REFRESH YOUR MENU WITH THE BRIGHT TASTE AND COLORS OF THE GLOBALLY REVERED FRUIT
Why watermelon

Bright colors and flavors. Naturally sweet and nutritious. And, oh-so-fresh and versatile. Today’s watermelon is as comfortable at a picnic as it is at an upscale bar or restaurant.

And, it is carving a place for itself in global cuisine. The fruit, whose seeds have been traced back to the ancient tombs of pharaohs and thought to have originated in the Kalahari Desert of South Africa, delivers a hint of exotic aroma, a punch of color and flavor, and a healthful dose of nutrition to the inspired menu.

Its sweet, juicy flesh adds natural sweetness to aguas frescas, delicate texture to gazpachos, and a watercolor of hues – from deep red and pink to orange, yellow and even white – to almost any menu creation, including beverages.

The solid, striped or speckled rinds create an opportunity for innovation whether beautifully carved into serving vessels or pickled and preserved in Southern tradition.

Innovative chefs across the country are pioneering a whole new world of watermelon. We’ll show you inspiration and techniques to maximize your use of this visually appealing ingredient that will help set your menu apart.

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**SWEET**

It’s what guests want, and watermelon hits a sweet spot with all ages and genders.

**ALWAYS IN SEASON**

Imports provide unique varieties from the southern hemisphere January through April.

**HYDRATING**

At 92% water, watermelon delivers needed fluids and nutrients.

**COMPLEMENTARY**

Its natural sugar is a match for salty, savory, bitter, spicy and umami. A grilled wedge glazed with soy and fish sauce, sriracha and agave is umami-tastic.

**COLORFUL**

From deep reds and pink, to oranges, yellows and white, watermelon flesh adds a sunset of hues to your menu year-round.

**ADAPTABLE**

Pickled, puréed, cubed, grilled or vacuum-sealed, watermelon is ripe for innovation.

**GLOBAL**

From aguas frescas, to gazpachos to Asian salads, watermelon drips with international flair.
A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES WITH WATERMELON
WATERMELON.ORG

Family farmers and growers of watermelon love to show off their fields and facilities to chefs. Don’t be afraid to ask for a tour and learn about innovations in the world of watermelon, from seed breeding to strict growing practices that ensure the highest quality produce. Your feedback is critical in ensuring growers and suppliers continue to meet consumers’ evolving needs.

VARIETIES AND YEAR-ROUND AVAILABILITY
More than 300 varieties of watermelon are cultivated in the United States and South America, where complementary growing seasons provide a year-round supply of watermelon in an array of shapes, colors and sizes. Because there are so many varieties, they often are grouped according to characteristics, like fruit shape, rind color or pattern, and size.

Know Your Watermelon

SEEDED
The classic watermelon comes in a wide range of sizes. Ask your supplier for available options.

15-45 lb, round, long, oblong

SEEDLESS
Due to high demand, the majority of watermelon cultivars grown today are seedless – and they are getting redder and crisper thanks to seed breeding advancements. They are not the result of genetic engineering, but rather hybridization - the crossing of two different types of watermelons.

10-25 lb, round to oblong

MINI
Petite “personal watermelons” are easy to handle and their thinner rinds can mean more flesh per pound. Hollow them out for a compostable serving bowl.

1-7 lb, round

YELLOW/ORANGE
Generally sweeter than red-fleshed watermelon, yellow and orange varieties add a surprising element to the plate, or glass.

