

BUY FRESH - BUY LOCAL

Food of the Week: Raspberries

Raspberries have grown wild since prehistoric times, originating in eastern Asia. Other species of raspberries are native to the Americas and nearby islands. Raspberries began to grow across many lands, thanks to land animals, birds, and hunters and gatherers who would drop seeds or smaller raspberries along their way.

During the 19th century, raspberry cultivation became increasingly popular in North American and Europe. Boysenberries and loganberries became cultivars as a result of crossbreeding. Currently, the countries that lead in the production of raspberries include: the US, Russia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Germany, and Chile.

It is pretty hard to find someone who does not enjoy the sweet, sometimes tart, flavor of a raspberry. The soft, delicate mouth feel of a juicy raspberry is hard to resist. The most popular raspberry is deep red in color, but there are also black, purple, orange, yellow, and white raspberries.

Availability/Selection/Storage

Raspberries are available from midsummer through early fall. Because raspberries are very susceptible to spoilage, it is best to eat raspberries within two days after purchasing. Select berries that are plump, firm, and rich in color. They should not be moldy, soft, or mushy. Raspberries packaged in a container should be packed loosely, and the container should be free of mold and moisture.

Before placing raspberries in the refrigerator, remove ones that look spoiled. Then replace the unwashed berries back in the original container or on a plate wrapped with plastic wrap. Since raspberries are one of the most perishable fruits, do not leave at room temperature for long periods of time. Raspberries can also be frozen by gently washing and placing in a single layer on a cookie sheet in the freezer. Once frozen, remove berries and place in a plastic bag and put back in the freezer. Raspberries will keep for one year when frozen. Add a splash of lemon juice to preserve the rich color.

Nutrition

Raspberries contain phytonutrients, vitamins, and minerals that act as antioxidants, protecting tissues from free radical damage that can lead to cancer and heart disease. For example, raspberries are an excellent source of vitamin C and manganese, which help fight free radicals. Raspberries are also high in dietary fiber. One half cup of raspberries contains four grams of fiber, or 16% of our Daily Value for fiber.

Nutrient analysis per ½ cup raspberries: calories: 30, carbohydrate: 7g, fiber: 4g, protein: <1g, fat: <1g, saturated fat: 0g, cholesterol: 0mg, vitamin C: 15mg, potassium: 93mg

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Recipe of the Week
Fresh Fruit with Chocolate Mint Sauce

Makes 8 servings

Ingredients:

1 ½ c skim milk
2 T low fat margarine
½ c sugar
½ c unsweetened cocoa powder
1 c fresh mint leaves, finely chopped
1 t vanilla extract
4 c fresh raspberries

Preparation: Scald milk in small saucepan. In separate saucepan, melt margarine. Add cocoa and stir well. Stir milk into cocoa mixture. Stirring with wire whisk, add sugar and mint, stirring until sauce thickens (about 5 minutes). Add vanilla and remove from heat. Cool. Serve over 1/2 cup fresh fruit such as raspberries.

Nutrient Analysis per serving: calories: 122, protein: 3g, carbohydrate: 25g, fat: 3g, saturated fat: <1g, cholesterol: 1mg, fiber: 6g, vitamin C: 17mg

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