

Reader's
digest

SUPER FOODS COOKBOOK



184 Super Easy Recipes to Boost Your Health

**FIGHT AGING AND PREVENT DISEASE
WITH NATURE'S POWER FOODS**

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The Reader's Digest Association, Inc.
New York, NY/Montreal

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Welcome to the NEXT STAGE OF the HEALTHY FOOD REVOLUTION

Put down your health books, take up your knife and fork, and discover how to eat your way to a healthier lifestyle, easily, quickly, and deliciously. Savor our recipes and move into the super food nutritional fast lane.



Super Foods Cookbook is a cookbook with a difference—a fantastic selection of tasty, contemporary, easy recipes for everyday living, each of them packed with foods that have been demonstrated to promote long-term health, aid healing, and even help to fight some diseases. And all this can be done without fuss, complicated preparation, or lengthy cooking time—and with supermarket staples.

WHAT IS A SUPER FOOD?

Super foods, such as broccoli, blueberries, and salmon, contain natural ingredients with exceptional nutritional values or protective qualities. They contain natural chemicals, compounds, and nutrients that, for example, may help to protect against the impact of diseases such as cancer and type 2 diabetes, as well as fight the effects of aging, help to lower cholesterol levels, and improve mental alertness.

Here are five top reasons for including more super foods in your daily diet:

- Super foods will help you to meet the seven-a-day fruit and vegetable target that health professionals recommend as a minimum daily amount to protect your body and maintain well-being.
- Many super foods such as lentils and oats have a low glycemic index (GI) value, which means that their carbohydrates are absorbed slowly into the bloodstream. Such foods stave off hunger and keep you feeling full longer which helps with weight control.
- Many super foods such as whole-wheat pasta and carrots are a good source of fiber. This helps your digestive system to work effectively, and some forms of fiber can help to lower cholesterol.
- All super foods are low in, or free from ‘bad’ fats, such as saturated fats and trans fats, which can increase the risk of heart disease.
- Super foods naturally provide high levels of the essential vitamins and minerals that your body needs for a healthy nervous system, a fully functioning brain, and other key body processes, such as the regulation of blood clotting and the efficient working of your cells and organs.

Turn to the Super Food Benefits Chart ([see here](#)) for a list of the main super foods featured in our recipes and the conditions they can help to reduce and possibly even prevent, as well as their positive health benefits in the body.

MAKING YOURS A BALANCED DIET

Super foods should form a large part of a healthy, well-balanced diet. Follow this checklist of what food types to include regularly to keep your mind and body performing at their best.

Protein

Essential for building and maintaining muscles and internal organs, protein is also needed to build new cells and repair damaged tissue in your body. High-protein foods include lean meat, poultry, fish, seafood, low-fat dairy foods, eggs, and legumes.

Carbohydrate

The staple of most diets, carbohydrates provide energy for your body throughout the day and as you sleep. About 50 percent of your daily energy should come mainly from whole-grain foods, such as brown rice, whole-wheat

pasta, and whole-grain bread. Within this total, no more than 10 percent should come from sugary foods. The best type of sugar is found naturally in fruit and vegetables, not added.

Fat

Providing your body with energy and fat-soluble vitamins, and protecting your vital organs, are among the many roles fat has to play. Eating too much fat, though, especially saturated fat, can lead to weight problems and heart disease. The good fats are unsaturated fats, such as olive oil or canola oil. Other healthy fats include omega-3s, found in oily fish, nuts, and seeds.

Vitamins and minerals

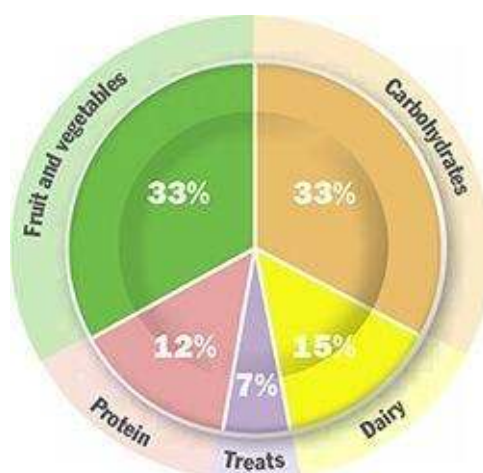
Vitamins A, the B group, C, D, E and K are the essential nutrients for keeping your body in good working order. Major minerals (those found in relatively large amounts in the body) are iron, calcium, zinc, selenium, magnesium, and potassium. Vitamins and minerals appear in small quantities in lots of different foods, so a varied diet is the best way to obtain them all.

