

Seeing Red

By Laura Kurella

One of my favorite memories from childhood gardening was getting to pick and eat the very first radish I ever grew.

I recall how awe-struck I was to bear witness to such a tiny seed growing into a crisp, juicy, tender, and delicious root so quickly.

Experiencing the miracle of seed germination first-hand was a marvel indeed, and I can say that no other radish I have ever eaten has been able to compare to that very first one because that one was wrapped in that special magic that one can only find dancing a little girl’s head. It’s also quite likely why I can’t help smile whenever I see red!

Being an edible root vegetable with a pungent taste, all parts of the radish - leaves, flowers, seeds, and pods - are able to be consumed and for centuries have been used in Ayurveda and traditional Chinese medicine to treat many conditions like inflammation, sore throat, fever, and bile disorders.

Consisting primarily of water – 95% - radishes are low calorie - about 16 calories each – and contain a little protein as well.

Offering a good source of fiber, which satiates the appetite and helps make it easier to lose weight, the fiber in radishes also helps promote good bowel health, and it also helps lower cholesterol by binding to low-density lipoproteins and shuttling it out of the body.

Containing anthocyanins and other vitamins radishes possess anticancer properties,

anti-inflammatory properties, and can help control diabetes.

Offering an excellent source of potassium, radishes can help relax blood vessels and promote steady blood flow.

I know this may sound weird, but radishes also possess anti-fungal properties- a protein called “RsAFP2” that studies show causes a cell death in Candida albicans, which is the primary cause of vaginal yeast infections, oral yeast infections and invasive candidiasis.

Giving us their high-water content, radishes help to keep us cool during the summer and help keep our skin healthy by delaying the aging process. Their so good, in fact, that many recommend radish face masks for better skin!

Radishes are amazing fresh or cooked a number of different ways, but they are always best when fresh, so find a stand with them or just grow some of your own. Here now are some rewarding ways to see red and indulge in all the health-filled magic that it brings. Enjoy!

Rosey Radish Roll-ups

Prep Time; 15 minutes; Rest Time: 1 hour; Total Time: 1 hour 25 minutes; Yield: 4 servings.

1 cucumber
natural sea salt
1 bunch of radishes
2 oz cream cheese, or like

Everything but the bagel seasoning (recipe below)

Using a mandolin or vegetable peeler, thinly slice cucumber into long, thin strips.

Place cucumber slices in a strainer over a bowl or sink then salt slices with a

few pinches of salt, tossing. Let cucumbers sit for 30 minutes to one hour. This will remove a large part of the moisture and ensure the cucumbers are crunchy and not soggy. Don’t skip this step or your whole dish will become a puddle.

Once time has elapsed, rinse cucumber slices well then pat dry. Smear a bit of cheese across a cucumber slice then arrange three to four radish slices along the cucumber, with the tops of the radishes peeking over the edge of the cucumber. Roll from left to right, making sure there is a little dab of cream cheese on the end of the slice to ensure it doesn’t unroll. Arrange on a serving dish, sprinkle with a generous amount of Everything but the Bagel seasoning then serve.

Everything Bagel Spice

YIELD: 1/4 cup
1 tablespoon poppy seeds
1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds
1 tablespoon dried garlic
1 tablespoon dried onion
2 teaspoons coarse natural sea salt

In a small bowl with a spoon, combine all ingredients. Store in a sealed container until you’re ready to use.

Radish Tops Soup

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, or sub
1 to 1 1/2 large onions, diced
3 medium Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and diced
radish greens from one bunch, rinsed well and chopped
6 cups chicken or vegetable broth, low/no sodium
1/2 cup half-and-half
1 bunch of



Super-sweet in spring, thinly-sliced radishes can make cool appetizers taste even more rewarding, and rosier, too. **Photo by Laura Kurella.**

radishes, thinly sliced or julienned, for garnish (optional)

In a large saucepan over medium heat, melt butter. Stir in onion and cook for 8 to 10 minutes, stirring, until tender. Add potatoes and radish greens and stir to evenly coat, then add broth. Increase the heat to medium-

high; bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook, uncovered, for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Allow soup to cool slightly then, working in batches as needed, transfer the mixture to a blender to puree until smooth. Alternately, use a submersion blender to puree in pan.

Pour the puree through a strainer set over the same saucepan; discarding solids. Stir in half-and-half. Return to low heat, stirring, until well blended and warmed.

Serve warm, garnished with radish slices or sticks, if desired.



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