

# Fruit of the Month

## Grapes



The grape is one of the oldest fruits to be cultivated going back as far as biblical times. Spanish explorers introduced the fruit to America approximately 300 years ago. Some of the most popular ways in which the fruit is used, is eaten fresh, in preserves or canned in jellies, dried into raisins, and crushed for juice or wine. Although, machines have taken the place of much handwork, table grapes are still harvested by hand in many places. (Wellness Encyclopedia of Food and Nutrition, 1992).

Grapes are about 80 percent water, making them a delectable low-calorie snack or dessert; a cup of Concord or Catawba grapes contains only about 60 calories. Grapes also add fiber to the diet and are naturally low in sodium. Raisins, or dried grapes, contain only about 15 percent water. For this reason, nutrients and calories are more concentrated in raisins—one cup contains 464 calories! Like other dried fruit, raisins are a good source of iron. Serving Size 1-1/2 cups (138g/14.9oz)

# Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 1/2 cups grapes (138g)

Amount Per Serving	
	% Daily Value*
<b>Calories</b> 85	Calories from Fat 0
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<b>Total Fat</b> 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	0%
<b>Sodium</b> 0mg	0%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 24g	8%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 23g	
<b>Protein</b> 1g	
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Vitamin A 2%	Vitamin C 8%
Calcium 2%	Iron 2%

## Varieties

Grapes come in more than 50 varieties in black, blue, blue-black, golden, red, green, purple, and white colors with a juicy pulp inside. The two main types of grapes are the American and European. They both come in seeded and seedless varieties. Common varieties include Thompson, Flame, Ruby, Perlette and Tokay grapes. Most U.S. grapes are grown in California.

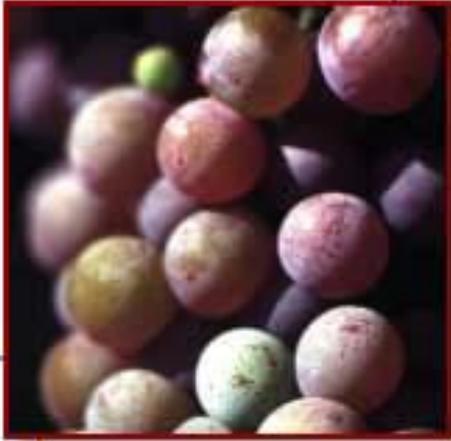
## Selecting Grapes

Look for firm, plump, well-colored clusters of grapes that are securely attached to their green stems. Fully ripe grapes are soft and tender. Grapes showing signs of decay, shriveling, stickiness, brown spots or dry brittle stems should be avoided. Blue Concord grapes are excellent for table use and for making juice and jelly. The large, purplish-red catawba variety is used primarily for making juice and wine, but can also be served fresh for eating.

## Using and Preserving Grapes

### Fresh Facts

- Fresh grapes maintain good quality for two to three days in the refrigerator. Store in a covered container or plastic bag.
- Just before use, wash grape clusters under a gentle spray of water, drain and pat dry.
- Table grapes are at their best served slightly chilled to enhance their crisp texture and refreshing flavor.
- Seedless grapes are used whole. For seeded grapes, remove seeds by cutting grapes into halves lengthwise and scooping out seeds with the point of a knife.



- Grapes are easier to peel when they're frozen. Just rinse frozen grapes in lukewarm water until skins split. Skins will then slip right off.
- When preparing small clusters of grapes for garnishing, cut the clusters with scissors. This helps keep the grapes attached to the stem.

For longer storage, grapes can be canned, frozen or made into juice or sweet spreads to enhance meals throughout the year. Grapes can be dried as raisins for use as a snack or in baking.

### Canned Facts

- Seedless grapes can be canned whole for use in fruit salads and molded gelatin desserts. If seeded varieties are used, halve and remove seeds before canning.
- Grape juice can be canned both sweetened and unsweetened. If juice will be made into jelly later, it's best to can it without sugar-then add the proper amount of sugar at jelly making time.
- To prevent mold growth, seal grape jelly with two-piece canning lids and process for five minutes in a simmering water bath.

### Freezer Facts

- Frozen grape juice is of excellent quality—serve it alone or mixed with other juices. Freeze a few grape "popsicles" for an icy summer treat.
- Freeze grape puree for use in making grape pie and to flavor yogurt.
- Tray freeze seedless grapes and store them in freezer containers. When summer temperatures sizzle, chill summer drinks with "grape" ice cubes.
- For an easy, refreshing summer dessert, serve tray frozen grapes in a chilled glass bowl.

## Dried Facts

- The quality of dried grapes, or raisins, is excellent.
- For best results, use seedless grapes. If seeded varieties are used, remove seeds as described under Fresh Facts before drying.
- In areas of high humidity, sun drying is not recommended. For best results, dry grapes in a dehydrator or oven.

