those with kidney disease should exercise caution as two grams of certain seaweeds can contain upwards of twice the potassium levels found in bananas. This high concentration of potassium wouldn't be dangerous for healthy individuals but can lead to heart palpitations in those with kidney disease.

Finally, seaweed has been shown to help rid the body of several environmental toxins including metals found in both cigarette smoke and pollution. However, the quality of seaweed is dependent on the water it is grown in. When purchasing seaweed or seaweed supplements, be sure to only buy from trusted brands.

Seaweed Pomegranate Jelly

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 1/2 cups water
- ◆ 2 cups pomegranate juice
- ◆ 1 cup orange juice
- ◆ 2 tablespoons agar (seaweed gelatin substitute)
- ◆ 1 cup coconut sugar
- ◆ 1 cup green grapes, quartered

Instructions:

1. Combine all ingredients except grapes in a saucepan over medium high heat.
2. Bring mixture to a boil, stirring. Cook for 5 minutes.
3. Divide the grapes between 8 serving dishes. Pour the seaweed mixture on top. Place in the fridge and cool until jello like consistency.



Seaweed Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 apple, peeled and chopped
- ◆ 1 orange, peeled and sliced
- ◆ 1 frozen banana
- ◆ 1 cup yogurt
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon kelp powder
- ◆ 1 teaspoon sunflower seed powder
- ◆ 1 teaspoon flax seed powder
- ◆ 2 tablespoons dried seaweed

Instructions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender. Mix until smooth.
2. Pour into a glass and enjoy.



Seaweed Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 ounce dried seaweed
- ◆ 1/4 pound beef top sirloin, minced
- ◆ 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- ◆ 1 1/2 tablespoons gluten free soy sauce
- ◆ 1 teaspoon salt
- ◆ 6 cups water
- ◆ 1 teaspoon minced garlic

Instructions:

1. Place the seaweed in a bowl and add just enough water to cover it. Allow to soak until soft. Drain then chop into smaller pieces.
2. In a saucepan over medium heat, put in sirloin, sesame oil and half of the soy sauce. Cook for 1 minute.
3. Add the seaweed, remaining soy sauce, and 2 cups of water. Bring to a boil.
4. Add remaining 4 cups of water and garlic. Cook for 20 minutes covered.



Seaweed Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- ◆ 1 teaspoon sugar
- ◆ Red pepper flakes to taste
- ◆ 1 teaspoon grated ginger
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon garlic, minced
- ◆ 2 scallions, sliced
- ◆ 1/4 cup carrot, shredded
- ◆ 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped
- ◆ 1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted

Instructions:

1. Place the seaweed in a bowl and add just enough warm water to cover it. Cover the bowl and let soak for 5 minutes. Drain and squeeze dry. Chop into smaller pieces.
2. Add remaining ingredients to the bowl. Toss to combine. Serve as is or chilled.

Seaweed and Vegetable Wraps

Ingredients:

- ◆ 4 seaweed sheets
- ◆ 4 tablespoons hummus
- ◆ 1 baked sweet potato, sliced
- ◆ 1 cucumber, sliced
- ◆ 1 avocado, sliced
- ◆ 1 cup quinoa, cooked

Instructions:

1. Place one sheet of seaweed on each of 4 plates.
2. Top each sheet with a tablespoon of hummus, a few slices of potato, a few slices of cucumber, and a few slices of avocado. Add a bit of quinoa and roll up the wraps.



Notes:

- ◆ There are a number of reputable online stores that sell organic seaweed.
- ◆ Many Asian markets and health food stores also sell seaweed.
- ◆ For longer storage, put the dried plant in a wide-mouth glass jar with a lid. it will store indefinitely this way.



Sunflower Seeds

Sunflowers are often thought to have originated in either Mexico or Peru, yet they are among the very first plants to be cultivated in the United States. The earliest Native American tribes utilized all parts of the flower including the seeds for food and the roots, stem and flower petals for several other purposes.

Sunflowers made their way to Spain after Spanish explorers first discovered the plant on their North American expeditions. From Spain, the unique flowers made their way around the globe and are today cultivated in multiple regions in various parts of the world. In fact, sunflower oil is the most popularly consumed oil. Russia, Peru, Spain, France and China are the major producers of sunflowers worldwide.

The seeds of the impressive sunflower range in colors from gray to green to black. They are teardrop shaped and once shelled, provide a nutty taste with a slightly firm texture.

