

Shop smart, shop Seasonal!

There are many reasons why choosing fruit and vegetables that are in season is the smart way to eat, and it's not just because they are the most readily available. Mother nature has cleverly ensured that the types of nutrients we need, around the different times and weather conditions of the year, are available in the fresh produce that is grown at that time. In fact it wasn't that long ago, before mass exporting became an option, that we had no choice but to eat what was in season, perhaps that wasn't as bad as we thought?

If we were to rely upon big supermarkets to purchase all our fresh produce, then we might never know what was in season as they import fruits and vegetables from all around the world. It also means many of them have been travelling for weeks before we eat them and have often been artificially ripened whilst being transported.



Why Seasonal Eating Is The Best Way To Go

Packed Full Of Nutrients And Flavour! The reason the foods you buy at the local farmer's market are usually more delicious and more aesthetically appealing, is because they have been grown naturally and harvested recently. They are usually ripened on the tree/vine and don't need to be transported across state or country, which means they are still very fresh when they get to your hands. Because of this they are often much higher in nutrients (and taste!), than produce that has been ripened using gas, whilst being transported hundreds or even thousands of miles.

Supporting Your Community! By purchasing your produce from the local markets you are supporting the smaller businesses, to help ensure that they are not run out of town by the big

corporate companies. The more smaller farmers we support, the more produce they are able to offer us which means we can continue to eat delicious, nutritious fruits and vegetables all year round.

Easy On Your Wallet! You will be surprised just how much you will save by shopping at your local farmers market. The reason why? When you shop seasonal, you are purchasing produce that is readily available in these months, and the fact that there is more available, usually means they are cheaper at these times.

Variety All Year Round! One of the great things about using the different types of produce as they come into season, is that you get to eat a variety of different types of foods. Different types of foods equals different types of nutrients, so apart from the yum factor of keeping variety in your diet, you are also ensuring that you receive a range of delicious nutrients too!

Harmonizing With What Nature Intended! Not only are you opting to eat how we were intended to eat, and how we have eaten for thousands of years prior to the introduction of mass import and export, but we are also reducing our contribution to the destruction of the ozone!

Different produce comes into season at slightly different times depending on which state you are in, so as we enter these summer months, here are some of the fruits and vegetables to keep an eye out for as they are in season here in Florida:

- Avocados
- Aubergine
- Cucumbers
- Basil
- Sweet peppers
- Corn
- Potatoes
- Green beans
- Tomatoes
- Cantaloup
- Mangos
- Oranges
- Melons

Because the weather is warming up, it is natural to crave lighter or cooler meals. So try this delicious avocado and melon smoothie for your next breakfast, or even just for a healthy and delicious treat!

Avocado and Melon Smoothie



Ingredients:

- 1 large ripe avocado
- 1 cup of cantaloupe in chunks
- 1 cup plain yogurt - low fat
- 1 cup skim milk
- ½ cup apple juice
- 1 Tbsp honey
- Several ice cubes
- Lime juice to taste

Method:

- Slice open the avocado and remove the seed, then scoop the flesh into a blender
- Add all remaining ingredients and then blend well, until the ice has melted

- Pour into glasses and enjoy whilst it is fresh!

Tips:

- Add a few mint leaves to complement the flavours
- Try using a combination of melons, or even some mango that's also now in season, to vary the flavour
- If your melon is quite ripe you may not need the honey as it will be sweet already. You can always add the honey after first tasting the smoothie (remembering to give it another quick blend after adding it!)