

Thematic Index

Fruits

ALMOND

Almonds are delicious as a snack, providing plenty of energy and strengthening the body. It is the edible kernel of the fruit of the sweet almond tree, and it is bright white in colour when the reddish brown skin that encloses it is peeled off.

It is eaten as a dry fruit, fried or salted, being also used as an ingredient in such popular products as turrón and marzipan, or even in cakes, chocolates, ice creams and myriad dishes, sauces and creams.

Almonds provide a great deal of energy, proteins, minerals, vitamins, fibre, folic acid, plant sterols and other phytochemical compounds. Furthermore, most of the fats they contain are unsaturated and reduce blood cholesterol.

The almond is a nut that provides between 576 and 626 kcal/100g and is a natural source of phosphorous, calcium and other minerals important for the health, such as iron.

Almonds can be found in any market throughout the whole year, with their origin being either Spanish or American.



APPLE

..... 65, 86, 87

APRICOT

On the outside, an apricot looks very much like a peach, albeit smaller and somewhat paler in colour, with red shading in the area most exposed to the



sun. Its skin is downy and its flesh has a pleasingly firm texture that tends to be slightly woody with a floury consistency when very ripe.

It is delicious as a fresh fruit, although it is also used to make certain by-products, such as preserves, jams, juices and the famous 'orejones', which are simply dried apricots. Dried apricots have a laxative effect, whereas when fresh they are a natural cure for diarrhoea. It is a fruit that bolsters our body's defences and is recommended at times of depression, inappetence and delayed growth.

Each fruit contains a significant amount of vitamin C. It also contains a good





concentration of provitamin A carotenoids, and is a source of minerals, such as sodium, potassium, calcium and magnesium.

Thanks to the diversity of producer countries, apricots are available in leading markets all the year round.

AVOCADO

..... 26,27,32,33,54,55

BANANA

..... 68, 69

BLACKBERRY

These are small edible fruits that start off red and then turn black as they ripen. They are sweet tasting, aromatic and slightly acidic. They consist of many small drupelets bunched tightly together.

There are hundreds of subspecies and varieties in Europe. They are eaten raw,

on their own or with ice cream, yoghurt or cream. They are also used for making juices, jams, preserves and fruit musts.

They are significant for their high content of vitamins, above all A and C, and their large amount of potassium, which makes them diuretic. Besides being rich in tannins, vitamins and potassium, the fruits are rich in glucose and levulose, calcium, iron, and citric, lactic, succinic, oxalic, and salicylic acids. They provide a lot of fibre and few calories as they are low in proteins and fats.

It is a fruit that wards off several illnesses, such as diabetes, tonsillitis or ulcers. It also provides several substances that inhibit certain kinds of cancer. In Spain, blackberries can only be found in summer and in highly specialised fruit shops, as they do not keep long at all. Nevertheless, they can be eaten at other times of the year imported from areas where they are grown in different seasons.

They are very popular in cooking for making desserts, jams and jellies and, sometimes, wines or liqueurs.

BLACKCURRANT

Blackcurrants grow in small bunches, similar to grapes, although smaller in size. They are round and have a smooth, delicate skin which, depending on the variety, can either be red, white or black.

The flesh is fleshy and juicy, with a bittersweet taste. The fruit contains numerous small seeds inside, which are barely noticeable when eaten.

Blackcurrants are a healthy foodstuff with few calories and abundant vitamins, especially vitamin C and minerals. In general, they are a good source of fibre, which is good for the digestion, and of potassium, iron,





calcium, astringent tannins and several organic acids. Nevertheless, they excel as a source of natural pigments such as antocyanins and carotenoids, which have an antioxidant effect.

When buying them, choose blackcurrants that have a deep bright colour that is a guarantee of freshness. They should preferably be eaten when ripe and fresh, as this is when they retain all their nutritional value. They are a recommended part of the diet for women during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Although they can be eaten fresh, their bittersweet flavour makes them more suited to products such as preserves, jellies, jams, creams, milk-shakes, pies, ice creams, juices, wines, liqueurs and soft drinks.

CHEERRY

..... 110, 111, 118

CHESTNUT

Chestnuts have a high content of water, sugar and starch, as well as of carbohydrates and mineral salts, whereas they are very low in fat.

Chestnuts are a high-energy food and have a relatively significant amount of gamma-aminobutyric acid, an effective inhibitory neurotransmitter.

