

# MELONS FOR SUMMER

One of the best ways to cool down during the summer is with some hydrating, chilled melon. With several varieties to pick from, there are many ways to enjoy it. Last summer we covered all the benefits of cantaloupe, but there's also honey dew, and a few different types of watermelon to pick from. You can have it cut up, straight from the fridge, in fruit salad, or in savory salads. You could get creative by blending melon into drinks, smoothies, or a slightly sweet gazpacho.



*Many types of melons, like cantaloupe and honeydew, have antioxidants that protect your body from damage and inflammation.*

Melons are a tasty and healthy fruit packed with important nutrients. They are full of vitamin C, which helps keep your immune system strong and your skin looking good, and vitamin A, which is great for your eyesight. Since they have a lot of water, they help keep you hydrated, and their potassium helps your body balance fluids and keeps your heart healthy. Melons also have fiber, which helps with digestion and supports gut health. They are naturally sweet but low in calories, making them a refreshing snack that supports a healthy diet.

The refreshing flavors of melon work well with sweet, savory, tart, and spicy flavors alike. You can grill melon to caramelize their natural sugars. Top with vanilla frozen yogurt for an indulgent treat.





Watermelon's classic pairing with feta cheese tastes great as a salad on a bed of arugula with extra virgin olive oil, red wine vinegar, and toasted pumpkin seeds. Try a fire and ice salad pairing melons with herbs like mint or basil and spicy peppers with a lightly sweetened vinaigrette.

Honeydew and cantaloupe pair well with a thin slice of prosciutto for a sweet and salty appetizer. For a vegetarian sweet and salty appetizer, try melon with griddled queso fresco with a sprinkle of chili lime seasoning or griddled haloumi cheese and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. Melons also pair well with tropical fruit or coconut.


There are some universal tricks for picking a ripe melon. It should be heavy for its size, sound hollow when tapped, have some give if you press where the stem was, and cantaloupe specifically should smell fragrant and sweet.

Once you have selected your delicious ripe melon, make sure to wash the exterior well before cutting it. You can run it under cold water and use a soft brush or cloth to remove visible dirt from the rind. Dry well before cutting.

While there are so many ways to enjoy melon, I welcome you to try this refreshing beverage. I've made it with both cantaloupe and watermelon. It can serve as a mocktail for entertaining, or just as an easy way to finish up some cut-up melon you have on hand if you adjust the quantities.

Note: Since everyone's health history and nutritional needs are so different, please make sure that you talk with your doctor and a registered dietitian to get advice about the diet and exercise plan that's right for you.





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# COCONUT MELON SPRITZ

## INGREDIENTS

4 cups of cubed melon of choice

1 cup ice cubes

1 cup unsweetened light coconut milk

2 12 oz cans of seltzer of choice

(recommendations: lime, coconut  
pineapple, mango)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place all the ingredients in a high-powered blender and blend on high speed for 60 seconds.
2. Divide the mixture into 6 tall glasses over ice. Top with about 4 ounces of seltzer slowly. Stir gently to eliminate some of the foam and enjoy!
3. You can keep it chilling in the fridge for a few hours if you stir it well before serving.

*Parul* Chef Parul Desai, RDN

*Melon is a great and healthy source of nutrition and hydration while being delicious and versatile. I hope you all find some fun ways to add more melon to your diet.*