Dietary fiber

You need about 30 g of fiber per day to keep your digestive system in good working order. Some types of fiber also help to lower cholesterol levels, which is vital if you want to maintain a healthy heart. Unrefined (unprocessed) plant-based foods contain the highest amounts of fiber. Good examples include whole grains, legumes such as lentils and beans, dried fruit, and fresh fruit and vegetables.

Fluids

Water is vital for physical well-being. An average adult needs to drink almost 2 quarts of fluids every day. Water is the best thirst quencher, but tea, coffee, and low-fat milk are also included. Food can also supply some of your fluid requirements—many fruit and salad ingredients have a high water content.



EATING WELL

Build your food intake around the main food groups for healthy living. The optimum amount of nutrients needed to maintain health varies from person to person—depending on sex, age, height, weight, and activity levels—but as a rule of thumb, about one-third of the food you eat should come from high-fiber carbohydrates such as whole grains, legumes, and potatoes, another third from fruit and vegetables, with the rest made up from fish, poultry, lean meat, and low-fat dairy foods, with only limited amounts of processed fatty or sugary foods.

A NOTE ON SEASONING

Salt Avoid adding salt to your cooking and when serving—too much can lead to high blood pressure. Choose low-sodium stock, or make your own stock. Salt is not added to the cooking water of vegetables, rice, and pasta in our recipes. We have not overseasoned the recipes.

Herbs Use herbs and spices to boost flavor—many have their own health properties. Fresh is best, but use dried if you prefer or if it's more convenient.

Sugar Replace processed sugar with natural sweetness from fresh and dried fruit whenever you can.

SUPER EASY PLANNING AND SHOPPING

Healthy cooking does not mean costly lists of little-known ingredients. Much of it is about making a few easy changes to your usual routine and planning ahead, such as making best use of your freezer (see left).

A WELL-STOCKED PANTRY

Stock up on super-food pantry staples and you will always be able to make delicious, healthy food even if you forget to plan ahead. These are the staples that should always be on your shelves:

- grain products such as brown rice, rolled oats, bulgur, couscous, quinoa, a few different whole-wheat pasta shapes, noodles, and flour
- dried and canned legumes, including lentils, cannellini beans, kidney beans, and chickpeas
- a variety of unsalted nuts and seeds
- oils for cooking and salads—canola oil and olive oil are best
- natural sweeteners such as agave syrup, honey, and maple syrup

-
- whole and ground spices, plus a selection of seasonings, such as low-salt soy sauce, stock cubes, herbs, and pepper.

THE SAVVY SHOPPER

All the ingredients in our recipes are easy to find in supermarkets. If your local store has a fish or meat counter, ask the fishmonger or butcher to prepare the food fresh for you. You are likely to end up with less waste—and even save money.

Also try specialty shops either at shopping centers or online, and make use of local farmers' markets for top-quality produce that is locally and ethically farmed. Choose organic ingredients whenever possible as they should be free from pesticides and artificial additives.

Fish When buying fish, look for sustainable sources—try to avoid endangered bluefin tuna, orange roughy (ocean perch) and shark, and use more abundant varieties such as snapper, haddock, and flounder.

Poultry Choose free-range chicken and turkey where possible. They are slightly more expensive than cage-raised and may have a better flavor.

Meat Beef, pork, and lamb are sold ready cubed, sliced, or ground, which will save on preparation time. Steaks, chops, and tenderloin are best for quick cooking. Always choose lean ground meat. Choose grass-fed or wild meat where available.

Fruit and vegetables Fresh is best, but ready-prepared packs will save you time.





FREEZING SUPER FOODS

Using a freezer to store food ready to use at any time is a great idea—vegetables, fruit, meat, poultry, fish, and even some fresh herbs and spices retain their nutritional value when frozen.

Freeze meat, poultry, and fish on the day of purchase and do not store them for longer than 3 months. Never refreeze meat, fish, or poultry.