They can be eaten in numerous ways: roasted, boiled, dried and in syrup or crystallised, being referred to in the latter form as 'marrón glacé'. Before roasting them, it is advisable to cut them slightly to stop them exploding due to the accumulation of water vapour. In certain Spanish regions, such as Galicia, chestnuts are served cooked in milk. Chestnut flour, highly valued for its aroma and low gluten content, is also widely used in pastries, cakes and ice creams.



COCONUT

This tropical fruit can be used to the full, either as a drink or, when ripe, as an aromatic fruit with an extremely pleasant and full flavour.

It is round and tapers slightly, being covered with two outer husks; the first





one is fibrous and the second is very hard. Inside its central cavity and attached to the husk, it has a white, tasty kernel, called 'copra' when dried, and when still young it has a refreshing milky liquid called coconut milk. It is very popular in tropical countries, where it is drunk straight from the fruit.

The fruit's main components are water and fats. It is extremely energy-giving with a low content of carbohydrates and proteins. It is rich in mineral salts. As for actual minerals, its significant chlorine and potassium content is important. The latter is essential in any diet; a deficiency can lead to muscular dystrophy, mental confusion and heart problems.

Coconuts are available in Spanish markets throughout the entire year. When buying one, it is advisable to shake it to ensure there is liquid inside. This is removed from the fruit by



piercing the «eyes» in the coconut. The fruit is then split open with the help of a hammer, and the flesh is removed from the husk to be eaten raw, either in chunks or grated.

Each part of the coconut can be used. It provides a refreshing drink or milkshake, and coconut milk is used as an ingredient in cooking and confectionery. It is a staple ingredient in Malaysian, Indian and Indonesian cuisine. The freshly grated pulp is added to cakes, rice, meat or fish. In Europe and other areas where coconuts are not grown, grated coconut lends an exotic touch to salads and preserves, enhancing the flavour of creams, puddings, ice creams, biscuits, pies and cakes. It can be used instead of breadcrumbs for coating meat, fish or vegetables.

CRANBERRY

Its flesh is aromatic, juicy and has a slightly sharp taste. It contains numerous small brown seeds inside. Besides its distinctive flavour, this small fruit, which is also known as a blueberry, has a nutritional component that is becoming increasingly popular in response to the growing trend for healthy and nutritional foodstuffs.

A cranberry's nutritional value is defined as low-to-free in fats and sodium, free of cholesterol, rich in fibres and vitamins A and C.



Its juicy flesh makes it an excellent complement in game dishes, in the preparation of sauces and as a garnish for fish and meat. The berries can be used to make jellies and jams, which are perfect for filling cakes and pies. They can be added raw to fruit salads, cereals, crepes and waffles. They can be served with cream, orange juice or a dash of orange liqueur.

As it has a very low calorie content, it is very important in diets, reducing blood sugar and with anti-inflammatory properties. It acts as a disinfectant and cures mouth swellings (if left to macerate). Dried, it stops diarrhoea, and fresh, it is a laxative. The berries are rich in antocyanins, substances that are good for the digestive system. In addition, they contain a bactericide that can help to ward off cystitis.

Fresh cranberries are available for most of the year, as they are harvested in the summer and autumn months in both hemispheres. Depending on the season, they come from Canada, France or Andalusia, whereas at other times of the year they are imported from the southern hemisphere, specifically from Chile and Argentina.

Otherwise, they can be found all the year round in frozen form, or in jars, tins and dried.



CUSTARD APPLE

..... 28, 42, 43



DATE

Dates have become an exquisite part of Spanish cooking. Several famous chefs repeatedly include this delicious fruit in their dishes. It is normally eaten dried, but recipe books include a number of different ways of preparing them. In India, they are boiled for making into chutney or they are added to curries. In addition, dates are used to make syrups, different types of cake and confectionery items. Nowadays, both soft and dried dates can be found in markets all the year round.

When ripe, the berry is golden yellow or brownish red and the flesh is soft,



aromatic and very sweet. It has an elongated stone inside. Glucids are its main dietary contribution. There is also a considerable amount of fibre. The high food value of dates lies in their content of sugars, proteins, calcium, phosphorous, iron and group A and B vitamins. They also have an excellent concentration of iron and folate, a group B vitamin that has important health implications during pregnancy. Dates stimulate the appetite, being useful in intestinal and stomach complaints linked to inappetence. They are also recommended for liver disorders and anaemia, as well as for constipation, as they act as a gentle laxative.

