



Watermelon

On Your Mark, Get Set, Go... Summer Has Begun!

Biting into a juicy slice of watermelon brings cool and tasty relief to the heat of the summer months. Summer memories just aren't complete without this green and red melon!

Not Only Tasty But Healthy, Too...

As sinful as watermelon tastes, it has no fat or cholesterol and is an excellent source of vitamins A, B6, vitamin C, fibre and potassium. As a matter of fact, watermelon has a higher concentration of the cancer fighting nutrient lycopene than any other fresh fruit or vegetable, including tomatoes. Unlike tomatoes, watermelons do not require cooking to release this heart healthy nutrient. Lycopene is also what gives fruits such as watermelon, tomatoes and pink grapefruit their red color. Since it is such a powerful antioxidant, it may help prevent prostate cancer and lower the risk of other cancers. Lycopene is also linked with a lowered risk of heart disease in women.

Not only is watermelon loaded with lycopene, but a recent study by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) shows that eating watermelon also provides the body with two health-promoting amino acids. These amino acids, citrulline and arginine, are linked to the following health benefits:

- Promote wound healing
- Help lower blood pressure
- Protect against strokes and heart attacks
- Promote male reproductive health
- Possible treatment for blood flow problems with sickle-cell disease

There are so many yummy and healthy reasons to make watermelon a great part of your summer! This fruit can be made into delicious drinks, desserts, smoothies, salads, and even used in main dishes such as Shrimp Pad Thai! Visit www.watermelon.org to find great summer fare made healthy with this nutrient packed, low calorie treat.

Great Summer recipe:

WATERMELON ALMOND TART

250 mL (1 cup) sliced almonds
1, 3 to 5 inch thick slice seedless watermelon, rind removed
250 mL (1 cup) vanilla yogurt
250 mL (1 cup) blueberries
250 mL (1 cup) sliced strawberries
15 mL (1 tbsp) chocolate syrup
Serves 6 to 8.

In a non-stick sauté pan over medium heat, toast the almonds while constantly stirring to prevent burning. When they are golden, remove them to a heatproof tray or foil to cool. Cut the watermelon slice into 6 to 8 pie-shaped wedges.

Dip the back (curved) side of each slice in the yogurt and then the almonds, re-assembling the pieces on a serving platter as you complete each piece. When finished, it will look like a piecrust of almonds around the watermelon slices.

Frost the top of the reassembled watermelon with the remaining yogurt and decorate the top with the berries. Drizzle the chocolate syrup over the top. Serve cold.



Sources:

Collins JK, Wu G, Perkins-Veazie P, Spears K, Claypool PL, Baker RA, Clevidence BA. Watermelon consumption increases plasma arginine concentrations in adults. *Nutrition*. Mar 2007(23):261-266.

Rissanen TH, Voutilainen S, Nyyssonen K, Salonen R, Kaplan GA, Salonen JT. Plasma Lycopene, other carotenoids and retinol and the risk of cardiovascular disease in women. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2004 Jan;79(1):47-53.
www.lycopene.org; www.watermelon.org

