

November is: National Pomegranate Month



November is National Pomegranate Month. Fresh pomegranates are available from September through January. This wonderful fruit is rich in antioxidants, potassium and fiber. Research indicates that pomegranate juice may lower the risk of heart attack and protect against prostate cancer. This versatile fruit is used for food and fun.



Explore the pomegranate with these simple ideas.

Pomegranate Jelly

Ingredients:

3-1/2 cups prepared juice (buy about 8 to 10 fully ripe pomegranates)

1 box pectin

1/4 tsp. butter or margarine

5 cups sugar, measured into separate bowl

Directions:

BRING boiling-water canner, half full with water, to simmer. Wash jars and screw bands in hot soapy water; rinse with warm water. Pour boiling water over flat lids in saucepan off the heat. Let stand in hot water until ready to use. Drain jars well before filling.

SUBMERGE pomegranates in water; let stand 15 min. Break pomegranates apart under water, then separate the seeds from the membranes. (Seeds will sink to bottom while membranes, skin and rind will rise to top.) Skim top and discard skin, rind and membranes. Scoop up seeds and drain. Crush seeds, one layer at a time. Place three layers of damp cheesecloth or jelly bag in large bowl. Pour prepared fruit into cheesecloth. Tie cheesecloth closed; hang and let drip into bowl until dripping stops. Press gently. Measure exactly 3-1/2 cups juice into 6- or 8-qt. saucepot.

STIR pectin into juice in saucepot. Add butter to reduce foaming. Bring mixture to full rolling boil (a boil that doesn't stop bubbling when stirred) on high heat, stirring constantly. Stir in sugar. Return to full rolling boil and boil exactly 2 min., stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Skim off any foam with metal spoon.

LADLE immediately into prepared jars, filling to within 1/8 inch of tops. Wipe jar rims and threads. Cover with two-piece lids. Screw bands tightly. Place jars on elevated rack in canner. Lower rack into canner. (Water must cover jars by 1 to 2 inches. Add boiling water, if necessary.) Cover; bring water to gentle boil. Process 5 min. Remove jars and place upright on a towel to cool completely. After jars cool, check seals by pressing middles of lids with finger. (If lids spring back, lids are not sealed and refrigeration is necessary.)

Spiced Pears and Pomegranate

Ingredients:

3 pears or apples- peeled, cored and cut into wedges

1 pomegranate, skin and light-colored membrane removed

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

2 tablespoons light brown sugar

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

2 tablespoons finely chopped almonds

4 sprigs fresh mint leaves for garnish

Directions:

Place the sliced pears and pomegranate seeds into a bowl. Toss with lemon juice to coat. Combine the brown sugar, nutmeg, and cinnamon in a small cup or bowl, then mix into the fruit. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving to blend the flavors. Serve in individual dishes, and garnish with a sprinkling of chopped almonds and a sprig of mint.



How to Celebrate National Pomagranate Month



Idea 1.

Select a pomegranate by its red and unbroken skin. The size may range from orange to grapefruit size. The fruit should be heavy for its size. The heavier the fruit, the more juice there is inside. The red juicy flesh will be sweet or tangy, depending on the variety and ripeness.

Idea 2.

Open the pomegranate and remove the seeds. The easy way is to cut off the crown with a sharp knife. Score or cut through the rind in several places without cutting into the seeds. Place the pomegranate in a bowl of water, and soak it for 5 minutes or until you can gently break apart the fruit. Discard the rind and membranes. Strain out the juicy seeds called arils. The seeds are edible.

Idea 3.

Butter up the pomegranate. Soften 1 stick or cube of butter. Blend in 1/2 cup of pomegranate seeds. Refrigerate the mixture, and use as needed on muffins and toast. Blend pomegranate seeds into softened cream cheese for dessert bagels.

Idea 4.

Use pomegranate for dips and toppings. Make a dip for fresh vegetables or for steamed vegetables. Mix together 2 cups plain yogurt, 1/2 cup pomegranate seeds, 2 tablespoons chopped scallions or chives, and 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro. Chill for 1 hour or longer. Garnish with pomegranate seeds and mint sprigs before serving.

Idea 5.

Toss pomegranate seeds into salads, puddings and cheesecake. Add the arils to muffin mixes, homemade bread and cookie dough. Pomegranates add flavor especially to rice and poultry dishes. The pomegranate blends well with most meats and vegetables.

Idea 6.

Decorate with pomegranates. Use a large clear glass bowl or vase. Put in ripe pomegranates, cinnamon sticks, and whole nuts. Put evergreen sprigs around the outside of the bowl. For a holiday fruit bowl mix pomegranates, oranges and apples. When autumn rolls around, remember to bring pomegranates home for the holidays.

Resources:

http://www.ehow.com/how_2322004_celebrate-national-pomegranate-month.html#ixzz14ilxNu57

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