

Basic Roots Community Foods

<http://www.basicrootscommunityfoods.kaysue.org>

DECEMBER 16, 2009

100% Local

BASIC ROOTS

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& our community of farmers who help to make it all work!

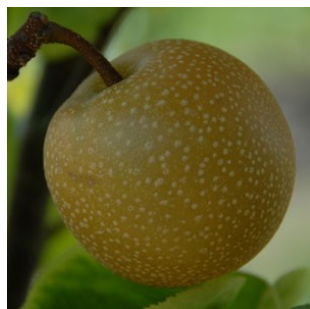
IN THIS ISSUE:

- Asian Pears
- Asian Pear and Gouda Grilled Cheese Recipe
- The Skinny on Dark Chocolate
- Baked Sweet Potato Fries
- Duck Eggs
- Black Radishes
- Reconsider Root Vegetables
- Go Nuts for Nuts...

Asian Pears

Though Asian pears have been grown in United states for decades, to many, it's a new fruit.

Still, those with roots in the Far East are the most avid consumers of the crisp and aromatic fruit. Bred at least as far back as the 12th century B.C., Asian pears can be divided into two main groups: Japanese or Korean pears, whose shape resembles that of an apple; and Chinese, or Yali, pears, which have more of what Westerners consider a



traditional pear shape.

Sometimes called apple pears, Asian pears are not a cross between the two fruits, but a dense, succulent pear with a firm bite as opposed to the melting flesh of a European pear such as the Bartlett. Because of their numerous grit cells, which are made of granular silica, the coarse-textured fruits also are known as sand pears.

Unlike European pears, which ripen after harvest, Asian pears mature while still on the tree and can hang onto their branches even when overripe.

Asian Pear and Gouda Grilled Cheese Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, softened
- 2 (1/2-inch-thick, 7-1/2- by 3-1/2-inch-long) slices light rye bread
- 2 ounces thinly sliced young Gouda cheese (aged 1 to 6 months)
- 5 (1/8-inch-thick) slices Asian pear

Directions:

1. Heat a large frying pan over medium-low heat. Meanwhile, spread 1/2 of the butter on 1 side of each slice of bread.
2. Once the pan is warm, add 1 slice of bread buttered side down, then top with 1/2 of the cheese, all of the pear slices, and finally the remaining cheese. Close with the second slice of bread, buttered side up.
3. Cook until bread is toasted and cheese is melted, about 6 minutes per side.



WOW! Basic Roots is 4 years old this month! We give thanks to our community of growers and our subscribers who supports us. "Local farmers growing healthy foods....growing healthy people...growing local farmers." Our website is coming along too....www.basicrootscommunityfoods.kaysue.org

DUCK EGGS

You can freely substitute duck eggs for chicken eggs in cakes, pies, cookies, custards, etc. They are excellent in everything we have baked with them.

Because the whites of duck eggs have more protein than those of chicken eggs, they will whip up higher when beaten and create more loft in cakes. This means lighter, higher cakes. But since the yolks are so rich, your cakes may also be richer with duck eggs. Most people who have baked with them prefer duck eggs for those reasons. Some pastry chefs argue against baking with duck eggs lest they unbalance finely calibrated recipes, but I have found few recipes to be as finely calibrated as their authors often believe. I would assume that in any given recipe you can substitute an equivalent weight of duck eggs, and if you don't like the results, you can always make it with chicken eggs next time.

*Martha Stewart's
Advice on
"Cracking Tough Nuts"*

Whole nuts can be difficult to crack. To soften them up, cover with cold water in a large saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove from heat, cover, and let sit for 15 minutes. Dry thoroughly before cracking.

The Skinny on Dark Chocolate

by: Gloria Tsang, RD

Quite a few studies have found that chocolate contains flavonoids, a type of polyphenol antioxidant. Research conducted at the University of Scranton has demonstrated that the quality and quantity of antioxidants in chocolate is relatively high when compared to other high-antioxidant foods. Cocoa powder ranks the highest of the chocolate products, followed by dark chocolate and milk chocolate. According to the Chocolate Manufacturers Association, dark chocolate



contains about eight times the polyphenol antioxidants found in strawberries.

In November 2001, researchers from Pennsylvania State University found that people with a diet high in flavonoid-rich cocoa powder and dark chocolate have slightly higher concentrations of HDL cholesterol (the good cholesterol) when compared with the control group. This study, however, only investigated the health effects of cocoa in 23 people.

In a more recent study published in Hypertension journal in August 2005, researchers from Italy found that dark chocolate may lower blood pressure in people with hypertension. The research also found that levels of LDL cholesterol in these individuals dropped by 10 percent. It is important to note that this study also used a very small test group with only 20 subjects.

Baked Sweet Potato Fries

Easy Low-Fat Baked Sweet Potato Fries. If you're craving a high-fat and salty treat like fast food French fries, try this recipe for healthier baked sweet potato fries. Baked sweet potato fries are much lower in fat than a deep-fried version and are very quick to prepare. Kids will love these baked fries as well.

