



Wellness Cooking Class- November 2015 Pomegranates



Pomegranates are a fruit that is available in the fall season. In the United States, California has the most number of pomegranate orchards. Nutritionally, they contain vitamin C, vitamin K, potassium, dietary fiber, and antioxidants (punicalagin and anthocyanin). One-half cup of arils contains about 80 calories.

PARTS OF POMEGRANATE

ARIL - The botanical term for a seed surrounded by a juice sac. Pomegranate arils are ruby red and contain sweet, tart juice. An average-sized pomegranate contains about 2 cups of arils.

ALBEDO - The white, fleshy substance directly under the skin of a pomegranate. This is not edible.

MEMBRANE - The translucent yellow material surrounding the pomegranate arils. The membrane is bitter and not recommended for consumption.

RIND - The outer peel or husk of a pomegranate. Much of the antioxidant content of the juice comes from crushing the whole fruit, as the rind is where you will find a unique blend of phytonutrients.

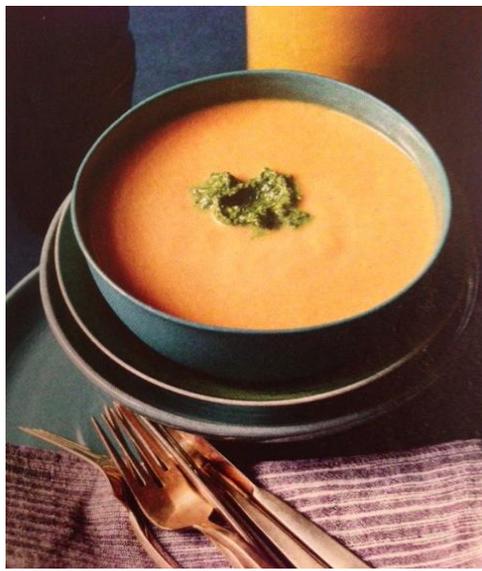
HOW TO SELECT

- For eating or juicing, select pomegranates by weight, not by color.
- The outside of a ripe pomegranate can vary from pink to a deep ruby red.
- The heavier the pomegranates are, the more juice they contain.

HOW TO STORE

- Unopened pomegranates can last up to one month on the counter or two months in the refrigerator.
- Fresh arils can last a few days in a sealed plastic container in the refrigerator and frozen arils can last for many months in the freezer.
- To freeze pomegranate arils, spread them in a single layer on a baking sheet lined with wax paper. Place in a freezer for two hours or until frozen. Transfer frozen arils to a plastic bag or container. Frozen arils can be enjoyed well after the season has ended. Thawed arils will have a softer texture.

For further information and recipes, visit: www.pomwonderful.com or www.pomegranates.org



White Bean and Pumpkin Bisque with Sage Pesto (source: Cooking Light November 2013) Serves: 6-8

The pumpkin adds vitamin A and dietary fiber to this classic fall soup. Pureed cannellini beans provide the creamy texture, as well contributing dietary fiber and protein. It is topped with sage pesto for a bit of color and autumn flavor. The recipe comes together quickly and is perfect for a busy weeknight dinner.

Soup

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 Tbsp fresh sage, chopped
- 5 garlic cloves, crushed
- ¼ tsp ground cumin
- 2 1/2 cups vegetable or chicken broth (preferably low sodium)
- 1 cup canned cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 1-15 oz can pumpkin puree (not pie filling)
- 1 cup 2% reduced- fat milk or unsweetened soy milk
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1 ½ Tbsp apple cider vinegar

1. Heat olive oil in large saucepan. Add onion, sage, and garlic; sauté 4 minutes or until lightly browned. Add cumin; sauté for 1 minute.
2. Stir in 1/2 cup stock; cook 1 minute, scraping pan to loosen browned bits.
3. Combine onion mixture, remaining 2 cups of broth, beans and pumpkin in a blender; puree until smooth.
4. Return stock mixture to pan. Stir in milk and salt. Bring to a simmer; Cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in vinegar. If soup is too thick, add more broth to achieve desired consistency.
5. Season with salt, black pepper, or grated ginger. Serve with a dollop of sage pesto (recipe below).

Sage Pesto

- 1 Tbsp fresh sage, chopped
- 1 cup baby spinach
- 1 cup basil leaves
- 2 Tbsp pine nuts or walnuts, toasted
- 2 Tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated (optional)
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp water

1. Combine pesto ingredients in food processor; process until smooth.



Roasted Butternut Squash and Pearl Couscous Salad with Pomegranate Vinaigrette

Source: www.pomwonderful.com Serves: 6

This colorful side dish will brighten any meal. It is chocked full of nutritious vegetables and pomegranate arils. It can be served as a side dish or entrée with the addition of beans, chicken or fish. Today, we will be using farro- a whole grain from wheat with a nutty taste. Other uses for farro include soups and risottos.