Nutritional Profile

Unshelled sunflower seeds may prove to be a bit of a chore, but they are well worth the effort. The nutty seeds are an excellent source of several nutrients including:

- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Folate
- ◆ Magnesium



- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Phosphorus
- ◆ Selenium
- ◆ Vitamin B1
- ◆ Vitamin B3
- ◆ Vitamin B6
- ◆ Vitamin E

Health Benefits

Sunflower seeds are an excellent source of the body's primary fat-soluble antioxidant, vitamin E. Vitamin E travels throughout the body, seeking out and destroying the free radicals that damage important fat-containing structures including cell membranes, brain cells and cholesterol. Thanks to vitamin E's potent effect on free radical neutralization, sufficient intake is associated with easing the symptoms of inflammation-related conditions such as asthma, osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. Omega-3 and omega-6 fats found in these small seeds are necessary for brain function and health.

Vitamin E is also the main antioxidant in cholesterol and prevents cholesterol oxidation. Oxidized particles of cholesterol adhere to blood vessel walls and over time can lead to atherosclerosis, stroke or heart attack.

Sunflower seeds are also a very good source of phytosterols. These compounds are found in plants but are structurally very similar to human cholesterol molecules. In the human body, they have a profound cholesterol-lowering impact. The effect is so powerful in fact, that often phytosterols are extracted from various sources and added to "cholesterol-lowering" food products. Sunflower seeds have the highest concentration of phytosterols among all commonly consumed nuts and seeds.

Magnesium and selenium are also found in high concentrations in sunflower seeds. Magnesium plays a major role in bone health as two-thirds of the body's magnesium is stored in



the bone supplying structural support. The rest is located outside the bone, waiting to be utilized in other roles.

This important mineral works in conjunction with calcium, helping regulate calcium's effect on nerve stimulation. Too little magnesium can lead to muscle cramping, soreness and fatigue and can affect the function of the heart muscle as well.

Selenium is a potent cancer fighter. This trace mineral has been shown to induce DNA repair of damaged cells and inhibit cancer cell reproduction. Selenium can also induce cancer cell apoptosis or programmed death and is incorporated into the active site of several proteins. It plays a major role in the protein glutathione peroxidase, which is known to prevent cancer cells from forming as well as aiding in liver detoxification.

Sunflower seeds are an excellent contribution to a healthy diet. As with most nuts and seeds, a little goes a long way. A quarter cup will provide plenty of the beneficial nutrients

contained in these tiny teardrop-shaped seeds. Sprinkle them into salads, granolas, cereals or in sandwiches or soups. Their mild nutty taste compliments most any meal or snack.

Avocado Sunflower Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/2 cup olive oil
- ◆ 1 1/2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- ◆ 1 clove garlic, minced
- ◆ 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- ◆ 2 heads romaine lettuce, chopped
- ◆ 1/3 cup sunflower seeds
- ◆ 2 avocados, peeled and sliced

Instructions:

1. Whisk the first 4 ingredients together to make a salad dressing.
2. Toss the lettuce and seeds together. Add enough dressing to coat.
3. Top salad with the avocado slices and serve.



Banana Sunflower Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 frozen banana
- ◆ 2 tablespoons sunflower seeds
- ◆ 1 tablespoon ground flax seed
- ◆ 8 almonds
- ◆ 1 cup almond milk
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ◆ 1 teaspoon honey
- ◆ 2 teaspoons almond butter
- ◆ 1 teaspoon nutmeg

Instructions:

Place all ingredients in a high powered blender. Mix until smooth. Pour into a glass and serve garnished with a few sunflower seeds.



Whole Roasted Sunflower Seeds

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup raw sunflower seeds
- ◆ 2 tablespoons sea salt
- ◆ 1 quart water

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Place seeds, salt and water in a large pot. Bring to a boil.
3. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes.
4. Drain the water from the seeds and spread them on a baking sheet.
5. Toast seeds in the oven for 10-15 minutes.



Sunflower Broccoli Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 pound broccoli florets
- ◆ 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
- ◆ 1/2 an onion, sliced
- ◆ 1 stalk celery, chopped
- ◆ 1/4 cup sunflower kernels
- ◆ Pinch red pepper flakes
- ◆ 1 teaspoon lemon pepper seasoning
- ◆ 1 teaspoon salt
- ◆ 2 cups vegetable broth
- ◆ 1/2 cup greek yogurt

Instructions:

1. Heat the oil in a large stock pot. Add the onion, celery, and broccoli and cook for 5 minutes while stirring.
2. Add broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cook for 5 more minutes.
3. Add sunflower seeds, red pepper, lemon pepper and salt. Stir.
4. Puree the soup in batches until creamy. Stir in yogurt and serve.