They should not be eaten in large quantities, as they can cause indigestion. Due to their extremely high-energy properties, they are excluded from the diets of diabetics and the obese.

When buying them, it is advisable to look for fleshy, tender fruits with a vivid colour.



FIG

Generally-speaking, these are very delicate fruits that go off quickly. They contain a large amount of minerals and are a high-energy foodstuff. They are even recommended for eating prior to a bout of physical exercise.

A fig is a good source of fibre, potassium, proteins, minerals, such as



iron, phosphorous, magnesium, copper and zinc, and vitamins, such as riboflavin and vitamin B6. It also contains enzymes and flavonoids that help the digestive process. In addition to regulating digestion, its properties make it a laxative, and it also helps to combat fatigue.

It is a fruit that can be eaten fresh, dried, as a purée for jams, preserved or crystallised.

The fibre figs contain is good for the gastrointestinal tract, whereas the minerals and vitamins present are essential for growth, development and wellbeing throughout life.

Fresh figs contain a large percentage of water. After water, the principal components are carbohydrates, mainly saccharose, glucose and fructose. Figs provide all the essential amino acids and there is a very small proportion of lipids.



Their diuretic effect is due to a high content in potassium, which makes it an alkalisng foodstuff. A couple of figs a day does more for keeping the intestinal flora healthy than any other foodstuff or drug.

GRAPEFRUIT

A grapefruit is a round, slightly squat fruit, with a rough or smooth skin, of a pale yellow or reddish colour, and a bitter taste. The pulp is divided into 10-



12 segments that also have a bitter taste due to the presence of a substance called naringin, and may be yellow, except in the reddish varieties, which vary from pink to red and have a sweeter taste.

It is mainly eaten as a fresh fruit. It is used in cooking to accompany meats such as duck, chicken and pork, or even as a garnish for prawns. Grapefruit juice is its sole use at industrial level.

Grapefruit prevents cardiovascular diseases, boots the immune system, wards off colds, stabilises the intestinal flora, stimulates metabolism and cell growth and helps in losing weight.

Like all citrus fruits, it is very rich in vitamin C and has many healing properties, notably the prevention of certain cancers and its positive effect on digestion and the stomach, along with antiseptic, tonic and diuretic effects.

Fresh grapefruit is low in calories. It contains folate, and is a good source of fibre, potassium, flavonoids and an excellent source of vitamin C.

Red and pink grapefruit also contain lycopene, a no-provitamin A carotenoid, with antioxidant properties. Grapefruits also provide the protector flavonoids known as campherol, tangeretin, nobiletin and rutin, which are seen as part of a balanced and healthy diet.



GRAPE



The skin of these little round fruits that grow in bunches can be greenish, yellow or purple and their flesh is sweet and juicy, containing several seeds or pips inside.

The grape has long been used for its healing properties. It is laxative and diuretic, and it is recommended in cases of debilitation or low resistance. It is also a good detoxifier for the blood and inhibits osteoporosis.

Although it is eaten fresh or in juices, its main use is in winemaking. Raw, it is an excellent table fruit, as well as mixing well in fruit salads. Dried bunches of grapes are a source of raisins, and there are a host of grape preserves, such as caramelised grape must, grape syrup, grapes in alcohol and grape jelly.

Grapes provide the body with minerals and vitamins. They are a source of provitamin A carotenoids, vitamin C and flavonoids. It is one of the fruits with the highest amount of carbohydrates, although it is not particularly high in calories. It contains resveratrol, an antioxidant and cancer-inhibiting compound, and since ancient times it has been connected with various healing properties.

There are numerous varieties of grape, which can be broken down into grapes

for the table, for raisins, for musts, for canning and for winemaking. This latter group contains the largest number of varieties. The different varieties of grape can be classified according to the use made of them.

The table varieties have large grapes, with a uniform size and colour, and are meant to be eaten fresh. There are three types of table grape: green, red and blue-black. Grapes are now available all the year round due to the wide range of varieties grown and sold.

HAZELNUT

The hazelnut is a small, round nut with a cinnamon-coloured shell and a yellowy-white flesh, with a pleasantly sweet taste and rich in oil. The nut itself can be eaten raw, toasted or as an ingredient in the preparation of several products, with the most common being turrón and chocolates.

Hazelnuts are a rich source of unsaturated fat, proteins, carbohydrates, vitamin E, folate and the vitamins B pantogenic and biotin. Dried hazelnut is highly nutritious and provides around 670 kcal per 100g.

