Red or Black, Raspberries Ripe With Phytonutrients

The Folklore. Raspberries grow in the wild, with thorny protection and a short growing season. Yet their exquisite flavor has made them a much-sought-after fruit since ancient times. Raspberries were praised in poetry by the Crusaders and used medicinally in medieval Europe.

The Facts. Botanists believe raspberries originated in Asia, where hundreds of varieties exist. North America boasts only three major varieties.

Raspberries are nutritious little nuggets, fairly bursting with vitamin C and manganese. And their fiber content is impressive. But much of their nutritional merit is due to potent phytonutrients. Raspberries are one of a few foods that contain substantial ellagic acid, a phytonutrient studied for its potential cancer-fighting abilities. Much of it is in the seeds. Black raspberries are similar nutritionally to red raspberries, but contain more ellagic acid and more anthocyanins, owing to their darker color.

The Findings. A growing body of animal research indicates that ellagic acid can slow or prevent the formation and proliferation of cancer cells and tumors. In animals, it has inhibited cancers of the colon, liver, lung and skin. Not only does ellagic acid possess antioxidant activity, but raspberries boast a bevy of other phytonutrients like quercetin and especially anthocyanins like cyanidin.

The Finer Points. Raspberries are highly perishable; it isn't long before they get bruised and fuzzy with mold. Choose firm, dry-looking berries and eat them within a day or two at most. Before refrigerating, check the container, removing mashed or spoiled berries that would cause the others to spoil faster. Don't wash raspberries until you're ready to eat them, and then use a gentle spray or swish them in water gently but thoroughly, as raspberry crevices are ideal hiding places for microbes. In recent years, imported raspberries were implicated in several outbreaks of cyclosporiasis, a diarrheal illness caused by a parasite.

To freeze, gently wash and blot raspberries dry with a paper towel. Arrange in a single layer in a pan and freeze. Once frozen, transfer berries to freezer bags and they'll keep up to one year.

—Kitty Broihier, M.S., R.D.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notable Nutrients</th>
<th>1/4 cup fresh red raspberries</th>
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<tr>
<td>Calories: 32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiber: 4 grams</td>
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<td>Vitamin C: 16 milligrams</td>
<td>(26% DV)</td>
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<td>Manganese: 0.4 milligram</td>
<td>(20% DV)</td>
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<td>Plus the phytonutrients ellagic acid, quercetin and cyanidin.</td>
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<td>DV = Daily Value</td>
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EN's Summer Raspberry Salad with Raspberry Dressing

2 cups washed baby spinach leaves
1 cup washed, chopped Romaine lettuce
1 cup washed sugar-snap peas
1/2 pint container fresh red raspberries, picked over, washed and drained
1 ounce goat cheese, crumbled
1 scallion, washed, trimmed, thinly sliced

1. Toss the spinach and Romaine together. Divide greens onto two plates.
2. Top each salad with half of each of the rest of the ingredients.
3. Drizzle each salad with 2 tablespoons of Raspberry Dressing (below). Refrigerate leftover dressing for another use.

Makes two salads.

Raspberry Dressing:
3/4 cup fresh raspberries, picked over, washed and drained (about 1/2 pint)
1 tablespoon vinegar (preferably raspberry, Balsamic or red wine vinegar)
1/4 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/4 teaspoon salt (optional)
2 tablespoons olive oil

1. Press berries through fine strainer with the back of a wooden spoon; set aside.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together vinegar, mustard and salt. Gradually add oil, stirring constantly, until thickened.
3. Slowly stir in raspberry mixture; mix well.

Makes 1/2 cup dressing.

Nutrition Information Per Serving
(1 salad with 2 tablespoons dressing):
265 calories, 7 grams protein, 20 grams carbohydrate, 19 grams fat, 10 grams fiber, 285 milligrams sodium, 50 milligrams vitamin C, 1.3 milligrams manganese.

Dressing recipe adapted with permission from the Washington Red Raspberry Commission.