



HEALTHIER SWEETS

for your sweetheart

It's easy to share in the fun of Valentine's Day by serving those you love sweet treats that are a healthier alternative to ordinary, heart-shaped confections.

Forget the expensive flowers, wines and chocolates. To really show you care, be a cupid and give your sweetie healthy, delicious treats that feature juicy watermelon. Naturally dressed in the holiday's hue of vibrant red, using this fabulous fruit in recipes adds color to the spread of any Valentine's Day party, whether large or intimate.

Mouthwatering Watermelon Treats

For an elegant, upscale treat, serve Watermelon Petit Fours, which feature sweet watermelon, candied almonds and is topped with your favorite decadent frosting. Get the kids in the kitchen with Watermelon Cupcakes for a new take on the beloved classic. Served with pineapple cream cheese frosting, kids will love helping you decorate these darling delights.

If you really want to make their hearts skip a beat, carve an adorable Lips and Love Basket. Fill it with all of your sweetie's favorite fruits for a fresh, flavorful display they'll devour in a heartbeat. Remember, nothing shows your love more than edible gifts crafted by hand. For more sweet ideas, visit www.watermelon.org.

Hearts Love Watermelon

Beyond adding color and variety to your family's diet, watermelon has other great benefits. Here are a couple of these heart-healthy reasons:

* Fresh watermelon is certified by the American Heart Association's Heart Checkmark program as being low in saturated fat and cholesterol.

* Watermelon is the primary source of an amino acid called citrulline found in fruits and vegetables. Citrulline can help maintain blood flow within the heart and cardiovascular function.

Bonus Benefits

Your sweetie will love that they can indulge in the sweetness of the holiday without the guilt or inflated waistline caused by traditional Valentine's Day treats. A naturally low-calorie option, watermelon also boasts the following benefits:

* Vitamin A: Known to enhance eye health and boost immunity by enhancing the infection-fighting actions of white

blood cells.

* Vitamin B6: Helps the immune system produce antibodies which fight diseases.

* Vitamin C: Boosts the immune system's defenses against infections and viruses. It also protects the body from harmful free radicals which accelerate aging.



Lips and Love Basket

- 1 to 2 long, oval-shaped seedless watermelons
- Cutting board
- Green dry erase marker
- Kitchen and paring knives
- Melon baller
- Assorted cookie cutters (X, O and heart shapes), if desired
- Wooden skewers
- Toothpicks
- Strawberries
- Fruits to make fruit salad filling
- Large bowl and spoon

Wash watermelon under cool running water and pat dry. On cutting board, place watermelon on its side and cut off 1/4 to 1/2 inch from stem end being careful not to cut too deep into white part of rind to provide sturdy base.

With marker, draw scalloped line around width of middle of watermelon. Use paring knife to cut along marker line, then separate the two halves. Use melon baller to scoop out watermelon for your base.

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