




JULY: MELONS

Melons mean summer! And, they mean nutrition: they are packed with vitamins A and C, as well as potassium, fiber, and water! Seek these yummy summer treats, **cantaloupes**, **honeydews**, and **watermelons**, at your farmer’s market, grocery, or home garden!

CHECK OUT THE VARIETIES OF HEALTHY MELONS DESCRIBED BELOW!

	<p>The cantaloupe is the most popular melon in the United States, and is grown and eaten all over the world! Melons came originally from the Orient, via Armenia, to Europe and then to America. Some research has shown that the beta-carotene in many cantaloupes beats the amount found in bright orange oranges! It is usually eaten as a fresh fruit, or in a salad, but also is served as a dessert with custard or ice cream.</p> <p>Be sure to choose a cantaloupe with large webbing or netting on the skin, that is yellow/orange in color, and slightly soft on the stem end (firm elsewhere). It should also have a good cantaloupe smell on the stem end, and the scar at the stem end should be a smooth and well-rounded cavity. Often, melons will have a decidedly bleached side that rested on the soil - this does not affect the quality of the melon.</p>
	<p>The watermelon is a summertime favorite! Rich in vitamins A and C, fiber, and water, watermelon was widespread throughout Africa, and, by the 1600s, made its way to Great Britain, Spain, China and beyond. Watermelon arrived in North America courtesy of European colonists. It grows on a vine-like, flowering plant throughout the world. Good-quality watermelon will be firm, evenly-shaped, heavy for its size and have a deep-pitched tone when slapped with an open palm. Yellow skin on one side of the melon is where the fruit contacted the ground and does not affect quality.</p>
	<p>Honeydew melon is a variety of Muskmelon that originated in France and is considered the sweetest of all melon. “Honeydew” actually is the American name for the cultivar “White Antibes,” which has been grown for many years in southern France and Algeria. It's also a good source of vitamin B6, folate and potassium, and a very good source of vitamin C. The honeydew was revered as a sacred food by the ancient Egyptians. Napoleon and Pope John Paul II both considered honeydew melons their favorite fruit!</p>

Melons Tips

- Combine melon with reduced sugar lemonade in a blender for a refreshing summer drink!
- Hollow out a melon and fill with sherbet, cottage cheese, or vanilla ice cream.
- Top cubes of melon with fruit yogurt and sprinkle with granola for a yummy one-dish breakfast!
- Serve melons slightly chilled; if they are too cold, you'll miss their full fragrance (except for watermelon, that one can be ice cold!).

Melons Recipe!

Cantaloupe Salsa

Ingredients

½ cantaloupe, seeds and rind removed, chopped into very small cubes
¼ cup red bell pepper, finely diced
¼ cup cilantro, finely chopped
3 T scallions, finely chopped
Juice of 1 lime (or 3 T lime juice)

Directions

Put all ingredients in a bowl. Stir. Add pinch of salt and pepper. Chill. Serve with grilled chicken, fish, or baked tortilla chips. (Source: Utah State University Cooperative Extension)

Melons Recipes!

Cantaloupe Ice Pops

Makes 12 servings

Ingredients

4 cups cubed cantaloupe
¼ cup sugar
1 T chopped mint
½ tsp grated lemon peel (optional)
12 small paper cups
12 plastic spoons

Directions

In a blender, combine the cantaloupe, sugar, lemon juice, mint, and lemon juice; cover and blend till smooth. Pour ¼ cup mixture into each paper cup. Freeze until thick and slushy, about 1 hour. Insert one spoon, handle up, into each cup of frozen mixture. Freeze till solid (2 hours). Peel paper cup off each treat and enjoy! (Source: California Cooperative Extension)

Melon Compote

Makes 4 (3/4-cup servings)

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups cantaloupe, cubed
1 1/2 cups watermelon, cubed
1/2 cup sweetened apple juice
1 tablespoon mint, finely chopped
1/2 teaspoon orange rind, grated (optional)
2 kiwi fruits, peeled and sliced

Combine cantaloupe and watermelon cubes in a medium bowl. Mix apple juice, mint, and orange rind separately. Pour over melon cubes. Toss. Cover and chill 30 minutes. Add kiwi fruit and toss. Garnish with fresh mint leaves, if desired. (Source: U of Maine Cooperative Extension)