

Watermelon carvings dress up the buffet!

Watermelon carvings make any buffet or catered event even more special. Use these tips for professional results.

- Have the whole watermelon at room temperature when you carve. The cuts will be easier to make when the watermelon is not cold. You can chill the watermelon in the refrigerator after cutting and before serving.
- Cut a small, thin, flat piece from the bottom of the watermelon before carving. This will make a flat base, making the watermelon more stable when carving.
- Draw the design on the watermelon rind with a fine/medium point waterproof marker or a sharp pencil before you cut.
- After you've drawn the design on the rind, insert toothpicks in key places to use as guides for your cuts.
- Use a sharp knife with a pointed tip – the sharper the knife, the easier and cleaner the cuts will be. Be careful!
- Consider using a channel knife for certain cuts and to hollow out larger areas.
- For better grip and to help protect your hands, use a fresh, new thick pair of gardening gloves with gripper palms.



- Choose a flat working surface on a solid base.
- For more detailed designs, draw a template first on a sheet of white paper with a marker or pencil. When finished, transfer the image to the watermelon surface by taping the paper to the melon and tracing along the design's lines with a pencil, making the design right on the watermelon surface.
- When attaching cut pieces on the watermelon to make your design, use round toothpicks or skewers. Flat toothpicks will often break due to weight of the piece or the thickness of the rind.

Here are some fresh carving ideas – easy instructions are at www.watermelon.org.



Watermelon Rabbit



Watermelon Flower ▲ ▼ Watermelon Fish



Watermelon Teapot



Ribbon Basket

Football Helmet



Heart Basket

Store Watermelon on the Warm Side

Compared to most fruits, watermelons need a more “tropical” climate - a thermometer reading of 55° F is ideal. However, whole melons will keep for 7 to 10 days at room temperature. Store them too long, and they'll lose flavor and texture.

Lower Temperatures Cause Chill Injury

After two days at 32° F, watermelons develop an off-flavor, become pitted and lose color. Freezing causes the rind to break down and produces a mealy, mushy texture. Once a melon is cut, it should be wrapped and stored at 36°-39°F.

Safe Handling Practices

According to the FDA, you should wash all fruits and vegetables, including all melons, in clean, running water before eating them. This is true of all fruits and vegetables, rinds or not. You should also use clean knives and cutting surfaces. Additionally, persons preparing melons, fruits, vegetables or other foodstuffs should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water prior to preparing the food for eating.

Yield

Wedges: The average watermelon yields about 90 6-ounce wedges, each 3/4" thick.

Cups: There are approximately 3.2 cups per pound, so the yield is approximately 1 1/2 to 2-cup servings per pound.

Yield by Percentage of Weight: 100% whole watermelon = 70% edible watermelon + 30% rind. For example, the average 20-pound watermelon yields 14 pounds of edible fruit, leaving 6 pounds of rind.

Year-Round Availability

Top quality watermelon is available 12 months out of the year in today's global market, and is especially plentiful during the peak season from April through October.

For More Creative Ideas, Carvings and Recipes Visit:

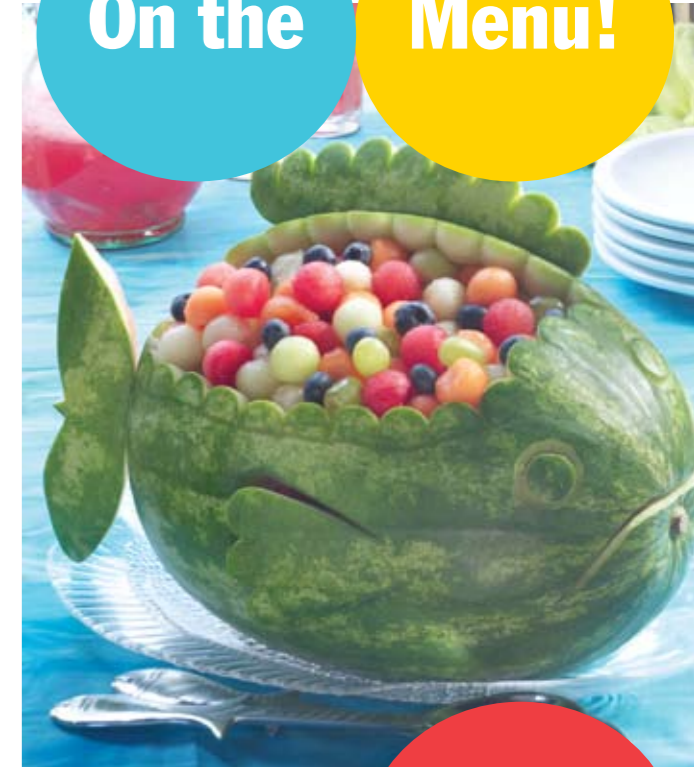
www.watermelon.org



Watermelon Basics

Watermelon –

On the Menu!



Food Service Recipes, Carvings and Tips.

Watermelon. Healthy and delicious. Everyday.

Watermelon on the menu! All year long.

It's not just for summertime picnics! This deliciously sweet fruit is available year-round, and perfect for every meal occasion from breakfast, lunch, appetizer and entree to dessert.

It's healthy and nutritious, but most importantly it tastes great. It's perfect for people who are trying to eat healthier, but don't want to give up great taste – just about everybody!

Quick Watermelon Ideas:

- Offer watermelon wedges as a side dish – they brighten the plate and are light and healthy.
- Cut watermelon in cylinders, sticks and other unusual shapes for garnishes.
- Cut fun shapes from slices of watermelon with cookie cutters and serve as side dishes or edible garnishes, especially for kids!
- Freeze cubes of watermelon puree to add flavor to kid and adult beverages.
- Watermelon is a great substitute for tomatoes in salsas and on sandwiches.