Chocolate Sunflower Raw Cookies

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/3 cup coconut oil, melted
- ◆ 1/2 cup raw cocoa powder
- ◆ 1/3 cup honey
- ◆ 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- ◆ 1 cup sunflower seeds
- ◆ 1 cup flaked oats
- ◆ 1/2 cup dried coconut
- ◆ 1/2 cup raisins

Instructions:

1. Whisk together coconut oil, cocoa powder and honey.
2. Stir in the seeds, oats, coconut and raisins.
3. Form the dough into balls and place on a cookie sheet.
4. Chill cookies until firm.



Notes:

- ◆ You can purchase sunflower seeds in the shell or out of the shell and they usually come in prepackaged containers or you can also purchase them in bulk.
- ◆ Unshelled seeds should be firm and whole.
- ◆ Do not purchase seeds that have a yellowish color.
- ◆ If you purchase from a bulk bin, be sure the bin has an airtight lid and the seeds smell fresh.
- ◆ Store seeds in an airtight container in the fridge or freezer.

Tomato

Though commonly associated with Italian cuisine, the tomato is believed to have originated from the western side of South America with the very first tomatoes more closely resembling what we now refer to as the “cherry tomato.”

The fruit, which is technically also a berry since it is grown from a single ovary, spread throughout Europe

during the 1500s thanks to Spanish explorers. Tomatoes were not warmly received at first as they are a member of the nightshade family and many individuals considered the fruit unfit for consumption. Over time however, tomatoes were embraced and are today a staple in a wide variety of ethnic cuisines.

Over a thousand varieties of these popular red fruits are cultivated ranging in size from the littlest grape tomatoes to the larger beefsteak varieties. And while most tomatoes are indeed red in color, they can range from yellow to orange to green.

Approximately 130 million tons of tomatoes are consumed annually. China is the largest producer followed by the United States, where a majority of cultivation takes place in either Florida or California.



Nutritional Analysis

While most noted for their lycopene content, tomatoes are an excellent source of a wide variety of nutrients including:

- ◆ B Complex Vitamins
- ◆ Biotin
- ◆ Chromium
- ◆ Coline
- ◆ Copper
- ◆ Magnesium
- ◆ Manganese
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Vitamin A
- ◆ Vitamin C
- ◆ Vitamin E
- ◆ Vitamin K
- ◆ Zinc

Health Benefits

Tomatoes are probably most known for their lycopene, a carotenoid pigment that provides the fruit with its rich red color.

Carotenoids are phytonutrients with incredible antioxidant capabilities. It is commonly believed that the deeper the shade of red, the more antioxidant potential in the fruit.

However, recent research suggests that lighter colored tomatoes, those that fall into the orange or tangerine-colored variety, may possess a more absorbable form of lycopene than their red counterparts. While more research is needed in this area, food scientists find it encouraging that light-colored tomatoes may be just as rich in lycopene as their darker cousins.

Lycopene, along with other phytonutrients abundant in tomatoes, have been found to play a key role in heart health, which is why this fruit is so often incorporated into “heart healthy” eating plans. One particular reason is that these phytonutrients work synergistically to both lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels in the blood and prevent blood clots from forming.



Researchers are now discovering that this same lycopene along with beta-carotene, can protect us from free radical damage to cells that can cause dementia, especially dementia related to Alzheimer's.

The glucoside compound esculetin, along with the flavonoid chalconaringenin, have been of particular interest to researchers as these two compounds are believed to play a direct role in lowering blood fat concentrations. Tomatoes contain high concentrations of both of these compounds among many others.

Tomatoes are also considered an important fruit in a cancer prevention diet. The antioxidant capacity coupled with the strong anti-inflammatory effects of tomatoes aid in preventing both the mutation of healthy cells and the proliferation of cancer cells. The phytonutrient alpha-tomatine, plays a key role in prostate cancer prevention as it has been proven to alter the metabolic activity in developing prostate cells as well as trigger cancer cell death.

Tomatoes play an often overlooked role in bone health. When researchers removed lycopene-containing foods from postmenopausal women for a period of four weeks, they noted increased oxidative stress in the bone as well as degenerative alterations in bone tissue. Researchers strongly believe these changes were due to a lack of lycopene in the diet.