Salad Ingredients:

1-1/2 cups	butternut squash, peeled, 1/4" dice (can substitute sweet potatoes)
½ Tbsp	olive oil
3 cups	cooked pearl couscous (can substitute cooked farro)
1 cup	fresh spinach leaves, cut into ribbons
1/8 tsp	salt
pinch	black pepper
3/4 cup	pomegranate arils
3 oz	feta cheese, crumbled (optional)

Vinaigrette Ingredients:

1/3 cup	pomegranate juice
1	garlic clove, minced
1/8 tsp	salt
1 Tbsp	white wine vinegar
1/4 tsp	black pepper
2 Tbsp	olive oil

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss the butternut squash with olive oil; spread onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper.
2. Place in the oven and roast for approximately 15 minutes or until fork tender. Remove the squash from the oven and cover to keep warm.
3. While the squash is roasting, prepare the vinaigrette. Place the juice, garlic, salt, vinegar and black pepper in a small, deep bowl. Whisk to combine.
4. Slowly drizzle the olive oil into the mixture while continually whisking to form the vinaigrette. Set aside.

5. To Finish: Place the prepared spinach in a large bowl. Add the warm squash and hot cooked grain. Stir gently to wilt the spinach.
6. Pour the vinaigrette over the vegetable and grain mixture. Gently mix.
7. Season the salad with salt and black pepper.
8. Sprinkle with the remaining 3/4 cup of arils and crumbled feta cheese, if using.



Emerald Greens with Orange (Source: *The Cancer Fighting Kitchen* by Rebecca Katz Serves: 4)

The combination of orange and cranberry is perfect for this fall side dish. Use rainbow Swiss chard for added color, if available. To avoid bitter-tasting greens, sauté them just until the color darkens and they are wilted.

Ingredients

1 Tbsp	olive oil
1 tsp	garlic, minced
2 Tbsp	dried cranberries
¼ cup	orange juice
6 cups	Swiss chard, stemmed and chopped, bite-size pieces
1/8 tsp	salt
½ tsp	orange zest
¼ tsp	maple syrup

Directions

1. Heat olive oil in large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the garlic, cranberries and orange juice; sauté for 30 seconds or until aromatic.
2. Add the chard, salt, and orange zest and sauté until the color of the chard begins to darken.
3. Remove from the heat. Stir in the maple syrup. Serve immediately.



No-Bake Apple Walnut Tart (source: www.whfoods.org) Serves: 8

This is “no-bake” alternative to traditional apple pie. The crust of the tart is made with walnuts and dates, instead of using a flour crust. The filling is made by lightly sauteing apples, dried fruit, spices, honey and cider on the stove top. Tart apples such as Granny Smith work well, but you can substitute your favorite apple variety. Also, try with dried currants or cranberries, instead of raisins.

Ingredients:

Crust

2-1/2 cups walnuts
1-1/2 cups dates, remove pits and stems
Pinch salt

Filling

3 green apples, such as Granny Smith, peeled and sliced
1/4 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp allspice
1/8 tsp ground cloves
2 Tbsp honey
1/2 cup apple cider
1/4 cup raisins, dried currants or dried cranberries

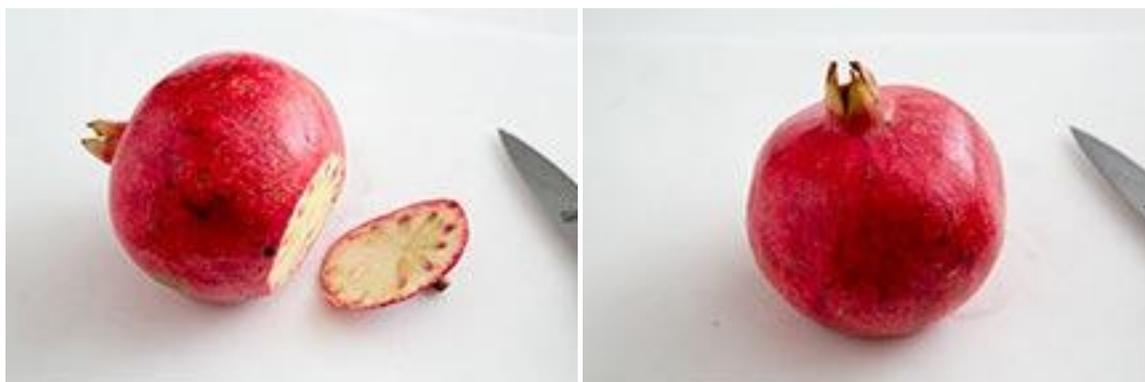
Directions:

