



A plateful of COLOURS!

TO STAY HEALTHY,
EAT YOUR COLOURS.



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique



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Summary



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Local fruit, vegetables and tubers: our best allies for staying healthy



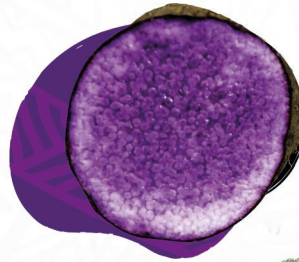
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Fruit and vegetables: foods that wish us well!

We all know by now that eating at least five fruit and vegetable portions a day helps us stay healthy and prevents the onset of non-communicable diseases and their attendant woes like diabetes, obesity, heart disease and even some cancers. But do you know why these foods are so wholesome?

Because they're brimming over with goodness!

LOCAL FRUIT, VEGETABLES AND TUBERS: our best allies for staying healthy

HIGH IN ESSENTIAL
NUTRIENTS:
VITAMINS, MINERALS,
FIBRE AND ANTIOXIDANTS

LOW IN
CALORIES

FRUIT AND
VEGETABLES ARE
NATURALLY...

LOW IN FAT

(CHOLESTEROL
-FREE)

So, WHAT ABOUT LOCAL ROOT CROPS?

Roots and tubers are naturally nutrient-rich and high in carbohydrates, providing the energy your body needs. Taro, sweet potatoes, yam and cassava grow abundantly in the Pacific! When eaten with vegetables they act like a health-boosting cocktail. So, why miss out on them?

Vitamins and minerals



In order to perform its **basic functions**, like seeing, breathing and keeping your heart, muscles and brain working, **your body need essential nutrients**, such as vitamins and minerals, which it can't produce on its own. But, to get them, you need to put them on your plate.

> WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF MY BODY DIDN'T GET ENOUGH ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS?

Fatigue, hair loss, sleeplessness, impaired vision, heart disease and a weakened immune system are some of the pretty serious effects that a lack of vitamins or minerals can have on your health.

Fibre



Fruit and vegetables are also recommended for their fibre content. **There are two types: soluble and insoluble fibre.** Your body can't absorb soluble fibre, but it does help you feel full and slows down sugar absorption, which is why it is so important for diabetics. Insoluble fibre helps your digestive system work properly, facilitating bowel function and preventing some disorders like constipation.

Health Tip !

DIETARY FIBRE GOES HAND IN HAND WITH A HEALTHY IMMUNE SYSTEM.

You might not be aware that your bowels are jam-packed with billions of micro-organisms such as viruses, yeast and bacteria.

Contrary to popular belief, not all these germs are bad! Weird as that may sound, **there are actually "good" bacteria that feed off dietary fibre!**

So, eating fibre-rich food is the best way to keep them breeding so as to **stimulate your immune system** and ward off attacks from bad bacteria.

Antioxidants



Antioxidants (that come under various names, such as anthocyanins, carotenoids, flavonoids, polyphenols, lutein and lycopene, etc.) are molecules **found in fruit, vegetables and root crops. They form an almost magic shield against free radicals** (harmful substances your body produces when attacked from outside, such as by stress, smoking, alcohol, pollution or an unbalanced diet, etc.). Once these free radicals reach high numbers, they can damage your health and cause disease. Fortunately, local produce is there to help you fight back against them and strengthen your natural defences!

> HOW CAN I KNOW WHICH FOODS ARE HIGH IN ANTIOXIDANTS?

Great question! Actually, nature gives us a helping hand: **if the fruit and vegetables you eat are colourful, it's because they contain antioxidants!** That's why you need to do away with the dull shades on your plate and splash bright colours on them with balanced meals. It's a great way of protecting your health and absorbing the antioxidants your body needs. Can you see now why they say you need to "put a rainbow on your plate"?

Let's see now what foods are available in the Pacific to give colour to your plate and protect your health!

Blue is probably not the first colour you think of for foods. And yet many are just that colour, such as berries, purple sweet potatoes or eggplants.

