



Get to know: Pak Choi



Pak choi is a subspecies of Chinese cabbage, *Brassica rapa*. It is a leaf vegetable that is common in Chinese and Southeast Asian cuisine. Chinese cabbage was first grown in the Yangtze River Delta region, and was popularized during the Ming Dynasty as a plant with many medicinal qualities. The name pak choi means “white vegetable” in Cantonese

Nutrition

1 cup (70g) of raw pak choi contains only 9 calories. It also contains 1g of fibre, 1g of sugars, and 1g of protein. Pak choi is extremely nutritious and filling, with a low calorie count and no saturated fat or cholesterol. This makes pak choi one of the best foods you could eat if you are trying to lose weight.

Fun Facts

Pak choi contains glucosinolates, pungent compounds that are thought to be a defence against pests and diseases. Glucosinolates can have positive health effects in humans in small doses. However, these compounds can be toxic in high doses so don't overdo it! In 2009, an elderly diabetic woman who believed that pak choi could cure her diabetes developed hypothyroidism after eating over 1kg of raw pak choi per day.

Health Benefits

Pak choi is an exceptional source of Vitamin A. A 1 cup (70g) raw serving contains 63% of the recommended daily value of Vitamin A. In addition, that 1 cup serving contains 52% of recommended Vitamin C and 40% of recommended Vitamin K. There is research into glucosinolates, which are found in pak choi, as cancer fighting compounds.

source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_cabbage, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bok_choy,
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glucosinolate, nutritiondata.self.com
image: <http://www.bellybytes.com/food/bok-choy.html#.VvFL4-J96M8>

What you can try with pak choi:

Charred Bok Choy (Pak Choi) with Spicy Thai Vinaigrette

by: Le Creuset South Africa

Serves: 4

What You Need:

- 1 tsp spicy Thai vinaigrette (see below)
- 2 large red jalapenos
- 2 large heads bok choy, halved lengthwise

Spicy Thai Vinaigrette:

- ¼ cup sesame oil
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 30mL rice vinegar
- 1 tbsp. palm sugar
- 1 large clove garlic, finely crushed
- 2mL fish sauce
- 1 red chili, finely chopped

What to do:

1. To make the vinaigrette, whisk together all the ingredients in a small bowl and set aside.
2. Set the grill to high heat and preheat a griddle pan coated with non-stick cooking spray. Grill the jalapenos for 6 minutes, or until lightly charred. Remove from the grill and cut into thin rounds. Set aside.
3. Coat bok choy halves with non-stick cooking spray. Grill for 2 minutes per side, or until lightly charred.
4. Arrange bok choy on a large serving platter. Sprinkle with the jalapeño rounds and drizzle with the vinaigrette to serve.

<https://www.lecreuset.co.za/recipes/charred-bok-choy-spicy-thai-vinaigrette/>

Try these other recipes

- Thai style steamed fish: <http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/1031/thaistyle-steamed-fish>
- Sesame pak choi (side dish): <http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/1183/sesame-pak-choi>
- Honey chicken with pak choy:
<http://www.taste.com.au/recipes/21142/honey+chicken+with+pak+choy>