These delicious red fruits can be enjoyed in a variety of ways. Cooking tomatoes often makes the lycopene more bioavailable, which is why tomato sauces and ketchup can be excellent sources of this antioxidant.

All tomato varieties be they red, yellow, orange or green contain a wealth of antioxidants, yet four varieties stand out among all others. These include: New Girl, Jet Star, Fantastic and First Lady. So if you find yourself faced with a variety to choose from, these four will get you the most antioxidant bang for your buck.



Tomato Juice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 pounds ripe tomatoes, roughly chopped
- ◆ 1 1/4 cups celery with leaves, chopped
- ◆ 1/3 cup onion, chopped
- ◆ 2 tablespoons coconut sugar
- ◆ 1 teaspoon salt
- ◆ 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ◆ 6 drops tabasco

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in a large stainless steel pot. Bring to a simmer. Cook uncovered for 25 minutes.
2. Force the mixture through a sieve.
3. Place in the fridge to chill. Pour over ice to serve.

Corn and Tomato Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 cups frozen corn, thawed
- ◆ 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ◆ 1 1/2 teaspoons sea salt
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- ◆ 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 3 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
- ◆ 1 red onion, diced
- ◆ 1/4 cup basil, sliced thinly

Instructions:

1. Whisk the lemon, salt, pepper and olive oil together until well combined.
2. Add remaining ingredients. Toss to evenly coat. Chill and serve.



Tomato Soup

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 1 cup chopped onion
- ◆ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ◆ 1/2 cup carrot, chopped
- ◆ 1/4 cup celery, chopped
- ◆ 2 cans crushed tomatoes
- ◆ 3 1/2 cups vegetable broth
- ◆ 1 tablespoon worcestershire sauce
- ◆ 1 teaspoon salt
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- ◆ 4 drops hot sauce

Instructions:

1. Heat a large pot over medium heat. Add the oil, onion and garlic. Cook until soft.
2. Add carrots and celery and cook for 8 minutes.
3. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cook covered on low for 20 minutes.

Mint and Basil Baked Tomatoes

Ingredients:

- ◆ 4 ripe tomatoes, halved and seeded
- ◆ 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil, divided
- ◆ 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ◆ 6 fresh mint leaves, shredded
- ◆ 1/2 cup shredded basil leaves
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Cover the bottom of a muffin tin with olive oil.
3. Combine the basil and mint with a few drops of olive oil.
4. Place a tomato half in each muffin cup. Drizzle the herb mixture inside the tomatoes, dividing evenly amongst the tomatoes.
5. Bake for 25 minutes.



Green Tomato Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 cup kale
- ◆ 1/4 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- ◆ 1/2 cup celery, chopped
- ◆ 1 cup grape tomatoes
- ◆ 1 tablespoon hemp seeds
- ◆ 1 tablespoon cayenne pepper
- ◆ 1 cup water

Instructions:

Blend all ingredients until smooth.
Pour into glasses and drink right away.

Notes:

- ◆ When purchasing canned tomatoes, be sure to avoid any cans containing BPA as the acidic nature of the fruit can easily corrode the can and allow for chemicals to leach into the food.

- ◆ Even organic tomatoes may be packaged in BPA-containing cans, so be sure to read labels properly.
- ◆ Strange shapes and some cracking is normal in tomatoes but leaking wounds are not.
- ◆ Healthy tomatoes will be heavy for their size.
- ◆ Tomatoes should also have an earthy smell.
- ◆ Keep tomatoes at room temperature until they are ripe.
- ◆ Once ripe, store in an unsealed container in the fridge.





Fennel

Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) is a sweet, crisp and refreshing member of the Umbelliferae family, which also includes anise, carrots, dill and cumin. It was enjoyed for its culinary and medicinal qualities by the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, as wild fennel flourished in Eastern Asia and the Mediterranean before spreading to Europe.

This aromatic plant received its nickname, “marathon,” from the ancient Greek Battle of Marathon, as it was thought to have grown on the field where the battle was fought. In the Middle Ages, fennel was used in concoctions for warding off witchcraft, and was also hung over doorways to banish evil spirits. It was also often used in traditional remedies as a carminative, to relieve gas and as an antidote for other digestive distress.

Today, fennel is cultivated all over the world, and is especially prevalent in Italian cooking. Every part of the plant, from the seed to the stalk to the yellow flower, is edible. The plant is made up of a pale green or white bulb with stalks arising from it, topped with leaves and the seed-producing flowers, depending on the season. It has an aromatic quality, with a taste that is akin to anise seed and licorice. Fennel seeds are often used for seasoning foods, and the crunchy bulb is often chopped up in salads.