Antioxidants in purple to blue-black pigments (**anthocyanins**) are highly valuable, as they can prevent heart disease, improve vision and memory, prevent certain cancers and reduce inflammation (a major risk factor in many diseases).

Another good reason to eat them is that blue and purple foods are usually high in **dietary fibre, vitamins (e.g. vitamin C) and minerals such as potassium.**

> WHAT BLUE AND PURPLE LOCAL PRODUCE CAN I EASILY GET IN THE PACIFIC?

There's good news for you: there's a wide range to choose from, such as purple, blue, red and black berries, purple sweet potatoes, purple yam, purple taro, red cabbage, eggplants (with their skins on), blood-red dragon fruit (pitaya), purple or false shamrock, red oak lettuce, purple basil, red Swiss chard, radishes, purple grapes, purple onions, red shallots, purple kohlrabi and purple sweet-potato leaves.



PURPLE AND BLUE foods



> HOW DO YOU PREPARE THEM WITHOUT LOSING TOO MANY NUTRIENTS?

Eat very colourful fruit and vegetables, such as eggplants, with **their skins on** whenever possible, because the peels contain most of the nutrients. You should choose pesticide-free produce and wash it thoroughly with clean water before preparing it.

There are two golden rules

1

2

Preferably eat **raw** food such as grapes, purple onions and red cabbage, so as to preserve as many vitamins and minerals as possible. When foods need to be cooked, **use fats** like oil, butter or ghee **sparingly** and **only lightly salt** them and avoid overcooking. Fewer antioxidants are preserved when food is fried or sautéed, **so it's best to steam or bake it.**

> A FEW RECIPE SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDING DASHES OF BLUE AND PURPLE TO YOUR PLATE!

INGREDIENTS :

- ▷ 300g red cabbage
- ▷ 1 red onion
- ▷ 3 radishes
- ▷ A few leaves of red-oak type lettuce
- ▷ A few purple basil leaves
- ▷ 60g grated coconut
- ▷ Grilled sesame seeds
- ▷ 2 Tbsp sunflower oil
- ▷ 1 Tbsp mustard
- ▷ Juice of 1 lemon

Yam patty :

- ▷ 100g grated purple yam

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. Grate cabbage, mince onion, thinly slice radish and put into a large bowl. Add basil that you have cut up with scissors and mix. Season with oil, lemon juice, mustard, 1 Tbsp sesame seeds, salt and pepper.
2. Finely grate yam and mix with a little water.
3. Pour a little coconut oil into a hot pan and spread the yam dough with a fork to form a thin patty. Cook about 3 minutes on each side.
4. Put the patty on a plate and add lettuce leaves and a pile of coleslaw.

Coleslaw and yam patty



Purple sweet potato bread



INGREDIENTS :

- ▷ 170g flour
- ▷ 70g purple sweet potato
- ▷ 20cl sweet-potato cooking water
- ▷ 2 Tbsp coconut oil
- ▷ A pinch of salt
- ▷ 1 Tbsp yeast

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. Cook sweet potato in water for a few minutes (keep the water after cooking), then mash it well with a fork.
2. Pour the yeast and lukewarm cooking water into a bowl and dissolve well.
3. Put 50g of flour and the sweet potato into a large bowl, then mix with your fingertips. Add a pinch of salt, coconut oil and yeast and mix it all with a fork. Gradually add the rest of the flour and mix until you get a smooth dough. Let rise for 40 minutes in a warm, moist place (avoid drafts).
4. Preheat the oven to 200 degrees and bake the bread for about 40 minutes.

Broccoli, green beans, spinach, lettuce... the list is endless. In fact, so many vegetables are green that it's no surprise this colour has become the standard!

Do you know where the green leaf pigment comes from?

It's from **chlorophyll**, an essential substance for plants to be able to feed off sunrays in a process known as photosynthesis.

Of all the green vegetables around, let's zoom in on the **green leafy vegetable group**, such as island cabbage and taro leaves, and on **cruciferous** vegetables, also known as Brassica, like broccoli and all cabbage varieties, which are powerful allies against heart disease, stroke, neurodegenerative diseases and impaired vision.




