



Summer Squash

wicqwaq cozu took (ho-chunk) | waton mixa zi (Umonhon)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Eaten fresh in the summer months and part of intercropping with corn and beans.

HEALTH FACTS

Good source of Vitamin C, Vitamin A, B vitamins (like B6 and folate), and Vitamin K, as well as minerals like potassium and magnesium. High in fiber, low in calories.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Grilled, sautéed, stuffed and baked, roasted, stir-fried, or sliced raw for salads. Pairs well with fresh herbs, sweet corn, tomatoes, and bell peppers.

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Wild Rice

manoomin (Anishnaabemowin)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Sacred food of the Anishinaabe people, harvested in canoes using traditional methods. Symbol of resilience and sustainability.

HEALTH FACTS

High in protein, fiber, and antioxidants. Gluten-free and nutrient-dense. Good source of several B vitamins, including thiamin (B1), riboflavin (B2), niacin (B3), and folate.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Simmered and served as pilaf, in soups or salads, made into pudding as dessert, or puffed as a crispy topping. Pairs well with herbs, vegetables, nuts, game meats, fish, maple, and dried fruits.

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Dried Corn

selu (Cherokee) | neeshjizhii (Navajo)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Central to many cultures of Turtle Island, many tribes tell stories of a Corn Mother, tying the gift of corn to origin stories and identity. Corn is revered as a sacred gift, often integrated into ceremonies and important seasonal celebrations.

HEALTH FACTS

Good source of carbohydrates, B vitamins, vitamin E, and smaller amounts of vitamin A and vitamin K; higher fiber when stone-ground.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Coarsely ground for grits/mush, finely ground for flour, or processed into hominy to be used in soups, stews, or ground to make dough. Pairs well with beans, squash, chiles, meats, fish, and poultry.

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Winter Squash

iya (Cherokee) | wamnú (Lakota) | naayízí (Navajo)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

A staple of the “Three Sisters” agricultural system, along with corn and beans. Often dried and stored for winter nourishment.

HEALTH FACTS

Good source of beta-carotene (Vitamin A), vitamin C, and B6, as well as minerals like potassium and magnesium. It also provides folate and vitamin E. High in fiber. Good for immune health and digestion.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Roasted, mashed, pureed, added to soups and stews. Pairs well with maple syrup, warm spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, clove), and chiles.

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Sweet Corn

Wagméza (Lakota) | Piha Hanhi (Eastern Shoshone)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

The Haudenosaunee were the first to develop sweet corn, a spontaneous mutation of field corn where the kernels have a higher amount of sugar; it is harvested in its green corn stage and eaten or preserved before the sugars convert to starch.

HEALTH FACTS

Contains lutein and zeaxanthin for eye health; high in fiber and natural sugars. Good source of vitamins A, B, C, E, magnesium, and potassium. Magnesium is essential for bone health and muscle function, and potassium helps regulate blood pressure.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Grilled, boiled, roasted, sautéed, steamed. Pairs well with peppers, beans, squash, fresh herbs, tomatoes, chiles, meats, seafood, and poultry.

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Dried & Fresh Beans

pihuutah (Eastern Shoshone) | tuyá (Cherokee)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

One of the “Three Sisters.” Grown in harmony with corn and squash for sustainable farming. Harvested early in the season for fresh eating before beans fully mature, or left on the vine to dry for longer-term storage.

HEALTH FACTS

Excellent source of plant-based protein, fiber, iron, and folate. Good source of vitamin K, C, and folate; low-calorie and hydrating.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Braised, boiled, simmered, mashed, pureed, served in soups, stews, or cold in salads. Pairs well with corn, squash, fish, meats, poultry, mushrooms, rice, fresh herbs, greens, tomatoes, and peppers.

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Bison

tatanka (Lakota) | yvnsa (Cherokee)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Sacred animal central to Plains Nations for food, shelter, and ceremony. Symbol of abundance and resilience.

HEALTH FACTS

Leaner than beef, higher in protein, iron, and omega-3s. Rich in vitamin B12, niacin (B3), and vitamin B6.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Roasted, braised, grilled, smoked, dried into jerky or pemmican, ground for patties or meatballs. Pairs well with wild rice, beans, corn, fresh herbs, dried and fresh berries, and chiles.

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An illustration on the left side of the page shows various stages of turkey preparation. At the top is a dark turkey leg. Below it is a bowl of green salad with red cubes. In the center is a whole roasted turkey with steam rising from it, garnished with a sprig of rosemary and two lemon slices. At the bottom is another dark turkey leg.

Turkey

cholula (Nahuatl) | gallina de monte (various)
kwiyuwint (Eastern Shoshone) | fvkit (Choctaw) | gvna (Cherokee)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Indigenous to the Americas; domesticated by Mesoamerican peoples and hunted in the Southeast.

HEALTH FACTS

High in lean proteins. Skinless meat is low in fat.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Braised, grilled, roasted, sautéed, stir-fried, dried into jerky, ground for patties or meatballs. Pairs well with wild rice, corn, beans, fresh herbs, greens, vegetables, dried and fresh berries (especially cranberries), and nuts.

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Fish

painkw (Eastern Shoshone) | atsadi (Cherokee)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Fish and shellfish are foundational for coastal, riverine, and wetland cultures. Some species, like salmon, are an integral part of cultural identity, central to creation stories and traditional ceremonies.