1. Combine walnuts and dates in food processor. Process until well mixed and ground, but not smooth (about 40 seconds). It should be a coarse texture when done. Press evenly into a 9-inch tart pan. Refrigerate while making the filling.
2. Slice apples by cutting into quarters. Cut out core and slice crosswise in 1/4 inch thick slices.
3. Place apples in a large skillet with the cinnamon, allspice, ground cloves, honey, apple cider and dried fruit. Cook over medium heat for about 8-10 minutes, or until apples are tender. Stir frequently.
4. Spread apples evenly over crust. Brush remaining apple juice syrup over apples. The tart can be served right away, or cover and refrigerate until needed. Top with a dollop of honey yogurt, if desired. (see recipe below)

Whipped honey yogurt: Whisk 1 cup of 2% plain Greek yogurt with 1 tsp of honey and 1/8 tsp of vanilla extract. Use as a topping for your favorite desserts.

How to Cut and De-Seed a Pomegranate (source: www.simplyrecipes.com)

1 Pomegranate juice stains. So before you begin to cut into one, make sure you are wearing something that you don't care too much about, like an old t-shirt. The juice will stain a wood cutting board (you can use vinegar or lemon juice to get the pink out) so you may want to cut on a plastic cutting board. Work close to the sink, making cuts and then moving the pomegranate over a large bowl to open.



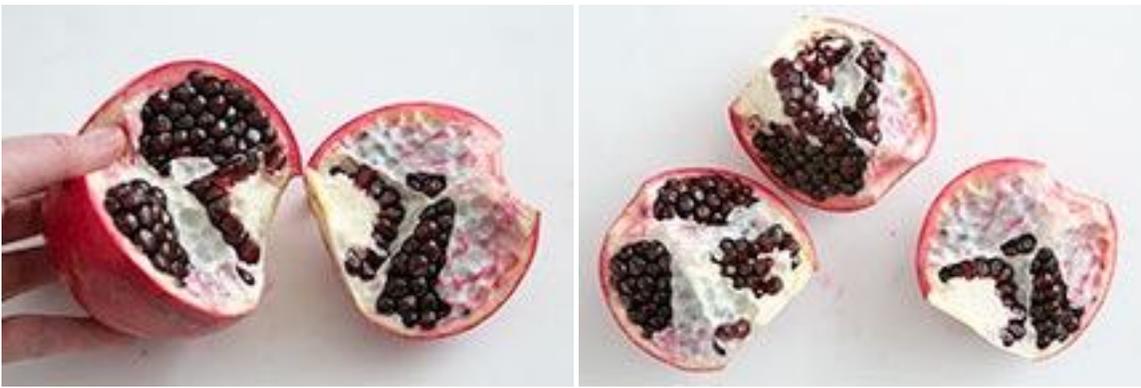
2 With a sharp knife, slice 1/4-inch off of the stem end of the pomegranate and place the pomegranate cut side down on the cutting board to stabilize it. The pomegranate's blossom end, the one that looks like a crown, should be on top.



3 Use a paring knife to cut a circle, angling in, around the crown of the pomegranate, cutting it out.



4 Notice the gentle ridges along the outside of the pomegranate. Use your knife to cut along those ridges, just through the red part of the pomegranate skin, from blossom end to stem end. You should make about 6 cuts. If you can't feel the ridges, don't worry about it, just make several gentle cuts (not so deep as to cut any of the seeds underneath) from top to bottom around the pomegranate.



5 Use your fingers to gently pry open the pomegranate. It should open easily, exposing the seeds (more accurately called *arils*). Continue to open the sections, if you've made 6 cuts, you can pry open 6 sections. It helps to work near or over a large bowl, so that as you open the fruit, any loose seeds find their way to the bowl.



6 Working over a bowl, use your fingers to pry away the seeds from the peel and membranes. If you like, you can fill the bowl part way with water. The seeds will sink to the bottom of the water while pieces of membrane will float to the top, making it easier to separate the membranes from the seeds. If you are concerned about staining your counter top, you can pry open the pomegranate and remove the seeds underwater.

Once you are done stripping the pomegranate seeds from the skin and membranes, skim the membranes from the top of the water, and strain the seeds from the water.

Put the seeds into a serving bowl and munch away. Remember to be careful about where you are eating them. Seeds falling onto a light carpet and then getting squished will cause staining. Eat immediately or store chilled in an airtight container for 3-4 days.