It is a nut that begins to appear on the market in autumn, and demand peaks in Spain in December, coinciding with the Christmas season. In Reus, the most traditional hazelnut growing area in Spain, families still keep to the custom



of gathering on wintry days to peel and eat hazelnuts.

They are sold whole or shelled, peeled or unpeeled. Markets also supply whole, sliced or ground hazelnuts in raw, toasted or salted form.

A handful of hazelnuts midmorning or at tea-time is the healthiest snack there is, as this tasty nut is a major source of nutrients. Although hazelnuts are a significant source of lipids, these consist largely of monounsaturated fatty acids, mainly oleic, which are good for you.

KIWI

Kiwis can be found throughout the year, as each country produces them at a different time. In Spain, they are harvested in October and November.

A kiwi is elliptical in shape and has a smooth brown skin that is covered with down. Its green flesh is very soft and juicy and has a bittersweet taste. It contains numerous tiny dark seeds inside.

The kiwi is a prized fruit with a high content of vitamin C, E and fibre. Its exceptionally high concentration of vitamin C helps to prevent stomach cancer, amongst others, thanks to its antioxidant effect. An average-sized fruit



provides approximately 90 mg of vitamin C, which easily exceeds the recommended daily intake of around 60 mg.

It is low in cholesterol. It has an anti-cancerous effect, as well as being an antioxidant and an anti-inflammatory, strengthening the immune system and bolstering the body's defences. It provides other vital nutrients for the body, such as phosphate, magnesium and copper. It is also rich in potassium, iron and calcium. Thanks to its content in fibre, mention should be made of a kiwi's laxative effect.

Kiwis can be eaten fresh as a fruit, in fruit salads, regular salads or accompanying different dishes. As a dessert, it can either be fully peeled or split down the middle and eaten with a spoon.





LEMON

The flesh of a lemon is divided into numerous segments and it is very juicy, pale yellow in colour and with a bitter yet not unpleasant taste. Its rind is tough and resistant, yellow, and especially bright when ripe. When cut open it releases a very distinct aroma.

Fresh, it is put to a variety of different uses in the kitchen, and its juice is widely applied in the food preparation industry. The pharmaceutical industry uses it as a raw material in the manufacture of numerous medicines, as it has a high content of vitamins, above all vitamin C, and at home it can be used in many household remedies.

Its use is more widespread as a juice for flavouring soups, drinks, salads, fish dishes and literally hundreds of dessert recipes. Gastronomically speaking, it is on a par with the Mexican lime, a smaller fruit that is eaten when green, being widely used in countries such as France.

Lemons have numerous properties. They reinforce the immune system, have a revitalising effect, trigger calcium metabolism in bones and teeth, cure haemorrhages, have a rejuvenating effect, protect the mucous lining of the stomach and act as a stimulant for pancreas and liver functions.

Fresh lemon is very low in calories, whilst at the same time constituting a

good source of potassium and vitamin C. Epidemiological studies indicate that stomach cancer is less common amongst people whose diets are rich in vitamin C, and that it also boosts the immune system. Besides vitamin C, lemons contain vitamin B complex, vitamin E, potassium, magnesium, calcium and phosphorous, and to a lesser extent, copper, zinc, iron and manganese. Lemon is also considered to contain phytochemicals that may reduce the incidence of cancer, namely, flavonoids, cumarins, D-limonene and terpens.

LITCHI

..... 34

MANDARIN

..... 100, 101, 102, 103, 109

MANGO

..... 32, 54, 55

MEDLAR

A medlar is a small fruit that is highly-valued for its flesh. It has a rounded shape and its edible pulp is midway between white and orange. It is extremely aromatic, fleshy, with an intense, sweet flavour, albeit slightly acidic.

It is low in calories but rich in sugar. It contains large amounts of potassium and lesser quantities of magnesium, calcium, phosphorous and iron. It also



contains small amounts of vitamins B1, B2, B3 and C. The medlar, like many fruits, has antioxidant properties. It also contains soluble fibre, tannins, astringent substances and numerous aromatic substances, such as organic acids (citric, tartaric and malic), which abound in its pulp.

The medlar is a digestive foodstuff, being diuretic and detoxifying. It also reduces cholesterol and is recommended for people with high blood-pressure.

