

BELL PEPPERS



Bell peppers are in season from August through October.

Tips for selecting bell peppers

Choose peppers that are firm, smooth, and brightly colored. Peppers should be heavier than they look and able to stand up straight. Peppers also have no smell. Do not choose peppers if they are dull or wrinkled or have damp patches on the skin.

Storage

Place peppers in a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator for up to one week.

Preparation

Peppers can be halved, quartered, or sliced and used in salads, vegetable platters, or sautéed with onions and garlic. To stuff peppers, cut off the top and remove the inner core and seeds.

Roast

Set the oven to 425°F. Cut the peppers in half and remove the seeds, place the peppers in a pan, sprinkle with olive oil, and roast in the oven for about 30 minutes. Turn occasionally.

Key nutrients

- Fiber to prevent constipation
- Potassium to maintain normal blood pressure
- Vitamin A for vision, healthy skin, and resistance to infection
- Vitamin C for healthy gums, skin, and blood

Recipes

Sweet pepper sauce

2 large red bell peppers

4 large garlic cloves, peeled

Salt and black pepper, to taste

Put peppers into a saucepan with enough water to almost cover. Bring to a boil, then simmer until tender. Remove peppers from water, reserve water, and discard stems and seeds. Chop and place in a blender or food processor. Add garlic, 1 cup of the cooking water, and blend to puree. Transfer to a clean saucepan. Season with salt and pepper and reheat gently. Serve over pasta. Serves 4; 15 Cal; 0 g fat.

Sunshine salad

5 cups packed spinach, washed and dried well

1 whole cucumber, sliced

½ red onion, sliced thin

½ red pepper, sliced

2 oranges, peeled and chopped into bite-size pieces

⅓ cup light vinaigrette salad dressing

Toss all ingredients together in a large bowl. Add the dressing and toss again. Serve immediately. Serves 5; 120 Cal; 8 g fat.



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