

start fresh

superfood

PRECIOUS PEARS

Called “a gift of the Gods” by Homer, pears have been praised since ancient times. They were sacred to Hera, goddess of marriage and childbirth (and wife of Zeus). As such, the pear has always had a strong connection with children, fertility and prosperity. There is even a custom in many parts of the world of planting a pear tree after a child is born. They are one of the world's oldest cultivated fruits, now with more than 10 varieties in the United States alone. Pears are nutrient dense and an excellent source of fiber, making them a great solo snack and tasty addition to culinary creations. Just one pear offers up 6 grams of dietary fiber, or about 25 percent of your daily recommended total. Much of that fiber can be found in the skin, so pass on peeling, opt for organic when possible, and wash fruit thoroughly. Pears are also rich in vitamins A, B and C, and in potassium, iron, magnesium and calcium. Look for firm (not hard) selections and apply gentle pressure to the neck or stem end. If it yields, it is ready to eat. Don't judge a pear by its color as most do not change hues as they ripen. Red, yellow and green are all equally nutritious and sweet, as are russeted varieties that may even have brown spotting. Firmer varieties, such as Bosc (used in our Bundt cake at right), are best for cooking, while juicier types like Bartlett or Comice are best enjoyed fresh or juiced. Pears can also be poached, preserved, chopped into salads, salsas and chutneys, and of course baked into pies, cakes and cobblers.

Pear Almond Bundt Cake

4 eggs
5 medium Bosc pears, cored
2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups almond flour
1 cup oat flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
powdered sugar, sliced almonds for decorating (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
Place pears in a food processor or high-speed blender and pulse until chopped. Combine wet ingredients (including pears) in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, mix dry ingredients. Then, combine wet and dry ingredients until batter is formed.
Pour into a bundt pan and bake for 60 to 70 minutes or until cake is firm and a toothpick comes out clean.
Remove from oven and allow to set. Turn cake over onto plate or platter. Sprinkle with sliced almonds and/or powdered sugar before serving. Makes 10 servings.

Per serving: calories 230; fat 11g; protein 7g; carbohydrate 26g; dietary fiber 5g; cholesterol 75mg; sodium 280mg; total sugar 12g (added sugars 2g)

Perfect Pearings at Every Meal

Make your meals pop with pears, whether morning, noon or night.

IN THE AM

Pear Oatmeal. Combine 1/3 cup oats with 2/3 cup almond milk, 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon and 1 diced pear. Cook on medium heat until about 5-7 minutes.
Vanilla Pear Smoothie. Dice one pear and combine in a blender with 1 cup almond milk, handful of spinach, 1/4 cup of flax meal, 2 tablespoons almond butter and 1 teaspoon vanilla.



IN THE PM

Pear Salad in a Jar. Fill a large mason jar with 1 pear, thinly sliced, 3 cups baby spinach, 1/2 cup pomegranate seeds, 1/4 chopped pecans and 1 ounce blue cheese crumbles. Top with 2 1/2 tablespoons sherry vinegar, pinch of salt, 1/8 teaspoon pepper and 3 tablespoons olive oil. Shake well.



ANYTIME

Pear Granola. Mix together 1 mashed pear (peeled and ripe), 4 cups puffed rice, 1 cup oats, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, 6 tablespoons hemp seeds, 1 tablespoon sunflower seeds and 1/2 cup honey. Spread evenly on a baking sheet and bake on 350 degrees for 30 minutes, turning every 10 minutes to prevent burning.



Gratitude is the Attitude

MAKE APPRECIATION AN EVERYDAY PRACTICE.

Research shows that we are happier and healthier when we give thanks. Though usually reserved for the month of November, we are certain there are great benefits to acting generous toward others and switching your own inner script year 'round. Grateful people experience increased happiness, less depression, fewer aches and pains, and feel healthier overall than others. They are also more likely to practice self care and visit their physician regularly, contributing to longevity. Read on for simple ways to incorporate gratitude into your daily life.



TRENDS THAT TAKE

Here are a few health and nutrition trends (covered in the past) that we hope continue to gain traction in 2017 and beyond.

Fermented Foods

The gut (which houses a huge portion of the immune system) is being recognized as one of the most important indicators of health. Boost gut health with foods like kefir, sauerkraut, kombucha and tempeh.

Plant Protein

The Year of the Pulse brought lentils, beans and peas into the spotlight with good reason. Plant-based eating is good for your health, wallet and the environment.

Mindful Eating

There is a movement afoot to choose quality over quantity, tune into hunger and fullness cues, and ditch fad diets once and for all. Add to that more home cooking and savoring meals in good company and suddenly food is less about calories and more about nourishment.

Journal. Begin or end each day by putting pen to paper to identify things that make you feel grateful. A short daily practice (five minutes is all it takes) creates a more optimistic outlook and even improves sleep. This habit also trains your brain to look for positivity throughout the day.



Start a Happiness Jar. Each day, write down the happiest moment of the day and place in a jar. It can be simple, like a good cup of coffee or sleeping five minutes later. When you are in need of a pick-me-up, reach in and remind yourself of all the things you have to be happy about.



Practice Zero Negativity. Try to avoid criticism and complaints for just one day and see how your mindset shifts. Words determine thoughts, which then determine emotions and actions. Instead focus on positivity, thus raising your own vibe and improving the energy around you.



Share Good Thoughts. At the dinner table have family members take turns recalling their favorite part of the day. This simple exercise can show kids how there is always something positive to be found on even the glummiest of days (and reinforces for us adults, as well).



Give Back. Donating to those in need or spending time with people who are less fortunate can provide perspective and shift a negative outlook. Search in your community for volunteer opportunities year 'round and enlist family, friends and co-workers to join you.

