

Fruit of the Month

Papaya



The exact origination of papaya is unknown but it is believed to be native to southern Mexico and neighboring Central America. The papaya is a melon like fruit with yellow-orange flesh enclosed in a thin skin that varies in color from green to orange to rose. Papayas are a rich source of vitamin A and C. One half of a small papaya can provide 150% of the recommended dietary intake of Vitamin C. It is low in calories, fat free, cholesterol free, and a good source of potassium, folate, and fiber.

Today papaya can be found all year long with the peak season being early summer and fall. Most of the papayas imported come from Hawaii, but smaller quantities from Florida, California, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Central and South American countries are becoming more available.

The papaya enzyme called papain, is used as a meat tenderizer. It breaks down tough meat fibers. Its use is nothing new. South American cooks have been using papaya to tenderize meat for ages. It is sold as a component in powdered meat tenderizer available in most supermarkets.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size (140g)	
Servings Per Container	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 70	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 10mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 19g	6%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 9g	
Protein 0g	
Vitamin A 8%	• Vitamin C 150%
Calcium 4%	• Iron 2%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

Selection

Look for papayas that are partly or completely yellow in color, depending on variety, that give slightly to pressure, but are not soft at the stem-end. Avoid papayas that are bruised, shriveled, or have soft areas. Papayas that are hard and green are immature and will not ripen properly. Uncut papayas have no smell. Papayas that are cut should smell sweet, not bad or fermented.

Storage

Slightly green papayas will ripen quickly at room temperature, especially if placed in a paper bag. As the papaya ripens, it will turn from green to yellow. Place ripe papayas in a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator. Papayas will keep for up to a week, but it's best to use them within a day or two.

Varieties

There are two types of papayas, the Hawaiian and Mexican. The Hawaiian varieties also known as Solo papayas, are found most often in supermarkets. These fruits are pear shaped, weigh about a pound each, and have yellow skin when ripe. The flesh is bright orange or pinkish, depending on the variety. The Mexican varieties are not as common but can be found in Latino supermarkets. Mexican papayas are much larger than the Hawaiian types and can weigh up to 20 pounds and be more than 15 inches long. Although the flavor is less intense than the Hawaiian varieties, they are still delicious and enjoyable.

Make Papayas Part of Your 5 A Day Plan



- Use papayas to make a hot and spicy salsa.
- Blend papaya with milk, yogurt, or orange juice for a breakfast smoothie.
- Puree papaya to make a delicious salad dressing or base for ice cream or sorbet.
- Add papaya slices to honeydew, melon, and strawberries to make a colorful fruit cup or salad.

Recipes

Papaya-Pineapple Salsa

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup ripe papaya, diced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fresh pineapple, diced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup diced jicama
- 3 tbsp chopped red onion
- 1 chili pepper, Serrano or jalapeno
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 tsp lime zest
- 2 tbsp fresh lime juice
- 1 tbsp minced cilantro

Combine papaya, pineapple, jicama, red onion, chili pepper, garlic zest, lime juice, and cilantro. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 37, protein 1g, fat 0g, percent calories from fat 5%, cholesterol 0mg, carbohydrates 9g, fiber 2g, sodium 2mg

Papaya and Pineapple Juice

Makes 2 (12 ounce) servings

Each serving equals two and a half 5 A Day servings

Official 5 A Day recipe from Produce for Better Health

- 2 cups of pineapple juice
- 2 cups of papaya
- 2 tbsp of honey
- 1 tbsp of lemon juice

Combine all the ingredients in a blender. Cover and blend on high until smooth.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 250, protein 1g, fat 0g, percent calories from fat 1%, cholesterol 0mg, carbohydrates 61g, fiber 3g, sodium 15mg

Tropical Kiwifruit Salad

Makes 6 servings

Each serving equals two 5 A Day servings

Official 5 A Day recipe from: Produce for Better Health/ New Zealand
Kiwifruit Marketing Board

6 kiwifruit

1 papaya, peeled, quartered, and seeded

12 watermelon triangles $\frac{1}{4}$ thick

4 mint sprigs

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup lime juice

3 Tbsp honey

1 Tbsp fresh mint chopped

Peel kiwifruit and slice $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick rounds. Slice papaya lengthwise into $\frac{1}{4}$ inch slices. Arrange kiwifruit, papaya, and watermelon on four salad plates. Whisk together dressing ingredients until well combined. Drizzle with lime and mint dressings. Garnish with mint sprigs.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 298, protein 5g, fat 3g, percent calories from fat 8%, cholesterol 0mg, carbohydrates 70g, fiber 7g, sodium 18mg

Papaya Boats

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals two and a half 5 A Day servings

2 papayas, ripe

1 cup (11 oz) Mandarin oranges, drained

1 banana, (small and ripe), sliced

1 kiwi, peeled and sliced

1/2 cup blueberries

1/2 cup strawberries

1 cup non-fat vanilla yogurt

2 Tbsp honey

2 tsp chopped fresh mint

Cut papayas in half lengthwise; scoop out seeds. Place oranges, banana, kiwi and berries in each papaya half. Combine yogurt, honey and mint; mix well and spoon over fruit before serving. Garnish with mint sprigs, if desired.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 240, protein 6g, fat 1g, percent calories from fat 3%, cholesterol 1mg, carbohydrates 58g, fiber 6g, sodium 55mg

Scallops with Spicy Papaya Sauce

Makes 2 servings

Each serving equals two and a half 5 A Day servings

1 small papaya, peeled, seeded and chopped

1 red bell pepper, chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$ red onion, chopped

2Tbsps fresh lime juice

1 Tbsp chopped fresh cilantro

1 tsp minced jalapeno peppers

1 Tbsp olive oil

2 Tbsp all-purpose flour

1 pound sea scallops

salt and pepper to taste

In a medium bowl, combine papaya, red pepper, jalapeno onion, lime juice, and cilantro. Set aside. In a large sealable plastic bag, combine flour, salt, pepper, scallops, and shake to coat. In a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat and add scallops; cook and stir until golden. Place scallops over papaya sauce and serve immediately.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 356, protein 40g, fat 9g, percent calories from fat 23%, cholesterol 75mg, carbohydrates 27g, fiber 4g, sodium 370mg