Ingredients:

- 3 large sweet potatoes, cut into wedges

- 1 tbsp olive oil
 - 1 tsp cumin
 - dash cayenne pepper
 - 1/4 tsp paprika
 - 1/2 tsp salt or seasoned salt
3. Place potatoes on a single layer on a baking sheet and bake for about 30 minutes, or until done.

Directions:

1. Pre-heat the oven to 400 degrees.
2. In a large bowl, toss together all ingredients until potatoes are evenly coated with oil and spices.



Black Radishes

A root vegetable with a sooty dull black exterior that covers a white, crisp inner flesh providing a peppery hot flavor. The intensity of this radish can vary from mildly hot to very pungent and somewhat bitter, depending on the age and size, tasting somewhat like horseradish. The Black radish can be either round or elongated in shape. As a round radish, it can grow from two to six inches in diameter. Although considered a Winter radish, which tend to have a milder, more delicate peppery flavor, the Black

radish can be very strong and pungent. This radish may be cooked like a turnip, creamed and served as a side dish, sautéed and braised to be served as a vegetable dish, or added to stir fry dishes. The skin is generally removed prior to preparing. It can also be served raw to be used as hors d'oeuvres, as a complement to salads and sandwiches or diced for use in soups and stews. This radish is also referred to as a Spanish Black radish.



Reconsider Root Vegetables

By Karen Collins, M.S., R.D., C.D.N., American Institute for Cancer Research

These humble veggies deserve more respect. Root vegetables, like carrots, parsnips, turnips, beets and radishes, don't seem to get the respect they deserve. Not only do these humble veggies supply more nutrients than people realize, they are also a blessing in tough economic times as they cost less than many other vegetables and can be stored for long periods of time.

Nutritious: People often picture dark green leafy vegetables when they think of folate, but beets and parsnips are equally good sources of this B vitamin—an important player in helping to protect DNA and lower cancer risk. In addition, radishes, rutabagas and turnips are classified as cruciferous vegetables along with broccoli, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts. This family of vegetables provides an important compound that seems to offer cancer protection by stimulating enzymes that deactivate carcinogens. Jicamas, rutabagas and celeriac (“celery root”) are all good sources of vitamin C; parsnips and rutabagas are high in potassium, which helps control blood pressure; and all these root vegetables supply dietary fiber.

Economical: Especially during winter months, when many favorite summertime vegetables come at a premium price, root vegetables are generally low-cost options. By adding them to your

usual range of choices, you can get greater variety while keeping costs down. Keep them in a perforated plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to three weeks. (Radishes and turnips, lasting only a week, and carrots, usually lasting two weeks, are the exceptions.) Just make sure you start off with fresh, firm roots with no signs of withering.

Fast or slow: Slowly baking root vegetables brings out a wonderful sweet flavor. Although a bit time consuming, requiring 40 to 60 minutes in the oven, there is very little hands-on prep time, except for chopping. They also make nice additions to stews and can be added for the last 20 minutes or so of cooking time. For faster preparation, chop root vegetables in small chunks and steam or microwave for 10 to 12 minutes. These can be served on their own or added to a ready-made soup for extra nutrients. Many of these root vegetables can also be sliced or grated and added to a salad. Or simply slice them to serve with a low fat dip.

Delicious: Traditionally, many cooks serve root vegetables doused in butter or swimming in rich cream sauces. Fortunately, these vegetables also taste great when they are prepared more healthfully, for example stir-fried or baked. Simply toss with a touch of olive oil and add a fresh or dried herb of your choice (dill and thyme are favorites). A splash of orange or lemon juice or flavored vinegar adds a refreshing note when vegetable are steamed or microwaved. Another option is to play up their sweetness by roasting with some dried fruit or spooning reduced-sugar orange marmalade or other jam onto the cooked vegetables.

Go Nuts for Nuts... in moderation of course!

by: Gloria Tsang, RD

Most people think that nuts are high in calories and fat... and they are right! Nuts are quite calorically dense. 15 cashews, for instance, deliver ~180 kcal! On top of that, it is very tough not to overeat these tasty snacks. If you can restrain yourself from overeating them, nuts can definitely be a part of a healthy diet.

Researchers found that people who eat nuts regularly have lower risks of heart disease. In 1996, the Iowa Women's Healthy Study found that women who ate nuts >4 times a week were 40% less likely to die of heart disease. Two years later, another study conducted by the Harvard School of Public Health found a similar result in another group of women subjects. Furthermore, potential heart health benefits of nuts were also found among men. In 2002, the Physician's Health Study

found that men who consumed nuts 2 or more times per week had reduced risks of sudden cardiac death.

The best approach is to reap the health benefits of eating nuts but not add excessive calories to your daily intake. So instead of simply adding nuts to your diet, eat them in replacement of foods that are high in saturated fats and limit your intake of these tasty treats to 1 to 2 oz per day. For instance, instead of adding chocolate chips when making cookies, sprinkle on some nuts. Or instead of making a deli meat sandwich, try a nut butter toast.