GREEN foods

> LEAFY GREENS

We're really lucky, because the leaves of our favourite root crops, taro and sweet potatoes, plus island cabbage are edible and easy to grow in Pacific gardens. They are extremely **rich in vitamins A, K, C, E and B9 and in minerals (iron, potassium and calcium)** and provide a lot of **fibre and antioxidants such as beta-carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin**.

Pretty convincing arguments to get us to add a touch of green to our plates every day, aren't they?

For more information and recipe suggestions for leafy greens, take a look at this book:

 purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/o7ek5

> (CRUCIFEROUS) VEGETABLES

This category includes vegetables such as broccoli and cauliflower that are not typically Pacific plants, but are grown in some of the region's countries during the cooler months. But don't go splurging on imported produce. Lots of local vegetables are in the same botanical (and nutritional!) group and have similar benefits.

Nutritionally speaking, cruciferous vegetables are a very good **source of calcium** that's easily absorbed by the body and also contain generous amounts of **fibre, antioxidants (especially sulforaphane) and vitamins C, K and B9**. If you decide to eat more green vegetables, which are rich in vitamin K, while you are on blood thinners that break down vitamin K, then talk to your doctor first.

> WHAT LOCAL GREEN VEGETABLES CAN I EASILY GET IN THE PACIFIC?

Whether it's leafy greens or cruciferous vegetables, the answer is lots!

For the former, choose from taro leaves, cassava leaves, green sweet-potato leaves, chayote stems, pumpkin stems, seed sprouts such as alfalfa, various varieties of island cabbage, Basella or Malabar spinach, pigweeds, Vietnamese spinach, water spinach, edible ferns, Polyscias leaves, moringa, wild daisy leaves, sow thistle, katuk, roselle, carrot tops, lettuce, white Swiss chard and various other plant species with edible leaves and stems.

For cruciferous vegetables, go for rocket lettuce, watercress, choy sum, bok choy, Chinese cabbage, turnip tops, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, wild cabbage, mustard cabbage, kale, radish tops, horseradish and green kohlrabi.



> HOW DO YOU PREPARE THEM WITHOUT LOSING TOO MANY NUTRIENTS?

Watercress, cabbage, rocket lettuce, Malabar spinach and lettuce are delicious in salads! By eating them **raw**, you preserve certain heat-sensitive nutrients, such as vitamin C and antioxidants. Which is good news considering we should eat at least one raw vegetable serving per day.

Unlike taro leaves that must be cooked for at least 45 minutes to prevent rashes in the mouth and throat, other leafy greens can just be stir-fried for a few minutes at low temperature in a lightly oiled pan. As a general rule, **it's better to steam or sauté vegetables, because if you boil them, water-soluble nutrients like vitamin B and C go to waste in the water.**

Bonus tip!

To preserve all the nutritional properties of cruciferous vegetables, **either eat them raw or chop up them at least 30-40 minutes before cooking.** When there's a break between chopping and cooking, healthy substances will form.

> A FEW RECIPE SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDING A DASH OF GREEN TO YOUR PLATE!

INGREDIENTS :

- ▷ 700g deboned and chopped chicken thigh
- ▷ 10 nice island cabbage leaves or other leaves from the cabbage family
- ▷ 1 onion
- ▷ 2 garlic cloves
- ▷ 1 bunch of chayote stems and/or pumpkin stems
- ▷ A few green sweet potato leaves
- ▷ 2 Tbsp soy sauce
- ▷ 2 eggs
- ▷ 1 Tbsp flour
- ▷ 30cl coconut cream

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. Wash leaves well.
2. Put chicken meat, grated garlic, chopped onion and stems into a large bowl. Mix.
3. Add eggs, soy sauce and flour and mix well again.
4. Spread out the leaves, garnish with chicken meat then roll up tightly.
5. Place the rolls in the bottom of a pot, pour on coconut cream, cover, and cook for 10 minutes.