## Make Grapes Part of Your 5 A Day Plan



It is easy to include grapes in your 5 A Day Plan. They're the original fast food so pack them before you leave home in your lunch or as a snack. Add grapes to any meal as a side dish, especially chicken. Eat grapes as a midmorning or midday snack. Freeze grapes and eat straight from the freezer.

## Quick 'N Fresh Ideas

- No time to make a fancy dessert? Serve clusters of chilled grapes on a platter with several types of cheese. Let guests serve themselves.
- A breakfast that's guaranteed to wake up slow starters...heap light green honeydew melon halves with luscious red grapes and top with yogurt. A toasted muffin makes this quick meal a nutritious morning starter.
- For a delicious one-course summer dinner, add chilled grapes to your favorite pasta, chicken or seafood salad. Serve with crusty bread or roll.

# Recipes

## Grape Kabobs

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals two 5 A Day servings

- 1 cup purple grapes, seedless
- 1 cup chopped pineapple
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup apple juice
- 2 kiwifruits, peeled and cut into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick slices
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup nonfat plain yogurt
- 2 small bananas, cut into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick slices
- 1 Tbsp orange juice
- 1 cup small strawberries, melon balls and blackberries



For the dip, in a small saucepan, bring the pineapple and apple juice to a boil. Reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Let stand about 25 minutes or until cool.

Transfer the pineapple mixture to a blender or food processor. Add the yogurt and blend or process until smooth. If desired, cover and chill in the refrigerator before serving. Place the bananas in a small bowl. Drizzle with the orange juice, then gently toss until coated. Cut the kiwi slices into quarters.

For the kabobs, thread the grapes, bananas, kiwi, strawberries, melon balls and blackberries onto 4-inch bamboo skewers. Serve with the dip.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 191, protein 3g, fat 1g, percent calories from fat 4%, cholesterol 0mg, carbohydrates 47g, fiber 7g, sodium 27mg

## **Chicken and Grape Pasta Pockets**

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Produce for Better Health/California Table Grape Commission

1½ cup seedless grapes, halved

1 cup diced cooked chicken

¼ cup low fat yogurt

1 Tbsp green onion, minced

1 tsp Dijon-style mustard

Salt and pepper to taste

6oz (16 to 18) jumbo shell macaroni cooked and drained

Lettuce leaves

Bottled low-calorie dressing

Combine grapes, chicken, yogurt, celery, green onion, mustard, salt and pepper; mix well. Stuff mixture into cooked shells. Serve on lettuce leaves with dressing.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 171, protein 12g, fat 3g, percent calories from fat 18%, cholesterol 36mg, carbohydrates 24g, fiber 2g, sodium 423mg

### **Pistachios, Fruits and Fun**

Makes 8 (1 cup) servings

Each serving equals two 5 A Day servings

Source: Produce for Better Health

3 cups (1 basket) fresh strawberries, hulled, halved  
3½ cups cantaloupe (medium), pared, seeded, and cut up  
2½ cups seedless green grapes  
1/3 cup shelled natural pistachios (raw)  
1/3 cup frozen lemonade concentrate  
2 Tbsp sugar

Combine fruit and pistachios in bowl. Stir lemonade concentrate with sugar vigorously, pour over fruit; toss gently to coat well. Refrigerate until ready to serve, tossing now and then.

Nutrition analysis per serving: calories 135, protein 2g, fat 3g, percent calories from fat 19% cholesterol 0mg, carbohydrates 28g, fiber 3g, sodium 8mg

### **Grape Volcano Smoothie**

Makes 1 (1 1/2 cups) serving

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Produce for Better Health

1/2 cup seedless green grapes  
1/2 cup 1% Milk, (or skim)  
1/2 cup plain, low-fat yogurt  
1 Tbsp brown sugar  
1/8 tsp vanilla  
2 Ice cubes, cracked

Put all ingredients in a blender. Blend at high speed for 15 seconds.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 205, protein 10, fat 1g, percent calories from fat 2%, cholesterol 4mg, carbohydrates 44g, fiber 1g, sodium 141mg

## **Grape and Napa Cabbage Stir-Fry**

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Produce for Better Health/California Table Grape Commission

1 cup onion, sliced vertically

1 Tbsp olive oil

4 cup Napa cabbage, cut into 1/2" slices

2 cup halved seedless grapes

4 dried Shitake mushrooms, re-hydrated and cut into 1/2" slices

2 Tbsp basil (fresh), chopped (2 tsp dried basil may be substituted)

Salt and pepper to taste

1/4 cup water

1 tsp cornstarch

Sauté onion in oil until tender. Add cabbage, grapes, mushrooms, basil, salt and pepper and stir-fry until cabbage is crisp-tender. Combine water and cornstarch; mix well and add to grape mixture. Stir-fry about 1 minute or until sauce thickens.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 127, protein 2g, fat 4g, percent calories from fat 27%, cholesterol 0mg, carbohydrates 22g, fiber 3g, sodium 291mg