KICK START YOUR DIET WITH KIWI

Winter offers few fruits in season with the exception of citrus and the ever growing popular kiwi. Originating from China, this subtropical plant grown in California, is rated number one for nutrient density.

Two medium kiwis are considered a serving size, providing 93 calories, and 5 grams of fiber, more than a slice of whole wheat bread. Vitamin C content is 230% of your daily requirement, almost twice the amount provided by an orange. Potassium content is 450 mg, more than a banana or an orange. Vitamin E content is 10% of daily requirements, unusual for foods other than nuts, seeds, and oils. These numbers verify it’s standing as number one for nutrient density.

Kiwi fruit has other nutritional benefits not present in other fruits. Most notable is the lutein it contains, more than any other food in the food supply, with the exception of spinach and yellow corn. Lutein is a phytochemical believed to play a role in eye functioning and health and recommended for the prevention of macular degeneration.

Virtually sodium, fat, and cholesterol free, kiwi is great for heart healthy diets. For diabetics the carbohydrate content is 23 grams, which is equivalent to 1 1/2 fruit exchanges on the ADA Diabetic Diet.

To eat kiwi simply slice in half and scoop it with a spoon or peel and cut into thick slices. Peels can be eaten if desired, but be sure to rinse with cold water first. Kiwi can be canned, frozen, and made into fruit leather. For directions consult the California Kiwi Fruit Commission website at www.kiwifruit.org. The website features dozens of creative, non-traditional recipes for incorporating kiwi into your meal plan.

When purchasing kiwi, select fruit that is free of soft spots, cuts, bruises, and wrinkles. Fruit should look moist and plump and stored in the refrigerator once ripe, which will prolong its life. Store in a loosely closed plastic bag, away from other fruits and vegetables, and it will keep for 2-3 weeks. Once it is sliced, refrigerate promptly, in an airtight container, to preserve moisture and nutritional value.

To ripen kiwi, place in a closed paper bag for 48-72 hours. Keep out of direct sunlight and high heat temperatures. You can speed up the ripening process by placing a banana or apple into the paper bag.
Because kiwi contains an enzyme that breaks down protein it can be used as a meat tenderizer. Here are two recipes provided by the California Kiwi commission. My favorite is the Asian variety which is great for pork.

Kick Start Your Day with Kiwi, nutrient dense and delicious!

**BASIC KIWIFRUIT MARINADE**

1 cup California kiwifruit, chopped  
2 tablespoons soy sauce (try low sodium for less salt)  
2 tablespoons tomato paste  
4 teaspoons Worchester sauce  
1 teaspoon hot sauce (optional)  
1 garlic clove minced (optional)

Combine ingredients in a bowl cover and refrigerate for a minimum of 2 hours. This marinade can be made the day before and will be good for up to 4 days.

**ZESTY ASIAN KIWIFRUIT MARINADE**

1 cup California kiwifruit, chopped  
3 tablespoons fresh ginger root, chopped  
2 tablespoons peanut oil  
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 garlic clove, minced

Combine ingredients in a bowl cover and refrigerate for a minimum of 2 hours. This marinade can be made the day before and will be good for up to 4 days.

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