

blackberries



THIS ANCIENT BERRY LEADS THE WAY IN NUTRITION AND TASTE
By Kim Colwyn

The Bible mentions blackberries; ancient Greeks prescribed them for gout; during the Civil War they were used to treat dysentery. Today, blackberries are mostly enjoyed because they are sweet and juicy. They also pack quite a health punch.

A cluster of tiny fruits called drupules, each containing its own seed, the blackberry comes in more than 2,000 varieties, although most are sold under its generic name. When choosing blackberries, make sure the berries are unblemished, look moist, shiny and full—not dried or mushy—and are packaged in a dry, unstained container (turn the package over to check the bottom for “weeping” juice stains, which indicate the fruit is past its prime or has been mishandled). Blackberries are one of the most perishable fruits, generally lasting only two to three days after you get them home. Help keep these fruits fresh by storing them immediately in the refrigerator,

unwashed, in a shallow pan lined with paper towels.

Blackberries are wonderful in their natural state; simply rinse them gently with cold water and drain (never soak them). They are best enjoyed at room temperature—when they have the fullest flavor—drizzled with a little honey or sprinkled with sugar. You can add them to yogurt or ice cream, or use them in pies and cobblers.

And if you thought an apple a day would keep the doctor away, consider this: Blackberries are nutritional powerhouses. They are high in vitamin C and folate and packed with antioxidants and phytochemicals that have been shown to help protect against chronic disease, inhibit tumor development in lab animals and maybe even slow the aging process. Eating three handfuls a day maximizes the benefits from this superfruit.

With all those benefits crammed into one small package, these little dynamos just can't be beat. □

Nutrition Facts

Serving: 1 cup
Calories: 62
Fat: less than 1g
Carbohydrates: 14g
Cholesterol: 0mg
Fiber: 8g
Protein: 2g
Bonus: Great source of vitamin C (50% of RDA), good source of potassium and manganese
Availability: May through September, peaking in June and July
Frozen assets: Frozen blackberries are harvested at their peak and packaged immediately, so you can get quality without sacrificing taste or nutrition.

fruit-and-flower salad

Serves 6-8

Edible flowers are an irresistible way to turn fresh salads into party food. Purchase prepicked, certified edible flowers at well-stocked supermarkets. Serve this salad with cheese crackers and chilled lemon tea.

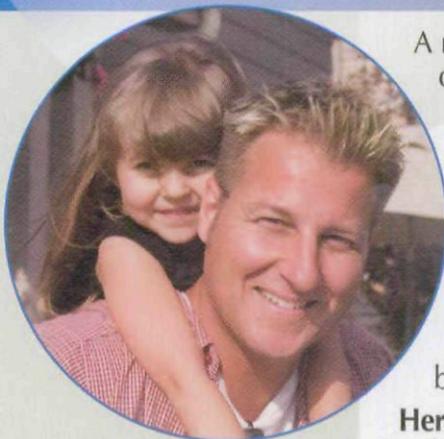
- 2 cups cubed cantaloupe
 - 1 cup cubed mango
 - 1 banana, peeled and thinly sliced
 - ½ pint fresh raspberries
 - ½ pint fresh blackberries
 - 1 cup fresh pineapple cubes
 - 1 cup seedless green grapes
 - 4 oz. part-skim Swiss-style cheese, diced
 - 2 Tbs. rose water, or more to taste, optional
 - 1 cup plain nonfat yogurt
 - ¼ cup mango chutney, or to taste
 - ½ cup sliced almonds, toasted
- About 1 cup edible flowers, such as pansies, nasturtiums, violets, rose petals

1. Toss together fruits and cheese in bowl. Sprinkle with rose water, if desired.
2. Combine yogurt and chutney in small bowl.
3. To serve, spoon 1 cup fruit mixture onto each plate. Top with a heaping tablespoon of yogurt mixture, and sprinkle with almonds and flowers.

PER SERVING: 250 CAL; 12G PROT; 7G TOTAL FAT (2G SAT. FAT); 37G CARB.; 10MG CHOL; 135MG SOD.; 6G FIBER; 28G SUGARS

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NO TIME TO EAT HEALTHY?



A recent study found that nearly one-third of the average guy's diet is pure junk—foods offering no nutrition, but plenty of calories. A demanding schedule and a long list of commitments can make drive-through dinners look like the easy answer. But they're not the best one—especially if that belt is going up another notch!

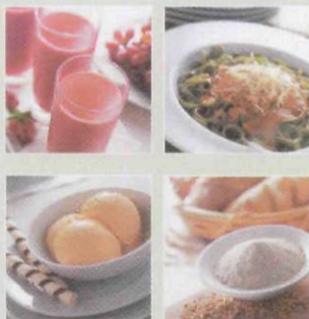
Here's a better idea: Enjoy refreshing fruit smoothies, flavorful pasta sauces and rich, creamy all-natural frozen desserts that are guilt-free and good for you. You won't believe how easy it is to make great-tasting snacks and meals in minutes with a Vita-Mix whole food machine.

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