Look for other great recipe ideas at www.watermelon.org

Watermelon Breakfast A Go Go

For 50 parfaits

15 pounds small chunks of seedless watermelon
3 quarts low-fat banana yogurt
6 to 7 pounds of low-fat granola

In a large, cylindrical glass or 16-ounce 'to go' cup or lidded container, create the following parfait:
Bottom Layer: 1/3 cup low-fat granola
Next Layer: 1/2 cup small chunks of seedless watermelon
Next Layer: 1/2 cup low-fat banana yogurt
Next Layer: 1/3 cup low-fat granola
Next Layer: 1/2 cup small chunks of seedless watermelon
Top Layer: 1/2 cup low-fat banana yogurt
Garnish: A slice of banana, toasted almonds or coconut, and chunks of watermelon

Watermelon Cosmicopolitan

Per Drink

1 1-inch x 1-inch cube of watermelon, frozen
1 cup ice
1 ounce premium vodka
1 ounce Cointreau
1 tablespoon grenadine syrup
1 cup watermelon puree
1 mini skewer of a small piece of watermelon, pineapple and a small strawberry

Place the frozen watermelon cube in the bottom of a chilled martini glass. Place the ice, vodka, Cointreau, grenadine and watermelon puree in a shaker and shake for 30 seconds. Strain into the glass and garnish with the skewer. Makes 1 cocktail.



Watermelon Breakfast A Go Go



Watermelon Cosmicopolitan



Toasted Jalapeño Tomatillo and Watermelon Salsa



Maple Citrus Watermelon Glazed Chicken



Flash-Grilled Watermelon Cheddar Burger



Fresh Mozzarella Watermelon Salad with Purple Basil

Toasted Jalapeño Tomatillo and Watermelon Salsa

For 50 1/2-cup servings

10 pounds medium tomatillos (peel off parchment-like coating and rinse)
2 cups vegetable oil
4 pounds white or sweet onion, minced
1 cup fresh minced garlic
1 pound jalapeño peppers or to taste, seeded and chopped
1 cup ground cumin
2/3 cup mild chili powder
1 quart tomato sauce or puree
5 pounds watermelon chunks, seedless or with seeds removed
Kosher salt

Cut the tomatillos into quarters. Heat the oil in a large heavy sauté pan over medium high heat and in it sauté the onions for a few minutes and then add the tomatillos, garlic, and jalapeños. Sauté until the onions and garlic begin to brown. Reduce heat to low and sprinkle the cumin and chili powder over the pan. Stir in the tomato sauce and bring to a simmer. Remove from heat. Cool. Place in a blender or food processor with the watermelon and puree. To serve, after the salsa is dished, sprinkle with salt.

Fresh Mozzarella Watermelon Salad with Purple Basil

For 50 1-cup servings

12 pounds small seedless watermelon balls
10 pounds mozzarella cheese
1 pound fresh chopped basil leaves (purple or green)
4 pounds scallions, trimmed and chopped
2 cups extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
Balsamic vinegar as desired

Toss together the watermelon, mozzarella, basil, scallions and oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve over a bed of baby greens with crostini on the sides. Drizzle a bit of balsamic vinegar over if desired.

Maple Citrus Watermelon Glazed Chicken

For 50 1/3-cup servings

For Glaze
1 gallon watermelon puree
1 cup lemon juice
1 cup lemon zest
1 quart maple syrup
1/8 cup ground cinnamon

Simmer ingredients together in a heavy saucepan for 20 minutes or until sauce is thick. Keep warm.

For Glazed Chicken
50 skinless boneless chicken breast splits
3 quarts pineapple juice
3 cups soy sauce
1 cup minced fresh ginger
1 cup minced fresh garlic
1 recipe Glaze

Trim chicken breasts and place in a bowl. Mix together the remaining ingredients and pour over chicken and toss to distribute marinade. Allow to marinate at least 2 hours or up to 12 hours. Grill until cooked and pour the warm glaze over chicken and serve immediately.

Flash-Grilled Watermelon Cheddar Burgers

For 50 Burgers

50 hamburger patties - ready to grill
50 slices white cheddar cheese
50 slices watermelon about the same size as the burgers, seeded
2 cups ground pepper or 4 cups cracked/coarsely crushed pepper
50 toasted buns

Grill the hamburgers almost to desired doneness, but 30 seconds before they are done, place a cheese slice atop each burger. Place the watermelon slices on the grill and dust with the pepper to taste. Assemble the burgers on the buns with a slice of warmed watermelon on each on top of the cheese.



Individual Watermelon Coconut Cakes with Raspberry Filling

Individual Watermelon Coconut Cakes with Raspberry Filling

For 50 servings

5 medium watermelons
5 pounds fresh raspberries
4 pounds shredded fresh coconut

Slice the watermelon into 4- or 5-inch thick slices. Using a pineapple corer cut 50 cylinders of watermelon and slice them into 3 slices each. Place 1 slice of the melon cylinder on top of a serving plate. Surround it with a ring of coconut. Place a layer of coconut and raspberries over the slice and repeat to form a 3-layer watermelon "cake" with the raspberries on top arranged attractively on the coconut.

Watermelon Dippers

For 50 servings

2 quarts sour cream
2 cups sugar
1/4 cup vanilla extract
12 to 15 pounds watermelon fingers or small wedges

Blend together the sour cream, sugar and vanilla. Serve with watermelon fingers for dipping.



Watermelon Dippers

Your guests will love the flavor of watermelon!