10-30 lb, round

THE FUTURE OF WATERMELON IS BRIGHT
While watermelon is still harvested and packed by hand, look for innovations in the following areas:

CRISPER, CRUNCHIER FLESH
DEEPER COLOR, DENSITY, FLAVOR
LONGER SHELF LIFE
ENHANCED NUTRITION
INCREASED UNIFORMITY

KNOW YOUR GROWER

Kelly and Aaron Tyner Family
Watermelon and Cantaloupe Grower/Shipper
Hoosier Fresh Farms, Indiana
### Peak Production Areas by Month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Peak</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JANUARY</strong></td>
<td>Costa Rica, Dominican Republic</td>
<td>Honduras, Mexico</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEBRUARY</strong></td>
<td>Costa Rica, Dominican Republic</td>
<td>Honduras, Mexico</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MARCH</strong></td>
<td>Nicaragua, Panama</td>
<td>Costa Rica, Dominican Republic</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APRIL</strong></td>
<td>Guatemala, Honduras, Panama</td>
<td>Costa Rica, Dominican Republic</td>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MAY</strong></td>
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<td>California (Imperial Valley), California (Central)</td>
<td>Arizona, California (Southern)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JUNE</strong></td>
<td>Arizona, California (Southern)</td>
<td>California (Central), Florida</td>
<td>Missouri, North Carolina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JULY</strong></td>
<td>Arkansas, California (Central)</td>
<td>Delaware, Indiana</td>
<td>Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUGUST</strong></td>
<td>Delaware, Indiana</td>
<td>Maryland, Virginia</td>
<td>Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEPTEMBER</strong></td>
<td>California (Central), Arizona</td>
<td>California (Southern), Missouri, North Carolina</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OCTOBER</strong></td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Honduras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOVEMBER</strong></td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DECEMBER</strong></td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Facts**

The *origins of watermelon* have been traced back to the deserts of southern Africa, where it still grows wild today. This ancestor of the modern watermelon is a tough, drought tolerant plant prized for its ability to store water for tribes crossing the Kalahari.

**Consumption and Production** have been recorded in Egypt 5000 BC, and China in the 10th century. Japan’s modern day fascination with the “cubic” watermelon fetches premium prices.

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Watermelon is grown in warm places, from Florida to Guatemala, making it available throughout the year.

Watermelon *rinds* are edible, and sometimes used as a vegetable. In China, they are stir-fried, stewed, or more often pickled.

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A member of the cucurbitaceae family, watermelon is a *vine-like scrambler and trailer*. Its fruit is referred to by botanists as a pepo, a berry with a thick rind and a juicy, sweet interior flesh.
Follow these tips to optimize the safety, quality and shelf life of your fresh watermelon:

**Watermelons Should Be Firm.** Symmetrical and free of bruises or cuts. Pitted rind, off flavor or loss of color is an indication of chill injury.

**Watermelons Should Be Heavy for Their Size.** Watermelon is 92% water, contributing to most of its weight and juiciness.

**Optimum Storage Temperatures** for whole watermelon range from 48-60° F, 90% humidity. Shelf life ranges from 7-10 days.

**How to Cube a Watermelon**

1. Wash and pat dry the watermelon.
2. Slice off ends and then quarter, cutting lengthwise along the seed line with a knife.
3. Lift the flesh from the rind. If desired, scrape seeds from removed piece with a fork.
4. Halve each quarter and cut into desired–sized cubes.

**A Note on Hollow Heart:**

Sometimes growing conditions will cause an internal cracking of the flesh, known as Hollow Heart. These watermelons are perfectly safe to eat, and they often are sweeter as sugars are more concentrated along the cracks.

**Important Numbers**

**Below are some guidelines on measurements and yield:**

**Wedges:**

A 20-lb watermelon yields about 90 6-ounce wedges, each ¾-inch thick.

**Cups:**

1 lb of watermelon = about 1½- to 2-cup servings.

**Yield:**

100% whole watermelon = 70% flesh + 30% rind. An average seedless watermelon, yields about 11 cups of cubes (approximately 69% useable product yield) and about 6 cups juice (39% product yield).

**Many produce distributors provide additional purchasing size options for their customers. Watermelon is often sold in foodservice by “the each” or in cases ranging from two, four or five count, depending on the size of the watermelon.**

**Pre-Cut Selections** available from some suppliers include spears, wedges, cubes, balls, halves and juice.

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If you are looking to enhance your focus on nutrition, watermelon is naturally sweet, rich in nutrients and hydrating. In fact, at 92% water, watermelon is an EXCELLENT CHOICE FOR STAYING HYDRATED – and a favorite among Americans.