Frozen vegetables are very handy—either when store-bought or fresh from the garden. If freezing your own produce, always freeze as soon as possible after picking to avoid losing essential vitamins and minerals. Wash and chop the vegetables ready for freezing, then blanch in a saucepan of boiling water for 2–3 minutes. Lift out with a slotted spoon, refresh under cold water, drain, and pack into labelled containers. Once opened, reseal bags of frozen vegetables securely. Salad vegetables cannot be frozen.

Always defrost food thoroughly in the refrigerator before cooking. Do not cook raw poultry or meat from frozen as it may not cook completely. Some seafood and fish can be cooked from frozen—follow the recipe instructions.

LET'S GET COOKING

Super Foods Cookbook contains 184 health-boosting recipes, and all include at least one super food. Each recipe page offers clear step-by-step cooking instructions, ingredient information, and invaluable tips.

- **Ingredients** Each ingredient is listed on the page in the order that it is needed in the recipe, with exact quantities given, either in weight or numbers. Unless otherwise stated, all ingredients such as eggs, fruit, and vegetables are medium in size.
- **Alternative ingredients** The majority of recipes in this book include different ingredient suggestions so you can include the foods you prefer—or adapt the recipe to what you have available.

- **Nutritional values** If you're keeping an eye on your calories or your intake of fat, protein, and fiber, these values are available to give you guidance at a glance.
- **Cook's tips** Expert practical advice is provided so you can get the most from our recipes—from how to remove seeds from a cardamom pod to the best cut of lamb to choose for a stir-fry.
- **Super food information** Every recipe page tells you about the health benefits of one super food ingredient. Refer to the Glossary (right) if there are any terms that are unfamiliar to you. Also, special features on 14 major super foods appear throughout the book. Each provides information on the food's health-promoting benefits and includes five simple mouth-watering recipes.

CONVERSION CHART

Weight		Volume	
Imperial	Metric	Metric	Imperial
1 oz	25 g	1 fl oz	30 mL
2 oz	50 g	2 fl oz	50 mL
3 oz	75 g	5 fl oz	150 mL
4 oz (1/4 lb)	125 g	10 fl oz	300 mL
6 oz	175 g	1 pint	500 mL
8 oz (1/2 lb)	250 g	1 qt	1 L
10 oz (2/3 lb)	275 g	1 gal	4 L
12 oz (3/4 lb)	350 g	1/4 cup	50 mL
16 oz (1 lb)	500 g	1/3 cup	75 mL
2 lb	1 kg	1/2 cup	125 mL
		2/3 cup	150 mL
		3/4 cup	175 mL
		1 cup	250 mL

GLOSSARY

anthocyanin: a type of plant pigment that may help to protect the body against heart disease (see also flavonoid).

antioxidant: a substance that helps to protect against and destroys harmful free radicals that can damage the body's cells.

beta-carotene: part of a family of natural antioxidants found in many fruit and vegetables.

It can be converted to vitamin A in the body.

cholesterol: fatty substance made predominantly by the body from saturated fat in the diet. Too much cholesterol in the blood can increase the risk of heart disease.

ellagic acid: a plant chemical that may have anti-cancer properties.

flavonoid: a plant pigment with beneficial antioxidant properties.

folate: form of B vitamin folic acid that occurs naturally in food. Folate helps to produce and maintain new red blood cells in the body.

glycemic index (GI): a ranking of carbohydrate foods based on the rate at which they raise blood glucose levels after eating. A low GI rating means only a gradual rise in blood glucose levels, which may help with weight control and reduce the risk of heart disease and diabetes.

immune system: the body's defense system, composed of cells, tissues, and organs, which protects the body against infection.

monounsaturated fat: can help to lower harmful cholesterol in the blood and keep the heart healthy.

phytochemical: describes a wide variety of compounds produced by plants that may help to reduce the risk of cancer.

polyunsaturated fat: heart-healthy fats that lower harmful cholesterol in the bloodstream. They provide essential fatty acids.

saturated fat: can raise harmful cholesterol in the blood, increasing the risk of heart disease.

vitamin: a substance found in food that is essential to maintain a healthy body.

SUPER FOODS BENEFITS CHART

The charts below list top super foods and shows you where they may be particularly beneficial when eaten as part of a balanced diet for the health issues, diseases, and conditions indicated in the headings. Use these charts as a guide only—always talk to your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.

