

'Blue'tiful Blueberries

Fun Facts:

- The USDA proclaimed July as National Blueberry Month in 1974.
- Peak season of freshness in North America is during the summer months, but fresh blueberries are imported from South America October-March, making these delicious treats available year-round!
- Frozen blueberries are also a nutritious, handy option. They freeze in just 4 minutes and may be stored for 10 months.
- Native Americans first discovered blueberries and recognized their health benefits, though it wasn't until 1916 that blueberries were harvested and sold commercially.
- The blueberry is the official state berry of New Jersey.

Never a dull moment: Endless are the ways to incorporate blueberries into your diet:

- ✓ Fresh
- ✓ Blended in smoothies
- ✓ Pureed in savory sauces
- ✓ Preserved in sweet jams
- ✓ Frozen yogurt treats
- ✓ Topped on a salad, over oatmeal, or parfaits
- ✓ Baked into pies, muffins, pancakes, cobbler, and doughnuts
- ✓ Accented in main dishes like pizza, pork tacos, BBQ sauce, and even grilled cheese! (see recipe)

Try it at Home:

Blueberry Grilled Cheese Sandwiches

Ingredients: (yields 2 servings)

- 1 tablespoon butter, softened
- 4 slices whole wheat bread
- 1 tablespoon honey
- ½ cup blueberries
- 2 to 3 ozs. white Cheddar cheese or American, sliced thin
- 6 thin slices apple

Directions:

1. Heat oven to 400 °F. Lightly butter one side of each bread slice.
2. Place bread on a work surface buttered-side-down. Drizzle honey over two of the slices; top with blueberries.
3. Add a slice of cheese, then the apple slices. Top with remaining cheese. Top with remaining two slices of bread, buttered-side-up.
4. In a heavy oven proof skillet over medium heat, cook sandwiches until golden brown on the bottom. Turn sandwiches over and transfer skillet to oven.
5. Bake about 5 minutes or until golden brown and cheese is melted.
6. Remove from oven and enjoy.



Health Benefits:

Don't let their small size deceive you; blueberries pack a powerful punch of nutrition!

- Waistline friendly – 1 cup contains only 80 calories and zero grams of fat
- Full of fiber - Dietary fiber may reduce the risk of heart disease, keep cholesterol levels in check, and adds bulk to the diet to help keep you regular and feel full longer
- Vitamin C machine - Just one serving provides nearly 25% of the recommended dietary allowance. Vitamin C is necessary for growth and development of tissues, immune function, and promotes wound healing.
- High in Manganese – This mineral is important in bone health and processing cholesterol, carbohydrates, and proteins into usable energy forms.
- Research also indicates blueberries have potential impacts in promoting cardiovascular health, brain health, insulin response, and cancer prevention.



References:

1. <https://www.blueberrycouncil.org/blueberry-nutrition/health-benefits-blueberries/>
2. National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference Release 28. United States Department of Agriculture. ARS-2016.
3. MedLine Plus Database: Vitamin C.
4. Medline Plus Database: Dietary Fiber
5. FDA Guidance for Industry: A Food Labeling Guide (11. Appendix C: Health Claims).