

Health Benefits of Blackberries



Blackberries are a tangy, nutrient-dense fruit rich in powerful antioxidants that protect against aging and disease. Often confused with black raspberries, the blackberry history goes back more than 2000 years. Ancient Romans used the fruit, leaf, bark and roots for healing and Ancient Greeks called it “gout berry” for its effective treatment of gout.

The stem of a blackberry is retained and becomes part of the fruit.



The stem of a raspberry is pulled from the fruit during harvest and leaves a hollow inside.

WHAT MAKES BLACKBERRIES GREAT?

Nutrition

1 cup whole, fresh blackberries provides 62 Calories, 2 gm protein, 8 gm fiber, 0.7 gm fat, no cholesterol

Antioxidants

Blackberries rank among the top 3 fruits for antioxidants including vitamins C, E and K, polyphenols, flavonoids, anthocyanins, carotenoids, salicylic and ellagic acids and lutein. These compounds work to fight reactive oxygen species (ROS) that cause damage to cells that result in aging and disease.

Blackberries have the antioxidant capacity to fight diseases like heart disease and cancer. They protect the lining of our arteries to defend against high blood pressure and blocked arteries. Anthocyanins inhibit cancer cells from forming and multiplying.

Vitamins

Besides vitamins C, E and K, blackberries also contain B vitamins thiamin, niacin, riboflavin and folate. B vitamins are important for energy production and metabolism, making hormones, protecting the nervous system, formation of red blood cells and preventing birth defects.

Minerals

Blackberries contain calcium for bones and heart health,

iron for red blood cell production and oxygen transport, magnesium for nerves, muscles and bones and to maintain heart rhythm. They also contain phosphorus for protein formation and hormone balance, potassium to regulate blood pressure and fluid balance, and zinc for wound healing and to prevent macular degeneration.

Fiber

Fiber helps to feed our healthy microbiome and maintain a healthy weight. It is protective against diverticulosis and constipation and plays a role in protecting against colon cancer.

Fat

Blackberries contain both of the only essential fatty acids for human consumption. Since we cannot make these in our bodies, we must get from our diets: the omega 6 Linoleic Acid (LA) and the omega 3 Alpha Linolenic Acid (ALA).

BUYING AND USING BLACKBERRIES

In general, blackberries in the US ripen between June and August but can usually be found in supermarkets between May and September. Blackberries range from tangy to sweet, depending on ripeness.

Ripe berries are a dark, rich purple to black. Red berries are less ripe and more tart. Berries should be firm and not mushy. Since they perish quickly, consume fresh berries within 3-4 days or freeze for later use.



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After freezing, berries become soggy and can be used for making jams, salad dressings or in smoothies.

Fresh berries can be added to fruits or green salads, fruit salsa or as a topping for yogurt or ice cream. Puree blackberries and dehydrate to make fruit leather, or freeze to make popsicles.

Blackberry Popsicles

cleancuisine.com

Ingredients:

- 4 cups fresh blackberries
- 1/4 c maple syrup or honey
- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 1/4 c unsweetened coconut milk

Directions:

1. Blend all ingredients until smooth.
2. Pour into 3-oz paper cups or molds.
3. Freeze until solid, about 3 hours.

Blackberry Salsa

onegreenplanet.org

Ingredients:

- 7 ounces fresh blackberries or 10 1/2 oz frozen
- 1 large handful fresh coriander (cilantro) chopped
- 1 large handful fresh basil, chopped
- 1 red chili pepper, chopped or 1/2 tsp dried chili
- Lime juice to taste
- Olive oil (optional)

Directions:

1. Chop blackberries and toss with cilantro and basil.
2. Add chili pepper and lime juice to taste.
3. Drizzle with olive oil (optional).

REFERENCES

Nutritiondata.self.com
Organicfacts.net

Cucumber Quinoa Salad with Blackberries

onegreenplanet.org

Salad Ingredients:

- 2 cups water
- 1 cup quinoa, uncooked
- 1/4 c slivered almonds, toasted
- 2 Tbsp + 2 tsp fresh mint, minced
- 1 large cucumber, spiralized or julienned
- 12 oz package of fresh blackberries
- 3/4 tsp salt
- Pinch of pepper

Vinaigrette Ingredients:

- 1/4 c almond butter
- 2 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp agave or honey
- 2 tsp fresh ginger, minced
- 1 Tbsp unsweetened almond milk
- 2 Tbsp olive oil (optional)

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In large pot, bring water to boil and add quinoa. Reduce heat to low and cook 15-20 minutes.
3. While quinoa cooks, place almonds on small pan in oven and bake 7-10 minutes until golden brown.
4. Chill quinoa and place cucumber on paper towel and squeeze out moisture.
5. Mix cooled quinoa, mint, cucumber, salt and pepper (salad ingredients).
6. In a microwave safe bowl, melt almond butter until creamy, about 30 seconds. Stir in vinegar, sweetener and ginger. Whisk in almond milk and optional olive oil.
7. Toss salad ingredients with dressing. Gently add blackberries and toasted almonds. Serve chilled.