**WATERMELON IS A Natural Hydrator**

If two-thirds of Americans say that of all produce, watermelon is the one they would choose to eat to help them hydrate.*

Watermelon is 92% WATER, and a whole lot more.

*This survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Poll on behalf of the National Watermelon Promotion Board from May 12-14, 2014 among 2,050 adults ages 18 and older.

Watermelon contains higher levels of the antioxidant LYCOPENE than any other fresh fruit or vegetable. Lycopene is a naturally occurring red pigment that gives red watermelon and tomatoes their color. It is thought to act as a powerful antioxidant, helping protect cells from oxygen-related damage that can result from regular cell functions.

Watermelon is an excellent source of an important amino acid, citrulline.

The human body uses citrulline to make another important amino acid – arginine – which plays a key role in cell division, wound healing and the removal of ammonia. Watermelon’s citrulline stores are not only abundant but also readily usable by the body.

**Nutrition Facts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Watermelon</th>
<th>Serving Size: 2 cups watermelon, about 12 slices</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>80 Calories from Fat 9% Daily Value*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>0g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
<td>0g</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Sugars</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Vitamin A</td>
<td>30% Vitamin C 25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</table>

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

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Finding the sweet spot in fresh

Chef Jeff Tenner

Not Your Average Joe’s, New England

Applications: gazpacho, sangria

Chef Tenner says as a small chain, Not Your Average Joe’s can hyper-focus on its cornerstones: fresh ingredients and scratch cooking. That’s great news for watermelon, which makes perennial appearances on the growing restaurant company’s menu – typically in the form of a summertime gazpacho and a sangria.

Tenner says the company aims to be on the leading edge with ingredients, relying on guest feedback, trend data and trial and error to refine its menu. “What’s interesting about watermelon is it appeals to different age groups, and to both men and women,” he says. “It doesn’t have some of the barriers that other produce might have with age and gender.”

Besides guest appeal, he says watermelon is approachable in the kitchen. “Training is simple because the fruit is common and familiar to most,” he says. “Watermelon is locked and loaded. The real work happened out in the field.”

Grilled Watermelon Wedge Salad

LongHorn Steakhouse®

Flash-grilled fresh seedless watermelon brushed with honey and chilled. With romaine, kale, quinoa and goat cheese tossed in a lemon vinaigrette and finished with a balsamic drizzle.

Watermelon Salad

Heirloom Tomato

Trading Post, New York City

Made with watermelon and tomatoes with aged feta, mint and balsamic

Hunch Punch

Outback Steakhouse®

Made with Ole Smoky® Blackberry Moonshine® and fresh watermelon mixed with ice-cold lemonade and topped with a juicy wedge of watermelon.

Watermelon

Trading Post, New York City

Made with watermelon and tomatoes with aged feta, mint and balsamic
Chef Garcia uses watermelon year-round, sourcing from preferred vendors and sometimes even flying to a farmers market to purchase fruit directly for special events. As executive chef of catering at Red Rock Resort, he has modernized the traditional fruit display. Instead of traditional mixed fruit, he creates bouquets of individual fruits. “Guests love the sweeping collages of color, including reds, greens and purples. When a specific fruit gets low, we can easily replace just that item. It makes sense from a labor and cost standpoint.”

Garcia’s eye for color explains his passion for compressed watermelon. He has embraced vacuum-sealing, a technique that removes air from the watermelon, thereby deeply concentrating and intensifying its juices, color and flavor. “The end product is a dense ruby red,” he says. “You lose volume, but not water, so the watermelon is even juicier.”
NATIONAL WATERMELON PROMOTION BOARD (NWPB) is based in Winter Springs, Florida, and represents 1,500 growers, shippers and importers. Through research, communications and marketing initiatives, NWPB is finding new ways to enhance market opportunities for farmers and promote the nutritional, culinary and convenience benefits of watermelon.

For further information on watermelon and NWPB, please visit www.watermelon.org

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