

Berries – not just the summer choice

How you can enjoy the health benefits of berries all year round

Berries are delicious freshly picked and it's always good to make the most of them during the summer months when they are in season. However, they also make great ingredients in home-made or bought-in juices, wines, jams, jellies, yoghurts and ice cream, adding a touch of summer to any dish. Recent research has compared the benefits of frozen and preserved berries to those of fresh. This showed that:

- Raspberries retain all their potential health benefits after freezing and storage
- Strawberries maintain their high vitamin C levels, even when frozen
- Other beneficial compounds such as antioxidants are not lost during storage
- Antioxidant capacity in berries is stable after freezing and 50% is retained even when the fruit is exposed to high temperatures in processes such as jam-making
- Berry wines contain similar levels of polyphenols as regular wine (made from grapes)



Mix it up!

The key to getting the most from berries is to include a variety of colours, textures and flavours in your selection. Each berry has its own strengths, for example strawberries are an excellent source of Vitamin C and folic acid but do not provide as much fibre as raspberries or brambles. So try to use a mixture of berries for cooking, drinking and snacking.



Scottish raspberry oaties • makes 24

Use fresh or defrosted berries for these tasty treats. Or try substituting brambles or currants for some of the raspberries for a bit of variety.

- 225g self-raising flour
- pinch salt
- 175g sunflower margarine
- 175g rolled oats
- 175g caster sugar
- 300g fresh or defrosted raspberries

Sieve flour and salt into a large bowl then rub in the margarine. Mix in oats and sugar – you should have a fairly thick dough which may need to be mixed by hand.

Press half the oat mixture into a lightly greased or non-stick Swiss roll tin then scatter on the raspberries and lightly press into the mixture. Top with the remaining oat mix, press down firmly and bake in a preheated oven at 190°C for 20-25 minutes until golden brown. Leave to cool slightly then cut into squares or triangles.



Quick fruit coulis • serves 6

- 250g mixed Scottish berries (fresh or defrosted),
- 3tsp icing sugar or to taste

Using a wooden spoon, push the fruit through a fine sieve until you have a bowlful of fruit puree and a sieve full of dry pips and pulp. Stir in icing sugar to taste then use to top fruit salad, yoghurt or melon. Alternatively, freeze for use during the winter months.

Scottish berry smoothie • serves 2

- 2 handfuls Scottish berries (use straight from the freezer out of season)
- 1 banana
- 150ml apple or grape juice
- A few ice cubes (optional)

Place all ingredients in a blender and blitz until smooth. Pour into glasses and serve immediately.



Berries – some quick and easy ideas

- Sliced bananas and strawberries make a great topping for your favourite breakfast cereal
- In summer – for an easy fruit salad, just fill a bowl with a selection of seasonal berries and tuck in!
- Amuse the kids on a rainy day by letting them construct their own fruit kebabs. Alternate strawberries, grapes and pineapple chunks on a wooden skewer then serve with a fruit coulis or yoghurt dip for a healthy and colourful snack.
- Don't forget to stock your freezer to make use of berries during the winter months. Berries are a great addition to hot puddings like crumbles or can make an interesting filling for a baked apple.

Find out more about berries and ideas on how to use them by visiting

www.berryscotland.com

Stock up on berries from your local grower or farm shop

berries



Scotland's super-food

berryscotland

why berries?

it's about tradition....

Scotland has a strong tradition of farming berries, stretching all the way back to the raspberries grown by soldiers returning from the first world war on land gifted to them by landowners. Decades of experience and a great level of expertise means that Scottish berries are some of the best in the world.



and nature...

Scotland's long summer days are perfect for growing berries and our unique climate means that the delicate fruits are not damaged by a fierce heat. Lots of sunlight and not much heat means fruit ripens slowly, giving Scottish berries a flavour packed with depth and sweetness.



getting the most from your fruit

- If not using immediately, store your fresh fruit in the refrigerator but remember to take them out at least 30 minutes before serving to enjoy their flavour at its best. Even the sweetest berries will have little flavour if eaten icy cold
- Modern freezers are very efficient and raspberries and currants keep particularly well. Add straight from the freezer to cakes, sauces and smoothies or defrost before serving. Strawberries can also be enjoyed all year round by freezing as a coulis or used straight from the freezer in drinks and sauces
- Don't limit your imagination. Berries are extremely versatile and are widely used in Scandinavia in both savoury and sweet dishes. Try venison with redcurrants, duck with raspberries or salmon with strawberries.

Remember to visit www.berryscotland.com for lots of recipe ideas



berry healthy

berries for health

Colourful and tasty, berries are a great way to reach your five-a-day target for fruit and vegetables. But they are also packed with nutritional goodness, helping your body to fight disease and leaving you brimming with energy.

Like many other northern countries, Scotland has a high rate of premature deaths from heart disease and strokes when compared to the world as a whole and this is often attributed to our poor diet. Berry Scotland would like to see us all enjoying our national fruits such as raspberries, strawberries and currants, particularly as berries are such a great, healthy addition to any diet.

There has been lots of research examining the health benefits of eating plenty of fruit and vegetables and the results have consistently shown that such a diet, when partnered with physical activity, can protect against chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke and cancer.

Most of us know about the vitamins, minerals and fibre which can be found in fruit and vegetables, but there are also less well-known but just as beneficial components and many of these can be found in berries. Compounds such as phytochemicals or polyphenols sound very complicated to most people but what they do is often quite simple.

goodness guide

A brief overview of the nutrients which make Scottish berries a real superfood

- **Vitamins** - Many types of berries contain a high level of vitamin C, so much so that often only a handful of the fruit can provide the recommended daily dose. Vitamin C is essential in the diet as the human body is unable to produce it. This important vitamin and antioxidant is involved in formation and maintenance of cartilage, bones, gums, skin and teeth as well as enhancing the immune system, helping wounds to heal and making it easier for iron to be absorbed.



- **Folate** (sometimes known as folic acid) is a water soluble B vitamin which works together with the Vitamin B12 to form healthy red blood cells.
- **Flavonoids** are a common group of plant polyphenols and provide much of the flavour and colour to berries. They are powerful antioxidants so they act to neutralise harmful free-radicals and may have a preventative effect on the processes involved in heart diseases and some cancers.
- The **polyphenols** which are abundant in berries are not considered to be essential nutrients in the way that some vitamins and minerals are but there is increasing evidence that they may play an important role in maintaining health.

five reasons to include berries as one of your five-a-day

- Berries contain vitamins and minerals, often in higher concentrations than other fruits. For example just 10 strawberries or a small handful of blackcurrants can contain a whole days worth of Vitamin C. Both are much richer sources of this essential Vitamin than other common fruits such as apples or oranges.
- Raspberries, brambles and currants are all excellent sources of dietary fibre
- Various studies over the past five years have shown berries to be one of the best dietary sources of antioxidants.
- A high level of berry consumption, as part of a diet rich in fruit and vegetables, is associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular problems and some cancers.
- Berries provide the best and most common source of Ellagitannins and Ellagic Acid. These compounds have been linked to improved cardiovascular health and some research has indicated anti-cancer properties too.