	Aging (skin)	Cancer	Cholesterol lowering	Depression	Diabetes (type 2)	Digestive health	Eye health	Fatigue
Apples	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Apricots	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Avocados	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Bananas	•	•	•	•	•	•		•
Beans		•	•	•	•	•		•
Beef (lean)	•			•				•
Beets	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Bell Peppers	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Berries	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Broccoli	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Butternut squash	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cabbage	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	

	Aging (skin)	Cancer	Cholesterol lowering	Depression	Diabetes (type 2)	Digestive health	Eye health	Fatigue
Carrots	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Cauliflower	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Cherries	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Chicken		•		•	•		•	•

Cabbage	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
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	Heart health	Immune function	Menopause	Mental alertness	Osteoporosis	Rheumatoid arthritis	Stroke prevention	Weight control
Carrots	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cauliflower	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
Cherries	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Chicken	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Chicken livers	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Citrus	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Dried fruit	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Eggplant	•	•	•	•			•	•
Eggs	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Garlic	•						•	•
Grains	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
Grapes	•	•	•	•		•	•	•

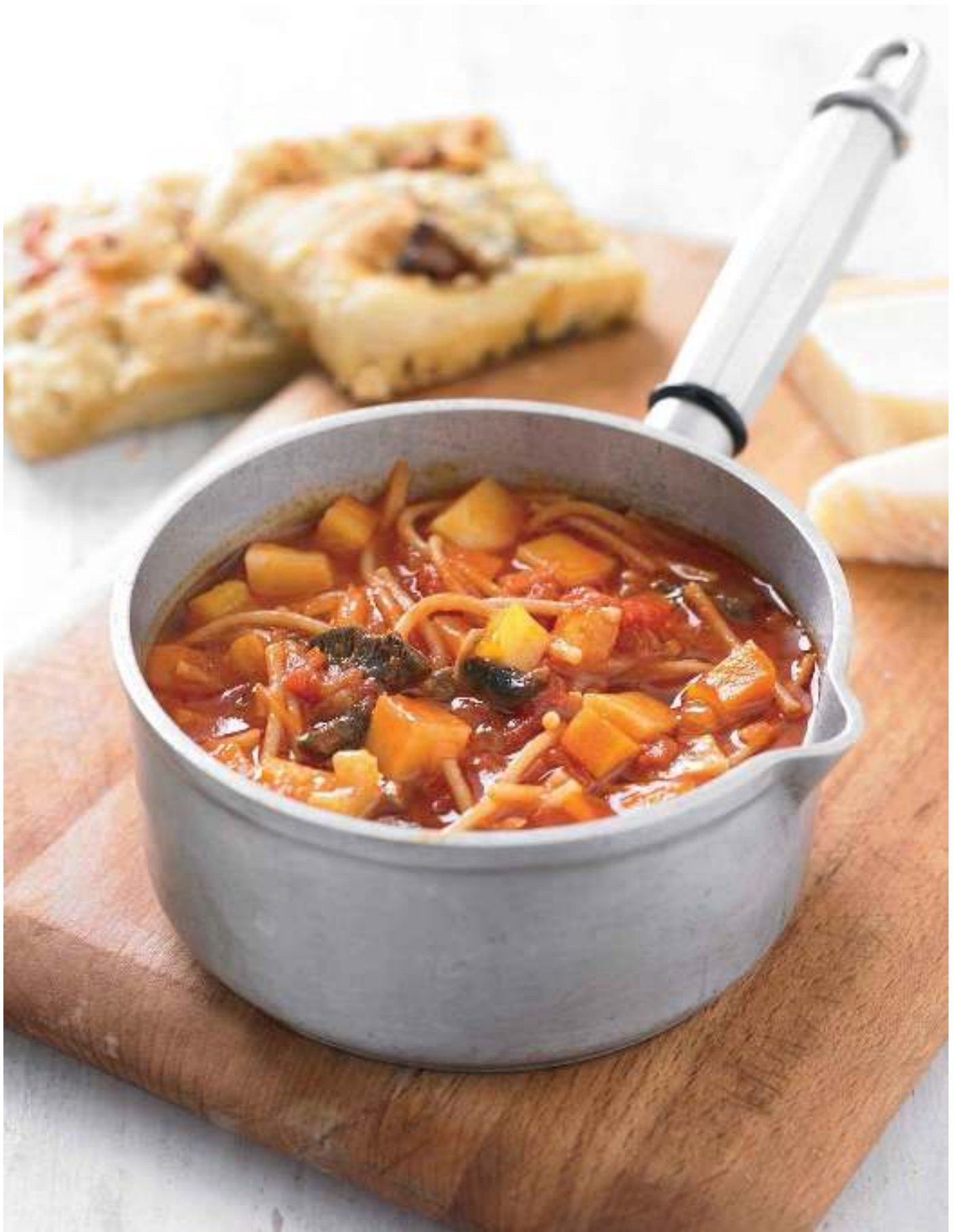
	Heart health	Immune function	Menopause	Mental alertness	Osteoporosis	Rheumatoid arthritis	Stroke prevention	Weight control
Lentils	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Low-fat dairy	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Mangoes	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Mushrooms			•	•		•	•	•
Nuts	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Oats	•	•	•	•			•	•
Oily fish	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Olive oil	•	•		•	•	•	•	