Chicken Simboro with island cabbage



Rolls Omelette and mixed salad



INGREDIENTS :

For the omelette:

- ▷ 4 eggs
- ▷ 2 grated garlic cloves
- ▷ 1 bunch of herbs: basil, parsley, green onions
- ▷ Lemon juice
- ▷ Salt, pepper

For the filling :

- ▷ A nice mix of rocket lettuce, radish tops and carrots

Vinaigrette:

- ▷ 1 chopped shallot
- ▷ 1 tsp mustard
- ▷ 3 Tbsp sunflower oil
- ▷ Lemon juice
- ▷ Pepper

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. Wash lettuce and herbs.
2. Using a mortar, crush the herbs with the garlic and lemon juice for a long time, then mix with the beaten eggs.
3. Make the vinaigrette in a salad bowl by whisking all the ingredients, then add the lettuce and carrot and radish tops. Mix.
4. Cook a thin omelette for a few minutes in a hot pan with a little coconut oil.
5. Once the omelette has cooled down, put the lettuce and carrot/radish tops in the middle and roll up.

A plateful of colours ! To stay healthy, eat your colours.

Broadening YOUR HORIZONS

Herbs: 3 good reasons for eating them

Whether it's basil, parsley, sage, oregano, Mexican mint, mint, coriander, rosemary, thyme, Vietnamese coriander, dill, tarragon or lemon grass, there are so many tasty herbs around that it would be a pity to miss out on them!

They add a lot of **flavour** to your meals and help you reduce salt and fat in your recipes without spoiling the taste.

Here are
three reasons
for adding
them to your
dishes:

2

They're rich in **minerals**, such as iron, potassium, calcium, phosphorus and magnesium; **vitamins**, especially C, A, K, E and B9; **antioxidants**, such as beta-carotene, lutein, zeaxanthin; and **dietary fibre**.

3

They're **easy to grow** in pots, even if you don't have a garden!

Seaweed: *neglect it at your own cost!*

Seaweed is so easy to get in large amounts in the Pacific, but so often overlooked in our diets. And that's a pity, because it's highly nutritious. It's a very good source of **dietary fibre and minerals**, such as iron, iodine, magnesium, potassium and calcium. Some dried seaweed also contains **zinc** and **vitamin E**, which have valuable antioxidant properties.

The most commonly eaten edible types of seaweed in the Pacific islands include **agar**, **lumi** (*C. demersum*) and **nama** or green caviar (*Caulerpa* sp.). It can be eaten raw in salads, as seaweed tartare or lightly stir-fried. It's best not to overcook it, so that it doesn't lose its nutrients and texture.

Seaweed obviously has a high salt content, so leave it to soak in cold water and then rinse it before eating.

Bonus Tip!

Some seaweed varieties like lumi or agar can also be used to make plant-based gelatine.



Halophyte plants: What's that?

It's a term used for plants that grow in salty soil that is hard to cultivate, such as next to beaches.

These plants can be good **alternatives to vegetables** in environments that are traditionally harsh for crops, such as atolls.

1

*That can be an
advantage for
two reasons*

2

With climate change and the farming soil depletion that are currently affecting the Pacific Islands, being able to grow such **resilient plants** is a major asset that could probably be put to good use in the future.

Some of the common halophytes around the region include the **sea purslane, bead weed, Salsola soda, New Zealand spinach and orache spinach.**

Even if the nutritional properties vary from one plant to another, they generally have reasonable amounts of **dietary fibre, proteins, vitamins including A and C, and antioxidants (mainly carotenoids).**

Because they grow in salty environments, halophyte plants often have a high sodium content. As with seaweed, they're best left to soak in cold water or blanched and then drained to remove the excess salt before eating.

Yellow and orange plants are widespread throughout the Pacific and available all year round at reasonable prices. Mangoes and pawpaws are delicious examples of this family and grow in most Pacific Island gardens.

The orange pigment that gives you that healthy glow is due to a class of antioxidant nutrients called **carotenoids**, which your body needs to produce **vitamin A**.

Vitamin A deficiency is all too common in our region, especially in children.

YELLOW AND ORANGE foods

> WHAT HAPPENS IF MY BODY DOESN'T GET ENOUGH VITAMIN A?