It is usually eaten as a fresh fruit, although it is also used to make various products, such as jams, cakes, ice creams, desserts, juices and alcoholic beverages.

MELON

..... 109

NECTARINE

The nectarine is a fruit with juicy flesh surrounding the stone, similar to a peach, although with a more vivid colouring, somewhere between bright red and yellow, and generally smaller in size.

Its skin is not downy, but rather smooth like a plum, and it can be eaten either peeled or whole. Its flesh may be either



white or yellow, depending on the variety, and it has twice as much fructose as a peach.

Nectarines have a significant amount of vitamin C, provitamin A and vitamin B3. It is one of the fleshy fruits with the highest content of vitamin B3. This vitamin is involved in the metabolism of nutrients, boosting the breakdown of cholesterol and, therefore, helping to reduce its blood level.

Nectarines can be eaten fresh, or cooked for making jams and jellies. This fruit is often found as an ingredient or filling in desserts, cakes, pies, crepes and even sorbets or ice creams.

A large number of varieties are grown all over the world. The nectarine is one of the fruits that is available all the year round, although it is more abundant in the summer months.

..... 49

NUTS: ALMOND, HAZELNUT, PEANUT, CHESTNUT, WALNUT, PECAN, PISTACHIO, CASHEW AND PINE NUTS

Nuts are all those with a low water content. Their nutritional characteristics make them an extremely valuable foodstuff in the complex task of striking a sound nutritional balance throughout the different stages of our life. They are an essential ingredient in Mediterranean cooking and there are numerous ways to draw out their flavour in salads, sauces and desserts.

They contain large quantities of nutrients that make them a veritable energy tank.

All nuts have a similar composition in proteins (10-25% of their weight), sugars (5-20%) and lipids (50-60%). The prevailing type of fatty acid, however, varies according to each nut. They are rich in lipids, but most fatty acids are unsaturated and can therefore be part of a healthy diet. These fatty acids play a key role in reducing blood cholesterol. Hazelnuts and almonds, for example, contain a high percentage of oleic acid, monounsaturated fat that predominates in olive oil and which has properties that make it good for the





heart. In addition, other components such as proteins, fibre and other micronutrients such as copper and magnesium, vitamin E, folic acid or sterols and phytochemicals, may have other positive effects in the reduction of cholesterol and, therefore in the prevention of cardiovascular diseases. They are highly recommended for breakfasts, appetizers, desserts and healthy snacks.

The importance of eating nuts for people with a mixed diet is not the same as for vegetarians, for whom refraining from certain foodstuffs means they have to eat others to replace them. For vegetarians, nuts provide a significant part of the proteins and lipids in their diet.

Nuts are easy to transport and keep, which makes them good candidates for snacks between meals and an excellent source for providing all those nutrients our bodies need.



ORANGE

..... 100, 101, 102 ,103

PAPAYA

This is a tropical fruit that can be oval-shaped, spherical, elongated or pear-shaped, depending on the different varieties, which are enjoyed for their delicious flesh, which is usually orange-coloured and sweet-tasting, perfumed and very juicy (its water content can be as high as 90%). The pulp has a fleshy, milky consistency, and can be yellow, orange or salmon-coloured. The inside of a papaya forms a cavity that holds a gelatinous mass of shiny round black seeds that look like caviar. These seeds are not edible as they have a strong spicy flavour, although they are dried and used as a seasoning.

The papaya can be eaten as a fresh fruit, cooked or in various preparations such as ice creams, refreshments and jellies. It is low in calories and highly digestive, with negligible amounts of proteins and



fats. The papaya is rich in vitamins A, B1, B2, B3 and C. Its supply of minerals such as calcium, phosphorous and iron is also significant. Furthermore, it contains 'papain', an enzyme that breaks down proteins and therefore speeds up the digestive process. Its anti-acid properties are also well-known. Besides, it is satiating and laxative, and given its low calorie content, it is widely used in slimming.

The ripe fruits are generally eaten fresh, in slices, with sugar and lime juice or in fruit salads. Green papayas are usually cooked. They are also used for making several products, such as jams, refreshments, ice creams and jellies, as well as for canned products. The papaya can be found in markets throughout the year as it is grown in different countries and in a wide array of varieties. Spain is supplied mainly by Brazil and Costa Rica.

PASSION FRUIT

This is a tropical fruit with an extremely delicate and subtle flavour. The seeds are slightly crunchy, but are still easy to eat, being covered by a deep red gelatinous pulp. Passion fruit can be



found in markets throughout the year, with the best time falling between May and September.

