

OCTOBER: APPLES AND PEARS

Did you know that both apples and pears are “pomes”? This funny name, pomes, is a fleshy fruit consisting of an outer thickened fleshy layer (with lots of healthy fiber!) and a central core with usually five seeds enclosed in a capsule (have you ever counted the number of seeds in an apple or pear?).

CHECK OUT SOME FUN FACTS AND VARIETIES OF HEALTHY APPLES AND PEARS DESCRIBED BELOW!

APPLES!!

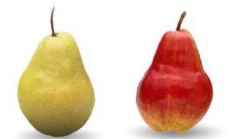
The **apple** can be traced back to the Romans and Egyptians who introduced them to Great Britain, and then finally to the Americas. Today, Americans eat about 120 apples apiece each year! (How many do you eat?) Apples are very nutritious because they contain lots of fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants (red delicious, northern spy, and Ida red apples are suspected of having the most antioxidants.)



There are about 2,500 known **apple** varieties grown in the United States. Thirty-six states grow apples! The top production states are Washington, New York, Michigan, California, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Some of the most common varieties are Granny Smith, Golden and Red Delicious, Fuji, and Gala.

PEARS!!

Like apples, **pears** are one of the oldest cultivated and beloved fruits! Many can be traced back to the Romans and Greeks (In *The Odyssey*, the Greek poet Homer lauds pears as a “gift of the gods!”). Early US colonists brought them to the America’s eastern settlements, but crop blights ruined their cultivation. Thankfully some in the Pacific Northwest made it, and thus the US has many thriving varieties of yummy, nutritious pears! Like apples, pears contain lots of fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants.



There many varieties of **pears** grown in the United States. Oregon and Washington produce 84% of the nation’s fresh pear crop. Some of the most common varieties are Bartlett and Red Bartlett, green and red Anjou, Bosc, but one less common has a funny name – “Starkrimson!”

Apple and Pear Tips

- **Apples** and **pears** are a healthy, handy snack at work or at play! Throw one in your lunch bag, or chop one up to put on your salad, and remember to keep them handy for a quick treat during a break.
- Pop a no-sugar added/all natural, single-sized container of applesauce in the freezer for about 15 minutes and then enjoy a healthy **apple** *slush* as an afternoon snack or healthy dessert!
- Keep healthy dips on hand, like low-fat, vanilla Greek yogurt, hummus, or all-natural peanut butter, for dipping fiber-rich **apples** and **pears**- a pick-me-up snack! Also, a slice of low-fat cheese goes very well with slices of these yummy fruits!
- Look for new healthy options at fast food restaurants such as **apple slices**, walnuts, and/or yogurts as substitutes for fried food side orders and/or as quick snacks while on the road!

Pear Recipe!

PEAR & APPLE PARTY SALSA – GREAT FOR A SNACK OR AS A HEALTHY DESSERT!!

Ingredients

- 1 **pear**, cored and finely chopped
- 1 **apple**, cored and finely chopped
- 2 kiwifruit, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 orange, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- Cinnamon graham whole grain crackers

Combine chopped fruit in a medium-sized bowl. Pour honey and lemon juice over fruit and gently toss. Scoop up bites of fruit salsa using cinnamon graham whole grain crackers.

[Take it to school for lunch: Pack a serving of salsa in an air-tight container, with cinnamon graham crackers for dipping stored in a separate baggie; adapted from <http://usapears.org/recipe/pear-party-salsa/>]

Apple Recipes!

BAKED APPLE – GREAT FOR BREAKFAST OR AS A HEALTHY DESSERT!!

Makes 2 servings

Ingredients

- 2 medium **apples** cored and cut into bite sized pieces
- 2 Tbsp. dates (raisins, etc.)
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ cup 100% **apple juice**
- 2 Tbsp. berry all-fruit, no sugar added spread/jam
- ¼ cup low-sugar granola

Preheat oven to 350° F. Place apples and dates in a small oven safe dish and sprinkle with cinnamon. Pour apple juice over the apple mixture. Bake, covered with foil, for 20-25 minutes until apples are tender. Meanwhile, in small saucepan (or in the microwave), heat the berry jam until melted. Drizzle the melted jam over the baked apple mixture and sprinkle with the low-fat granola.

(Adapted from: Discover Healthy Cooking The 5 A Day Way; 1996; Apopka, FL: Try-Foods International.)

BROCCOLI AND APPLE SALAD

- 6 Tbsp. **apple** cider vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbsp. canola or olive oil
- ½ tsp. ground pepper
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. sugar
- 1 (1 and ¼ pound) head of raw broccoli, coarsely chopped
- 1 ½ cups chopped Braeburn or Fuji **apples** (about 3 medium apples)
- ¼ cup minced sweet onion

Combine first 6 ingredients in large bowl and stir well with a whisk. Add broccoli, apple, and onion into mixture, tossing to coat. For best flavor and texture, allow salad to sit in the refrigerator for up to eight hours before serving. [Top with shredded sharp cheddar cheese if desired.]