Vitamin A deficiency leads to eyesight disorders ranging from poor night vision to permanent blindness or weakened immunity that could make you more susceptible to infectious diseases. It can also lead to growth and development issues in children, problems during pregnancy, difficulties with wound healing and skin disorders.

It's fortunately **very easy to prevent this deficiency by regularly eating orange-coloured fruit and vegetables and leafy greens** (see page 10).



> WHAT LOCAL YELLOW AND ORANGE FRUIT AND VEGETABLES CAN I EASILY GET IN THE PACIFIC?

Lots! The Pacific is chock-full of mangoes, pawpaws, oranges, tangerines, passionfruit, melon, yellow-orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, yellow-orange-fleshed taro, carrots, sweet bananas, plantains, yellow-orange capsicum, breadfruit, squash and more.

> WHAT'S THE BEST WAY OF PRESERVING THEIR NUTRIENTS?

Adding a little fat to vitamin-A-rich foods helps your body better absorb their nutrients! So, if you eat a mango for tea, don't forget to add a handful of nuts, such as peanuts or nangae or ngali nuts, a bit of avocado or a piece of coconut.



> A FEW RECIPE SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDING DASHES OF YELLOW AND ORANGE TO YOUR PLATE!

Lentil curry



INGREDIENTS :

- ▷ 3 small sweet potatoes
- ▷ 3 carrots
- ▷ ¼ squash
- ▷ 2 onions
- ▷ 2 garlic cloves
- ▷ 1-2 cm grated fresh ginger
- ▷ 1-2 cm fresh turmeric
- ▷ 1 small chili pepper
- ▷ Pepper
- ▷ 250g red lentils
- ▷ 2 Tbsp coconut oil
- ▷ 25cl water
- ▷ 25cl coconut cream

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. Pour coconut oil into a casserole. Add minced onion, crushed garlic and chili pepper, turmeric and ginger. Simmer for 5 minutes.
2. Add sweet potatoes and diced carrots, stir well and cook for another 5 minutes.
3. Add water and coconut cream. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Add red lentils and pieces of squash. Mix well (add a little water if needed).
5. Cook for 10-15 minutes.

INGREDIENTS :

- ▷ 400g parrotfish fillet
- ▷ 15cl passion fruit juice
- ▷ 15cl coconut cream
- ▷ 15cl lemon juice
- ▷ ½ red onion
- ▷ 2 garlic cloves
- ▷ 1 small piece of ginger
- ▷ ½ cucumber
- ▷ 1 carrot
- ▷ ½ semi-ripe pawpaw
- ▷ 3 stems green onion
- ▷ 3 sprigs coriander

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. Cut fish into strips and place in a large bowl; add lemon and passion fruit. Cover and refrigerate for 45 minutes.
2. Slice onion, grate garlic and ginger, and chop herbs.
3. Drain fish.
4. In a large bowl, keep one-third of the juice, add coconut cream, vegetables, herbs and fish strips. Mix well and refrigerate for 1 hour.

BECAUSE THEY ARE OFTEN OVERFISHED, PARROTFISH ARE PROTECTED BY REGULATIONS IN MANY PACIFIC ISLANDS. CHECK WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Tahitian Salad with passion fruit



Broadening YOUR HORIZONS

*Turmeric:
a spice with heaps of benefits!*

This widely used spice in Indian cooking grows easily in the Pacific. It is taken from the turmeric plant's roots and, while it doesn't contain any vitamin A, it has large amounts of an antioxidant called **curcumin**, which scientists are increasingly studying for its many potential health benefits. It's fantastic for digestion and has strong **anti-inflammatory properties** that may prevent and treat some chronic diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, ulcerative colitis, and lupus. Turmeric can be eaten raw, cooked or as a spice when dried and ground. For better curcumin absorption, take it with black pepper.

Do you know why the Mediterranean diet is so closely studied?

Because Mediterraneans have a lower incidence of heart disease than other people with comparable lifestyles and living standards. One possible explanation could be their high consumption of tomatoes, which are rich in **lycopene**, a healthy antioxidant.

