



Spring Is In The Air! : Springtime Superfoods

By Bill Bradley, Registered Dietitian and Cookbook Author

Here is a very quick post-winter quiz:

Do you feel lethargic? Have you gained a few pounds over the winter months? Are you having a hard time concentrating at work?

Since Superman is busy fighting Batman right now, we will have to rely on our trusty Superfoods to come to the rescue! Superfoods are highly nutritive, full of antioxidants that contain powerful inflammation-reducing properties. Many of these foods can be eaten on their own or combined with other superfoods to pack an even greater wallop of wellness! These are the foods that have kept people in the Mediterranean and Asia living long, vibrant, and happy lives. They have been shown to decrease the risk of almost every preventable disease from asthma to arthritis to Alzheimer's to cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. Plus, they provide a very nice added benefit: the more your diet is based on superfoods, the more likely you will be able to maintain or lose weight.

Springtime is one of the best times of year to start adding superfoods to your diet. They will not only give you newfound energy, but they will help you “detox” from the heavier foods of winter. Springtime superfoods include leeks, asparagus, green peas, radishes, arugula, dandelion greens, garlic, eggs, broccoli raab, fennel, rhubarb, walnuts, salmon, beans, and extra virgin olive oil.

Here are a few quick ideas on ways to create some quick superfood recipes.

- 1) Greens and Beans** – Sauté garlic in extra virgin olive oil. Add your favorite greens (spinach, Swiss chard, mustard greens, dandelion greens). Sauté until wilted and then add a can of your favorite beans (washed and rinsed). Heat 5 minutes and serve.

- 2) Veggie Scramble** – In extra virgin olive oil, sauté chopped onions, red peppers, and spinach. Remove from heat. In another pan, scramble some eggs with olive oil and dried oregano. Add the cooked veggies and cheese. Salt and pepper to taste.
- 3) Berry Berry Sorbet** – In a food processor, add 2 cups of frozen strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries. Add 1/4 cup fruit juice. Puree. Add more juice if needed to make a sorbet consistency. Serve immediately.
- 4) Superfood Picnic** – Enjoy a little flavor of the Mediterranean by creating small plates of olives, sliced apples, cheese, Greek salad, roasted red peppers, marinated artichokes, and a chilled and grilled asparagus salad. Serve with whole grain bread and olive oil.
- 5) Morning Parfait** – Top plain Greek yogurt with fresh berries, walnuts, and honey.

As you can see, superfoods are not only incredibly good for you, they also create some of the best tasting meals out there. You can even make comfort foods healthier by adding superfoods to the recipe. I love making “fried” (plain or sweet) potatoes in the oven and adding lots of extra virgin olive oil and spices. Add veggies to meat chili or pizza for a superfood kick. I have even been known to add greens to my occasional macaroni and cheese. I recommend buying a few superfoods at the supermarket or farmer’s market and giving them a try. Don’t be afraid to experiment. You may find superfoods becoming your favorite foods!

Here are 3 more superfood recipes that are fast, easy and delicious. :

Spinach

Quick and Easy Spinach with Feta and Lemon from Mediterranean Living

<https://www.mediterraneanliving.com/recipe-items/spinach-with-feta-and-lemon/>

Salmon

Winning Recipe for Baked Salmon with Parmesan Herb Crust from Add A Pinch

<http://addapinch.com/baked-salmon-with-parmesan-herb-crust-recipe/>

Strawberries

Fast Strawberry Frozen Yogurt from Just A Taste

<http://www.justataste.com/5-minute-healthy-strawberry-frozen-yogurt-recipe/?crlt.pid=camp.n6olbBziD6YI>

To get a longer list of superfoods you can enjoy, we highly recommend this excellent list of 100 superfoods over at SparkPeople.

http://www.sparkpeople.com/resource/nutrition_articles.asp?id=307

Happy Spring!