It is eaten for its pulp, which is juicy, sweet and slightly acidic. It is also used for making ice creams, sorbets, juices, etc. It is rich in vitamins and minerals. It is a source of fibre, and its low calorie content makes it ideal for people on diets. A passion fruit can be cut in half and eaten with a spoon or added to fruit salads. The more wrinkled it is on the outside, the riper and juicier it will be inside. It is also used for flavouring cocktails and juices, milk-shakes, sorbets, creams and ice creams. It is very popular in confectionery and cakes.

As with many fruits, the passion fruit is an excellent source of fibre, vitamins and minerals. The vitamins present in this fruit are A, B1, B2, B3 and C. Regarding minerals, it is a good source of potassium, calcium, phosphorous, magnesium, iron, manganese, selenium and zinc.

It is also known for its calming effects. It contains an alkaloid, passiflorine, with tranquilising properties that induce a natural sleep, making it suitable for cases of insomnia and anxiety.

PEACH

..... 48, 149

PEANUT

This extremely popular and highly-valued nut can be eaten raw or toasted, being also used for making peanut butter and peanut oil. The nuts are available peeled or in their shells, salted or unsalted.

Eating peanuts or maní is very healthy, as they contain linoleic and oleic acid, which help to prevent cancer and cardiovascular illnesses. They are an important source of minerals such as potassium and phosphorous, necessary for muscular and nervous activity. They have an important nutritional value, as they are very rich in proteins, and 50% is an excellent quality oil. Every one hundred grams of fresh peanuts provides 564-596 kcal. They also have a





high content of fibre, iron, magnesium, copper, zinc, niacin, folic acid, pantotenic acid, vitamins B and E.

In Indonesia and numerous African countries, they are widely used as a staple in sauces and stews.



PEAR

..... 86, 87, 128, 129, 150, 151



PECAN

This is a nut that is very similar to a walnut, although more elongated and with a smooth husk. It is also known as an 'American nut' or 'Pecan Nut'. It has a pleasant taste, being covered by a thin, dark-brown skin. It is eaten raw as an appetizer and used for making numerous desserts, such as pies, cakes and ice creams. It is a highly nutritious product, as it contains large amounts of vitamins and is an important source of proteins (one hundred grams yields 9g of proteins).

The pecan nut has a high energy value that provides around 700 kcal/100g. In addition, it is a major source of fatty acids, both mono and polyunsaturated, which help to reduce blood cholesterol levels. It is an excellent supplement in a vegetarian diet given the biological quality of its proteins. Its vitamins include vitamin A, folic acid, vitamin K and vitamin E. The latter has an

antioxidant effect on the body. It also contains minerals such as potassium, phosphorous, magnesium and calcium. It also provides other micronutrients, with phytochemical compounds being some of the more important.

There are varieties that produce nuts of varying sizes, with the most common ones grown in the US having a large nut. In Spain (Costa del Sol), they are grown for ornamental purposes in gardens, and the fruit is used in places such as Malaga, although in most cases the nuts are poor quality, small and provide little sustenance.



Pecan nuts are especially good for people who do a lot of exercise, such as sportsmen and women, thanks to their potassium. Their magnesium wards off stress and cares for the skin. They are also very good for pregnant women, children and teenagers; in short, they are good for everyone's health.



PERSIMMON

..... 112, 113



PINEAPPLE

This is a sweet, fragrant tropical fruit, which is very popular in cooking and widely consumed throughout the world. A ripe pineapple gives off a unique fragrance. It is a highly perfumed fruit,





with a delightful colour and a pleasant bittersweet taste.

Pineapple is available in markets all the year round. It is ideally suited to being eaten fresh or canned. In the West, it tends to be used as a dessert, although it is being increasingly used in Oriental dishes, blending in very well in pork and duck dishes.

Fresh, it can be eaten on its own or in fruit salads. It also serves as an ingredient for making juices, preserves, jams, liqueurs and cakes.

Pineapple has a very high water content. Glucids feature in second place and there are very few proteins and lipids. It is rich in vitamin C and fibre.

Considering its composition, its calorie content is very low, which makes it extremely suitable in slimming.

It is good for easing digestion, as it contains a proteolytic enzyme called bromelain, which helps to metabolise

foodstuffs. It is good for people with gastritis or dyspepsia. It is slightly laxative and regulates the workings of the intestines. It activates the pancreatic function. It is also diuretic, slightly antiseptic, cleansing, anti-acid and anthelmintic.