PINK AND RED foods

Some of the known benefits of red and pink foods include **heart disease prevention** (including high blood pressure and blood clots), **preventing certain types of cancer**, such as breast and prostate cancer, and **reducing “bad” cholesterol** (LDL).

In nutritional terms, such fruit and vegetables are generally **high in fibre, vitamins** (especially vitamin C) and **minerals**, such as potassium.

Health Tip

> VITAMIN C AND ITS BENEFITS

Vitamin C, an antioxidant :

- ▶ **strengthens your immune system,**
- ▶ **improves your skin, bones and cartilage,**
- ▶ **helps with proper healing of wounds.**

Most fruit and vegetables, such as capsicum and grapefruit, contain generous amounts of vitamin C, but it can easily be destroyed by heat when cooked. That's why it's best to eat such fruit raw and cook the vegetables over low heat.

Prolonged vitamin-C deficiency can cause scurvy, a serious and potentially fatal disease. Vitamin C also plays a major role in absorbing iron, a mineral that many Pacific women and children are deficient in. In order to prevent anaemia (iron deficiency), **you should eat fruit and vegetables that are high in vitamin C at the same time as iron-rich foods.**



HERE'S A SUGGESTION FOR AN IRON-
AND VITAMIN-C-RICH MEAL:

watercress and
tomato salad



a lentil (dhal) soup
or sautéed taro leaves
or island cabbage



An orange





> WHAT LOCAL RED AND PINK FRUIT AND VEGETABLES CAN I EASILY GET IN THE PACIFIC?

Tomatoes, watermelon, red capsicum, red chili peppers, pawpaw, pink guava, pink grapefruit and red grapes. Give yourself a treat: there's more than enough to go around!

> HOW DO YOU PREPARE THEM WITHOUT LOSING TOO MANY NUTRIENTS?

You should eat these fruits and vegetables with a little fat to get the most out of their nutrients. For example, add a little avocado to your tomato salad, eat a handful of nuts with your guava or eat your watermelon with its seeds.



> A FEW RECIPE SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDING DASHES OF RED AND PINK TO YOUR PLATE!

INGREDIENTS :

- ▷ 40cl watermelon juice
- ▷ 3 Tbsp honey
- ▷ A pinch of ground cinnamon
- ▷ Peel and juice of one lemon
- ▷ A few mint leaves
- ▷ 1 piece of grated ginger

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. Grate watermelon and ginger to extract juice and then incorporate all the other ingredients.
2. Pour the liquid into an ice cube tray, and put in bamboo or small wooden sticks.
3. Place in the freezer overnight.

Watermelon ice pops



Ahi (tuna) Tartare



INGREDIENTS :

- ▷ 400g yellowfin tuna
- ▷ 100g taro
- ▷ 2 tomatoes
- ▷ 2 capsicum
- ▷ ½ hot chili pepper
- ▷ A few Roquito peppers
- ▷ 1 garlic clove
- ▷ ½ red onion
- ▷ 1 piece of grated ginger
- ▷ Peel and juice of one lemon
- ▷ A few stalks of green onion and coriander
- ▷ 4 Tbsp sunflower oil
- ▷ 1 Tbsp coconut oil

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. Coarsely grate taro and cook in water for 2 to 3 minutes - it should still be firm. Rinse rapidly with cold water.
2. Make the chutney: Dice tomatoes and capsicum, slice onion, chili peppers and herbs and place in a large bowl. Chop ginger and garlic, then cube the tuna. Add lemon peel, salt and pepper.
Mix all the ingredients well, refrigerate for 1 hour.
3. Add lemon juice right before serving.

Of the few available white foods in the Pacific, vegetables from the *Allium* genus are particularly nutritious, the best known members of which are onions and garlic.

These foods have many major nutritional and health benefits and eating them regularly can **prevent certain types of cancer, improve glucose and cholesterol levels in the blood and prevent high blood pressure.**

They are also good sources of proteins, dietary fibre and minerals such as potassium and iron.

And the finishing touch is that these foods add a lot of flavour to your dishes! So, you can embellish your dishes while reducing salt and fats at the same time!