Onion	•	•	•	•			•	•
Pears	•	•		•			•	•
Peas	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Pineapples	•	•	•	•			•	•

	Heart health	Immune function	Menopause	Mental alertness	Osteoporosis	Rheumatoid arthritis	Stroke prevention	Weight control
Pomegranates	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Seafood	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Seeds	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Soybeans	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Spinach	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sweet potatoes	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
Tomatoes	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Turkey	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
White fish	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Whole-grain bread	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Whole-grain rice	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Zucchini	•	•	•	•		•	•	•

SOUPS, STARTERS *and* SNACKS





CHUNKY VEGETABLE SOUP WITH PASTA

CHUNKY VEGETABLE SOUP WITH PASTA

A real Italian-inspired meal in a bowl—nutritious whole-wheat spaghetti in a rich minestrone-style soup full of tender vegetables. Serve with warmed olive focaccia for a comforting meal.

Serves 4

Preparation 10 minutes

Cooking 30 minutes

1 onion

1 carrot

1 celery stalk

1 yellow bell pepper

1 parsnip

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup mushrooms

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 bay leaf

1 clove garlic, crushed

1 can (14 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces) chopped tomatoes

2 cups hot chicken or vegetable stock

3 ounces whole-wheat spaghetti

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated parmesan, to serve

Each serving provides

• 270 calories • 13 g fat • 4 g saturated fat • 29 g carbohydrates • 11 g protein • 7 g fiber

ALTERNATIVE INGREDIENTS

- For a meaty version of this soup, sauté $\frac{1}{4}$ cup diced smoked bacon, chorizo or pancetta in a dry frying pan for 1 minute before starting step 1.
- Leave out the parsnip and add $\frac{2}{3}$ cup fresh or frozen green beans or fava beans with the pasta.

1 Finely chop the onion. Dice the carrot, celery, pepper, and parsnip, and chop the mushrooms. Heat the oil in a large saucepan over high heat. Add the bay leaf, onion, carrot, celery, and garlic, reduce the heat to low, then cover and cook for 2 minutes.

2 Stir in the pepper and mushrooms, cover, and cook for another 2 minutes.

Add the parsnip and tomatoes, then pour in the hot stock and return to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, covered, for 20 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender.

3 Break the spaghetti into 1 1/2-inch pieces and stir them into the soup. Return to a boil, reduce the heat, and simmer for 5 minutes, or until the pasta is tender. Ladle the soup into four bowls and sprinkle with parmesan.

COOK'S TIP

- Frozen vegetables are great for everyday meals, saving time on shopping and preparation. There is a wide variety of mixtures, some with bell peppers, celery, and mushrooms as well as the usual carrots, peas, and beans. Use fresh onion and garlic, then add frozen mixed vegetables in step 2 in place of the fresh ingredients. Reduce the cooking time by 5 minutes.

SUPER FOOD



WHOLE-WHEAT PASTA

Most of the goodness of whole grains is concentrated in the outer bran layer. Whole-wheat pasta retains that bran so it contains up to 75 percent more nutrients than pasta made from refined grains. Regularly eating whole-wheat pasta protects against heart disease and may lower the risk of some forms of cancer of the digestive tract.



CHILLED CARROT AND ORANGE SOUP

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