The phytochemicals present in pineapples include quercetin and other phenolic compounds considered to be antioxidants and cancer inhibitors. In addition, it contains significant amounts of manganese, which is barely present in other fruits.

PISTACHIO

The pistachio is a highly nutritious and energy-giving nut of the highest calibre, which is prized both for fresh consumption and by industry. It has an elongated edible kernel that has a striking greenish hue in the middle and a very characteristic taste.

Over 50% of a pistachio consists of fats, most of which are unsaturated, 20% is proteins and 20% complex carbohydrates and provitamin A. There is no cholesterol. It is the nut that is richest in potassium, 1093 mg/100 g of pistachio nut, and it has a high fibre content. It is also an excellent source of phosphorous (503 mg/100 g) and magnesium (158 mg/100 g).

It is recommended for those people who make considerable physical and mental



effort. It is becoming increasingly commonplace for pistachio to be eaten toasted and salted in its shell as an appetizer. The raw kernel is used as an ingredient in many dishes, in both confectionery and delicatessen, as well as for making ice creams, and it gives a very sweet pistachio oil. It even has its uses as an ingredient in certain digestion-based medicines and in cosmetics.

The fact that it has a high energy content makes it suitable for reinforcing the diet of students, people suffering from mental exhaustion and those who do a large amount of exercise. Accordingly, eaten between meals, it is an excellent source of energy.

In its natural form, the pistachio shell is a light chestnut colour, but pistachios bought in shops are sometimes dyed red. Originally, the shells were dyed by importers to hide the marks made on the nuts when they were picked by hand. Today, most pistachios are harvested with machines, so the shells are not marked and there is no need for dying.

POMEGRANATE

A pomegranate is a balloon-shaped fruit with a thick, tough skin that can be bright yellow, greenish-yellow or off-white, rarely violet when ripe, surrounded by the calyx it still retains from the flower and full of ruby-



coloured seeds inside. These seeds are immersed in a juicy red, pink or yellowy-white pulp, which is astringent and acidic, containing the lobes.

Many cultures consider the pomegranate to be a symbol of love, fertility and prosperity.

It is a tasty and healthy fruit. It is unique for its flavour, nutritional goodness and exotic nature. It has numerous dietary and curative properties. It is low in calories and rich in proteins, vitamins A, B and C and minerals. Certain recent research papers have shown that eating pomegranates may be good for cardiovascular health and for inhibiting certain types of cancer.

It may be eaten as it is, seed by seed, separating the peel and the bitter walls that separate the cells containing them, or it may also be served as an ingredient in a variety of delicious dishes. Ideal for adding to and enriching desserts, ice creams and salads, or as a garnish for fish and meats, it is also used to make 'grenadine', a deliciously refreshing sweet drink.

Three types of pomegranates are grown: the common pomegranate with sweet fruits, the bitter pomegranate whose flowers are used for decoration and the pomegranate with seedless fruits. This latter variety is grown in the Middle East.

The main varieties grown in Spain are: Granada de Elche or Mollar de Elche, the more widespread, whose seeds are a dark red colour, with small soft pips, and ripening in autumn (September-October), and the Mollar de Játiva or Valencia, which is a somewhat flatter fruit with large seeds and tiny pips, which ripens earlier than its counterpart in Elche (August-September).



As well as being eaten fresh, pomegranates are used for such by-products as jams and marmalades. The seeds are also sold as minimally processed (MP) products.

Pomegranates are good for growth and prevent respiratory illnesses. Furthermore, its flesh is astringent and detoxifying.

PLUM

This small round fruit can be yellow, purplish red or green. It is juicy, highly nutritious and rich in vitamins, especially vitamin C, which helps to prevent various types of cancer. One hundred grams of this fruit provides around 5 mg of vitamin C. It is also a good source of provitamin A carotenoids, fibre and flavonoids.

Plums can be eaten fresh as a dessert or used for cake fillings, jam, jelly, juice, liqueurs, etc.

Certain varieties can be dried, becoming prunes, which have a delicious taste. Prunes can be kept for longer than fresh plums and they are very sweet. They are full of energy and rich in fibre, more so than when fresh, which means they are recommended for a sporting diet and as laxatives. Each fruit contains between 36 and 52 kcal/100g. Plums also provide minerals such as potassium, phosphorous, magnesium, calcium and iron, which are also important for keeping healthy.