WHITE Foods

> WHAT LOCAL WHITE FRUIT AND VEGETABLES CAN I EASILY GET IN THE PACIFIC?

Garlic, onions, white shallots, spring onions, chives, garlic chives, leeks, and so on. It can be difficult identifying foods in this genus because they're not always white! Some are even green!

What they all have in common, though, is their amazing flavour, pungent aroma and seasoning qualities.

> WHAT'S THE BEST WAY OF PRESERVING THEIR NUTRIENTS?

These vegetables can be eaten both raw and cooked. Garlic and onions are also available in powdered form and can be used as flavour enhancers in various dishes instead of salt.



Health Tip

ARE ALL WHITE FOODS GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH?

Unfortunately not! **Sometimes this colour means the food has been refined and many of its nutrients were eliminated in the process**, as happens with rice, pasta, bread, noodles and crackers.

So, when you eat white rice, you absorb as many calories as with brown rice, but less fibre and fewer minerals (iron, calcium, potassium, phosphorus, zinc and magnesium), vitamins (especially from the B group) and antioxidants. That's why you should choose wholemeal flour and foods, when you can.

Don't worry, though, **there are heaps of healthy white fruits and vegetables**, such as taro, yam, cassava, white sweet potato, potato, coconut, cauliflower, head cabbage, turnip, imported apples and pears that you can find in any Pacific supermarket, and many more besides!



➤ A FEW RECIPE SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDING A DASH OF WHITE TO YOUR PLATE!

INGREDIENTS :

- 1 cauliflower
- 1 leek (white part only)
- 2 onions
- 50cl coconut cream
- 20cl chicken stock
- Pawpaw flower buds

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. Brown onion and finely chopped leek in a saucepan for a few minutes, then add grated cauliflower.
2. Add coconut cream and chicken broth, and reduce for 20 minutes.
3. Quickly sauté pawpaw buds in coconut oil, then place them on top of the soup.

**This soup can be served hot or cold*

Cocoliflower soup



Fire-baked Fish Wraps



INGREDIENTS :

- 1 lagoon fish fillet
- 100g taro
- 1 leek (white part only)
- 2 Kaffir lime leaves
- 1 stalk lemongrass
- 20cl coconut cream
- 6 banana leaves (30x20cm) soaked in water (to prevent them from burning on the fire)

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. Dice taro in small pieces and thinly slice white leek and place in a bowl. Add coconut cream and mix.
2. Quickly pass the leaves over the flames to soften them, then layer in pairs to line a large bowl.
3. Place coconut/leek/taro mixture in the middle, then add Kaffir lime leaves, ½ lemongrass stalk and fish on top. Wrap up the fish with the first banana leaves, tighten, rotate the bundle half a turn and fold over the other leaves. Secure ends with wooden skewers.
4. Gently cook wraps over a wood fire for about 20-25 minutes.

Broadening YOUR HORIZONS

Nuts and seeds for all your needs

These nutrient-rich foods should be part of your daily fare! You should even eat a handful every day (unsalted and not fried), because they are full of proteins, dietary fibre, polyunsaturated fatty acids (the good fats, including omega-3s and omega-6s), minerals (especially iron, calcium, zinc, magnesium, potassium, phosphorus and selenium), vitamins E and B and many other antioxidants, including phytosterols or phenolic compounds.

These foods are anti-inflammatories and good for your heart health. They can also lower your cholesterol levels.

Although the nuts (pecan, cashew, macadamias, almonds, peanuts and hazelnuts, etc.) you find in the shops are mainly imported, there are some that are locally grown and easier to get. These include pistachios, pili nuts, namambe (Tahitian chestnuts), candlenut, Indian almonds and pandanus nuts, etc.

You can also keep squash, pawpaw, watermelon, breadfruit and jackfruit seeds! You just need to bake them at low temperatures to make cheap but delicious snacks.

Spruce up your plate with edible flowers

Edible flowers have always been welcome guests at banquets everywhere. Gourmet restaurants still serve them regularly to this day!

There is only the odd story about eating flowers in the Pacific and yet, like fruit, vegetables and root crops, their colours bear witness to the valuable antioxidants they contain, mainly phenols and flavonoids.