Nutritional Profile

This prized superfood contains:

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



- 💧 Potassium
- 💧 Protein
- 💧 Selenium
- 💧 Vitamin A
- 💧 Vitamins B2, B3 and B6
- 💧 Vitamin C
- 💧 Zinc

Health Benefits

Fennel is rich in antioxidants, including the flavonoids quercetin and rutin. These help to reduce inflammation in the body and protect the cells from oxidative stress damage, thereby lowering the risk of chronic disease. This veggie also contains a volatile oil called anethole, which has been linked to antibacterial and anti-fungal actions. Anethole is anti-inflammatory in nature, and has been linked to the possible prevention of cancer and certain types of liver damage.

Known as an overall brain booster, fennel seeds have been found to help improve cognitive performance while the bulbs contain a high degree of potassium which improves electrical conductivity throughout the body.

Fennel juice acts as a vasodilator, increasing oxygen to the brain. It has also been found to be helpful in easing depression and dementia.

The bulbs of fennel are a good source of fiber which, along with keeping the digestive system running smoothly and helping to flush toxins from the colon, also helps to regulate blood sugar and may reduce LDL 'bad' cholesterol. The high fiber content is one reason why fennel has been employed as a weight loss aid. Fennel tea, often brewed from the seeds, can relieve digestive discomfort and gas. Traditionally, the seeds have also been eaten to keep hunger at bay.

The high potassium in fennel also helps to keep blood pressure levels stable. It also functions to regulate the heartbeat, is important for proper muscle function, maintains normal fluid balance in the body, and regulates sodium levels in the blood. In this way, potassium may help to reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke. The folate found in fennel is a mineral that works to reduce heart disease risk by



preventing homocysteine damage to blood vessel walls, and is also important in the prevention of birth defects in unborn babies.

Other traditional uses of fennel include encouraging menstruation and easing chronic coughs. In ancient times, it was also sometimes employed as an aphrodisiac.



Fennel Orange Smoothie

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 bulb of fennel with greens
- ◆ 2 oranges peeled and sliced
- ◆ 1 handful baby spinach
- ◆ 1 handful ice cubes
- ◆ 1/2 cup water (more as needed)

Instructions:

Put all ingredients in a blender. Mix until well combined. Add more water as needed to reach desired thickness. Serve right away.

Green Fennel Juice

Ingredients:

- ◆ 6 green apples
- ◆ 2 cucumbers
- ◆ 5 stalks celery
- ◆ 2 handfuls of fennel greens
- ◆ 1/2 lime
- ◆ 1 inch piece of ginger

Instructions:

1. Slice ingredients as needed to fit into your juicer.
2. Process through juicer and serve over ice.



Roasted Fennel

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 fennel bulbs, sliced
- ◆ Extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ Balsamic Vinegar

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Lay the slices of fennel out on an aluminum foil lined baking sheet.
3. Sprinkle the slices of fennel with olive oil and balsamic vinegar to evenly coat the pieces.
4. Roast for 30 or 40 minutes until the fennel is caramelized.

Orange Fennel Salad

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 fennel bulb, sliced thinly
- ◆ 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ◆ 2 oranges, peeled and sliced
- ◆ 1/4 cup olives
- ◆ 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ Salt and red pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Toss the fennel slices with the lemon juice to coat.
2. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Toss to mix evenly.
3. Chill before serving.



Simple Fennel

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1/4 cup butter
- ◆ 5 fennel bulbs, trimmed and quartered
- ◆ 32 ounces vegetable or chicken stock
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Melt the butter in a stock pot over medium heat.
2. Add fennel slices to the butter and cook until browned.
3. Pour the broth over the fennel and cook for 15 minutes.
4. Season as desired and serve while warm.

Notes:

- ◆ Some regular grocery stores carry fennel bulbs or you can easily grow this versatile veggie in your garden in containers or in the ground.
- ◆ Fennel leaves can be used as you need them from the garden but

you have to wait until late summer and early fall for the seeds.

- ◆ High-quality fennel bulbs will be firm with no sign of splitting or bruising and should be whitish colored or pale green.
- ◆ Fresh fennel will have a fragrant aroma and will smell slightly like anise.
- ◆ Fresh fennel can be kept in the crisper for about four days.
- ◆ Store seeds in an airtight container in a cool location for about six months - they will last longer if you put them in the fridge.