HEALTH FACTS

High in omega-3s and protein. Good source of vitamin D and B vitamins like B12. Shellfish provide zinc and selenium.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Baked, broiled, fried, poached, sautéed, steamed, stir-fried, in soups and stews, dried, and smoked. Pairs well with fresh herbs, greens and vegetables, beans, corn, squash, and chiles.

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Chiles

Phaya yutapi (Lakota)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Cultivated for over 6,000 years in Mesoamerica; used for flavoring foods, as medicine, and in ceremony.

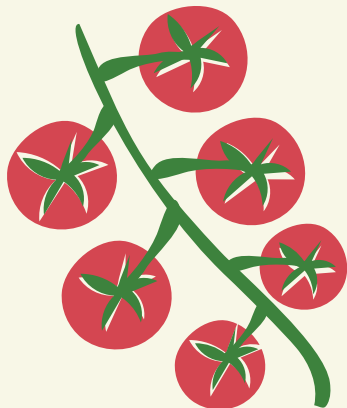
HEALTH FACTS

Rich in vitamin C, capsaicin (anti-inflammatory), and antioxidants.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Sautéed, fried, stewed, broiled, grilled, and raw when fresh, or dried and roasted to be used whole or ground as a dried spice. Pairs well with tomatoes, beans, corn, meats, fish, poultry, vegetables, and chocolate.

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Tomatoes + Tomatillos

Unjinjintka (Lakota)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Indigenous peoples in Mesoamerica cultivated wild plants into the wide variety of tomatoes + tomatillos we have today; "tomato" comes from the Aztec Nahuatl word tomatl.

HEALTH FACTS

Rich in water and nutrients. They deliver antioxidants, vitamin K, fiber, and potassium. Both are excellent sources of vitamin C. Eating them regularly can support eye and heart health, digestion, and hydration.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Baked, broiled, fried, grilled, roasted, sautéed, stewed, and raw; great for salsas, sauces, and salads. Pairs well with peppers, corn, greens, fresh herbs, meats, fish, poultry, beans, and corn.

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Maple Syrup

zhiiwaagamizigan (Ojibwe) | ziwagmedé (Potawatomi)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Tapped and boiled down by Northern tribes during sugaring season in early spring, it can be used to cure meats, as a sweetener for bitter medicines, and as an anesthetic. Maple syrup is a traditional "first food" and is important in many traditional stories.

HEALTH FACTS

Natural sweetener with manganese, zinc, and antioxidants. Also provides some calcium, potassium, and magnesium.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

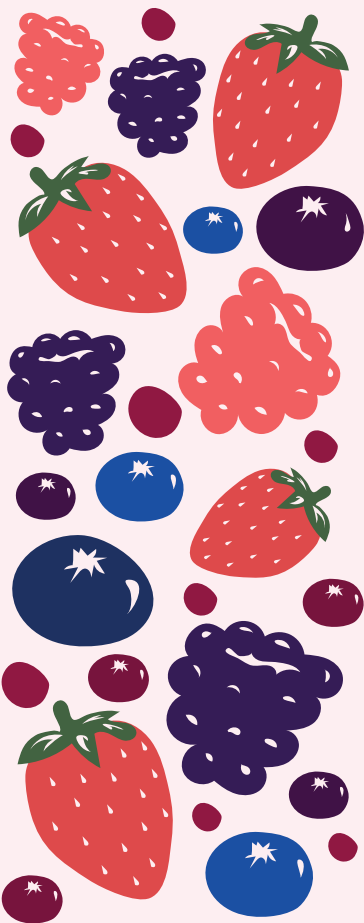
Pairs well with fresh and dried berries, wild rice, corn mush, root vegetables, winter squash, wild rice, nuts, poultry, and red meats.

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Berries

makade-miskominan (Anishnaabemowin for blackberries),
ani (Cherokee for strawberry) | hazá (Lakota for huckleberry/blueberry)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Sacred to many Nations; different berries can symbolize renewal, abundance, and connection to loved ones and nature; often used in ceremonies and storytelling and as medicine.

HEALTH FACTS

Rich in vitamin C, antioxidants, fiber, and a variety of B vitamins.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Eaten fresh, dried, or cooked in sauces. Pairs well with wild rice, corn, game meats, poultry, and fish.

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Nuts + Seeds

paisse (Eastern Shoshone for seeds) | nihi' (Chickasaw for seeds)
sohi (Cherokee for nuts) | oto (Mvskoke for chestnut)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Nuts and seeds are staples of a traditional diet, providing a nutrient-dense and diverse source of sustenance; for our ancestors, they were especially important during the winter months as they could be stored over long periods.

HEALTH FACTS

Rich in vitamin C, antioxidants, fiber, and a variety of B vitamins.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Ground into flour, toasted and eaten whole, boiled into porridges and soups, and pressed for oil. Pairs well with wild rice, berries, corn, squash, meat, fresh herbs, and greens.

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Venison

ahawiya (Cherokee)

DESCRIPTION/CULTURAL NOTE

Traditionally hunted across Turtle Island, deer provide meat, hides, and tools. Some Native cultures have Deer Clans, honoring deer as relatives, playing an integral part of their identity and belief system.

HEALTH FACTS

Lean, high in iron and zinc, and lower in fat than beef.

TRADITIONAL/MODERN USES

Roasted, braised, grilled, smoked, dried into jerky or pemmican, ground for patties or meatballs. Pairs well with wild rice, beans, corn, winter squash, fresh herbs, dried and fresh berries, and maple.

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