Flowers are fat-free, an excellent source of vitamins A, C and B, minerals (potassium, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium and iron) and dietary fibre.

Careful, though! Make sure you correctly identify the plant before eating its flowers! Some are toxic to humans. Also, to avoid pesticides, don't eat shop-bought flowers. Eat flowers you have planted in your garden or picked in the wild.

A quick overview of tasty, colourful flowers!



YELLOW AND ORANGE FLOWERS

Squash and courgette/zucchini flowers, choy sum flowers, parsley flowers, broccoli flowers, dandelions (*Taraxacum officinale*), pot marigold (*Calendula officinalis* L.), and Mexican or African marigold (*Tagetes erecta* L.)

Yellow and orange flowers are also good sources of beta-carotene and, therefore, vitamin A.



BLUE AND PURPLE FLOWERS

Bougainvillea (*Bougainvillea spectabilis*), Curcuma plicata flowers, blue pea and winged-bean flowers, basil flowers and chive flowers.



WHITE FLOWERS

Banana flowers, male pawpaw-tree flowers, spring onion and basil flowers, moringa flowers, pitaya flowers, chili flowers, greater galangal or galanga flowers (*Alpinia galanga*), Hedychium forrestii flowers, and Amomum maximum or Cardamomum maximum flowers.



RED-PINK FLOWERS

Hibiscus (*rosa-sinensis*), roselle, Egyptian starcluster (*Pentas lanceolata*), torch ginger flowers (*Etlingera elatior*) and ginger flowers (*Zingiber officinale*).

> A FEW RECIPE SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDING FLOWERS TO YOUR PLATE!

INGREDIENTS :

- ▶ 1 banana flower
- ▶ 1 carrot
- ▶ ½ green pawpaw
- ▶ A few lettuce leaves
- ▶ Herbs: mint, coriander, green onions
- ▶ 1 red onion
- ▶ A handful of peanuts
- ▶ Lemon juice or vinegar
- ▶ 1 small fresh chili pepper

For the sauce :

- ▶ 1 Tbsp nuoc mam (fish) sauce
- ▶ Lemon juice
- ▶ 3-4 Tbsp coconut or sunflower oil

INSTRUCTIONS :

Preparing the banana flower:

1. Peel the flower (only use the middle bracts which are softer and light in colour).
2. Cut flower in half lengthwise, remove hard central part and young banana shoots. Slice finely. Soak in vinegar or lemon water for 10 minutes to remove bitterness and prevent oxidation.
3. Drain and place in a salad bowl.

Preparing the salad :

1. Wash lettuce leaves. Peel and finely slice red onion.
2. Wash, dry and finely chop herbs.
3. Peel and grate carrot and green pawpaw.
4. Put all the ingredients together and mix.
5. Prepare sauce by mixing nuoc mam sauce, lemon juice and oil. Sprinkle with coarsely crushed peanuts.

You can add tofu, chicken or grilled fish to this salad.

Banana flower salad



Butterfly Pea flower infusion



INGREDIENTS :

- ▶ Butterfly pea flowers (Clitoria ternatea)
- ▶ Herbs and spices (thyme, rosemary, lemongrass, lemon juice, ginger, etc.)

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. **Blue water:** Boil water with a handful of Butterfly pea flowers and the blue colour will gradually appear.
- Pink water:** Add lemon juice to the blue water. The more lemon juice you add, the brighter the pink colour will be.
- Green water:** Boil water with a handful of Butterfly pea flowers, lemongrass and mint.
2. Finally, pour the infusions into bottles, wait for them to cool and then refrigerate.

Colourful plates + appropriate portions = STAYING HEALTHY!

Now you know why it's so important to eat different coloured foods every day! Don't forget to put the proper proportions on your plate.

ENERGY FOODS

Eat fruit and vegetables at
least **twice a day**



ENERGY FOODS

Choose **whole-food**
starches



BODY-BUILDING FOODS

Prefer **lean** proteins



Choose and prepare foods with less salt,
fat and sugar.

A plateful of colours! To stay healthy, eat your colours.



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