

RECIPE for health

SEPTEMBER 2011 In partnership with Health4U and Culinary Services

Featured Food:

MUSKMELON



By Peggy Crum, RD, Health4U Nutritionist

Whether you call them muskmelons or cantaloupes, these orange-fleshed melons roll out in August and peak in September. Although both names are used in the U.S. for the same fruit, we don't see many true cantaloupes here. Cantaloupes, named for the small town of Cantalupo, Italy, are hard-shelled melons with a smooth, segmented surface mostly grown in Mediterranean countries. Melons with deeply-netted, soft rinds found everywhere in the U.S. are actually muskmelons.

A ripe muskmelon will live up to its name—musky. The best-tasting muskmelon has a strong, sweet aroma (which disappears when it's chilled and returns at room temp), a bright straw-colored rind and a clean, dish-shaped scar where it slipped from the vine. Although a muskmelon will not continue to ripen off the vine, it will become softer and juicier given a few days on your countertop.

Muskmelon's netted rind harbors bacteria, a potential source of food-borne illness. Vigorously scrub the whole uncut melon under running water using a clean produce brush. Then place the melon on a cutting board and slice off the stem end to give it a flat surface. Sit the melon on this flat end and slice off the peel in sections. Once the rind is completely removed, cut the melon in half, scoop out the seeds and serve.

The sweetness of muskmelon can stand alone as a simple dessert. Or pair it with something sharp like arugula or salty like thin slices of prosciutto. The melon left on the counter a smidge too long, falling apart when you cut it, has the perfect hyper-ripened flavor for a refreshing cold soup, smoothie or gelato.

Fire and Ice Melon Salad

Recipe developed by Corporate Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski and featured in Residential Dining Services. Serves 12-16

- ¼ cup water
- ¼ - ½ cup honey depending on taste preference
- 2 Tablespoons minced Serrano Chile pepper
- 1 Tablespoon diced red bell pepper
- 2 Tablespoons lime juice
- 1 Tablespoon minced fresh mint
- 1 honeydew melon
- 1 muskmelon
- 8 thin slices of prosciutto

Place water in a non-stick sauté pan over medium heat; pour in honey and stir until dissolved. Add peppers and bring to a simmer. Remove from heat. Add lime juice and mint. Set aside to cool while preparing melons.

Dice melons and place in a large bowl. Toss with syrup. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days.

Just before serving, arrange on a platter with the slices of prosciutto.

Fire and Ice Melon Salad will be served for lunch at Brody Square, The Gallery at Snyder-Phillips and Riverwalk Market on September 21. Visit www.eatatstate.com for dining hall hours and menus.

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