..... 48



RASPBERRY



This is an extremely delicate and perishable fruit. Handling, heat or mere contact between the berries can impair their quality.

It consists of numerous tiny little fruits that are juicy and red or lilac-coloured, with a bittersweet taste that tends to be rather acidic. The red raspberry is the variety that is most widely known throughout Europe. It is eaten fresh as a dessert and is used in the making of scrumptious cakes, although it is also used to make juices, jams, syrups and to flavour certain liqueurs. It goes extremely well with game dishes, other meats and fish.

It is low in fats and has a high fibre content. It also contains nitrogenated matter, iron, thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, cellulose, citric acid, salicylic acid, and vitamins A and C.

Depending on the variety, raspberries ripen on a staggered basis throughout the summer months and early autumn, which means they can be eaten as a fresh fruit from July through to October.

STAR FRUIT

The fruit is oval-shaped, yellow and has five ridges that form a star-shape when sliced crossways. Its flesh is translucent, crunchy, juicy and perfumed, with a tart, acidic taste. Fresh



star fruit is an excellent source of vitamin A and C, as well as of minerals such as calcium, magnesium and phosphorous. It is the perfect «star» for decorating all kinds of sweet and savoury dishes. It is extremely decorative and attractive in meat dishes, desserts, pies or fizzy drinks, cocktails and punches. It is a perfect foodstuff as a source of vitamin C and minerals. It is an excellent fruit for eating raw and also makes for delicious jellies, sweets, jams, extracts, etc. It is also used for treating haemorrhoids and as a sedative for asthma sufferers; it is diuretic, anthelmintic, a good antidote for poisons and tempers the effects of excess drinking.



This exotic fruit has only recently been marketed in Europe, but is now available all the year round.

STRAWBERRY

When choosing these delicate and perishable fruits, we should make sure we select ones with a bright colour and fresh appearance, leaving the stem on until they are eaten.

This irresistible fruit of smaller or greater size (strawberry or long-stem strawberry), is a fleshy, juicy morsel with a soft texture and balanced flavour midway between sweet and bitter.

As well as being attractive for their colour and taste, strawberries are a major source of vitamin C, ahead even of citrus fruits, with a low calorie content and no sodium, a trait that has meant their inclusion in the so-called Mediterranean diet. The strawberry's most abundant component after water is



carbohydrates. In addition, it contains high levels of ellagic acid and flavonoids, whereby it provides specific protection against cardiovascular diseases and certain cancers.

Given its high level of potassium and low sodium, it is recommended for people with high blood-pressure.

There are many varieties available in fruit shops. The differences in cultivars between certain brands of producers may lead to considerable variations in taste between one variety and another.

Strawberries from Huelva, where Californian stocks prevail, start being harvested in winter, and in thousands of shops throughout Europe they are a harbinger of spring.



WALNUT

A walnut has an extremely distinctive, sweet taste that lingers on the palate after it has been eaten.

It is a very nutritious foodstuff, with a high calorific value, 662.5-688 kcal/100g, and amongst the vitamins present in walnuts, the more significant are those in group B, which are good for the memory. In addition, walnuts reduce the risk of heart attacks, lower blood cholesterol levels and can be eaten by people with high blood-pressure and by diabetics.

Walnuts tend to be eaten raw, as a snack or dessert, either on their own or



accompanied by another foodstuff. They are used as an ingredient in many dishes, sauces and ice creams. Markets stock whole, chopped or ground walnuts all the year round, and they generally keep for several months.

Ripe walnuts are rich in oil and proteins, although they have few carbohydrates. The content of linoleic and linolenic fatty acids helps to reduce blood cholesterol levels. They are also a good source of vitamin E, which acts as an antioxidant and removes free radicals from the body. This means they provide protection against certain types of cancer. Vitamin E also has a role to play in the formation of red corpuscles, muscles and other body tissue. Their abundance of vitamin B1 and B6 favours the proper function of the muscles and brain.



A major research project discovered that people who ate at least 150g of nuts per week were 33% less likely to suffer a heart attack than those who rarely or never did.

90% of the fats they contain are unsaturated, above all polyunsaturated. They contain essential acids such as Omega-3, which reduces the level of cholesterol and boosts the immune system, and Omega-6, which reduces the risk of arteriosclerosis and improves circulation.

WATERMELON

..... 38, 64, 149

