

# Health Benefits of Starfruit



Starfruit, also called *carambola*, is a tropical fruit native to Southeast Asia and cultivated throughout the world. There are 2 types, a smaller tart type and larger sweet type (most popular in the US). The skin is an orange-yellow and shaped as an oval with 5 longitudinal ridges. When cut cross-section, the slices are star-shaped.

Like other fruit, starfruit are juicy and delicious, packed with nutrition and great for snacking or mixing into dishes.

## WHAT MAKES STARFRUIT GREAT?

### **Nutrition**

1 3-inch raw starfruit provides 22 calories, 1 gm protein, 2.5 gm fiber, no fat and no cholesterol.

### **Vitamins**

One starfruit can provide 35% of the daily requirement for vitamin C which is important for wound healing and neutralizing free radicals that contribute to aging and disease. Other antioxidants include beta-carotene and gallic acid.

### **Minerals**

Starfruit is a good source of minerals including magnesium, iron, zinc, manganese, potassium, and phosphorous. These support heart, blood and bone health and energy production.

### **Fiber**

Starfruit contains both soluble and insoluble fiber which help to regulate blood sugars, lower cholesterol, prevent constipation and reduce risk for colon cancer. Fiber also feeds our healthy gut microbiome.

### **Phytonutrients**

Additional nutrients in starfruit include saponins, flavonoids, alkaloids, tannins, phenols, anthocyanin and anthocyanidin, chalcones and aurones, catechins, leucoanthocyanidins, and triterpenoids. These plant-based nutrients are compounds produced by plants that provide antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

## BUYING & USING STARFRUIT

Choose starfruit that are vibrant orange-yellow and firm, with smooth, waxy skin much like the texture of a grape. The ridges will have a brown, firm edge. Green starfruit are underripe and will be tart or sour.

The entire fruit is edible. Wash before slicing. The ridges should be green, indicating ripeness. If still brown, they can be carefully sliced off. Then slice cross-wise to get the unique star.

Starfruit can be used in juice and other drinks, diced into salads or side dishes, tossed into soups and stews. Blend into smoothies or dehydrate for kid-friendly star-shaped fruit chips. Starfruit can also be used for making salsa, chutney, jam, preserves or pickles.

## CAUTIONS

Starfruit are high in oxalates, which can contribute to kidney stones in some individuals. It is recommended those with known kidney disease seek advice from medical professionals before consuming starfruit. Higher oxalate content is found in unripe starfruit, especially in the smaller, sour varieties.

Like grapefruit, starfruit can alter how some prescription medications are metabolized. See your doctor if you are taking prescription medications before consuming starfruit.



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## Starfruit and Arugula Salad Adapted from yummyaddiction.com

### Ingredients:

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 cup starfruit, sliced     | 2 Tbsp olive oil           |
| 1 cup leafy green lettuce   | 1 Tbsp honey               |
| ¾ cup arugula               | 1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar |
| 1/2 small red onion, sliced | 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard       |
| 1 avocado, diced            | 1/4 tsp salt               |
| 1/4 cup pecans              |                            |

### Instructions:

1. Combine dressing ingredients in a small jar with lid. Cover and shake until combined.
2. Combine salad ingredients, adding additional veggies as desired.
3. Top with dressing and serve immediately.

## Starfruit Salsa simplysohealthy.com

### Ingredients:

- 1½ teaspoons lime juice
- Pinch of salt
- ¼ tsp honey
- 1 large starfruit, diced
- 1 small jalapeno pepper, seeded, minced
- 2 Tbsp red onion, diced
- 2 Tbsp fresh cilantro, minced
- 1 tsp olive oil
- sea salt and black pepper to taste

### Instructions:

1. In a small mixing bowl, whisk together the lime juice, salt, and honey.
2. Add remaining ingredients and gently mix together. Cover and refrigerate until time to serve.

## Cinnamon Starfruit Tart suwanneerose.com

### Ingredients:

- |                                    |                            |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 sheet frozen puff pastry, thawed | ¼ tsp salt                 |
| 1 egg                              | ¼ tsp allspice (optional)  |
| ¼ cup sugar                        | 2 starfruit, thinly sliced |
| 2 tsp cinnamon                     | ice cream (optional)       |

### Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment or a silicone liner.
2. Unfold thawed puff pastry sheet while still cool and smooth out creases.
3. Whisk the egg and brush it over the pastry sheet.
4. Mix the sugar, cinnamon, allspice, and salt in a small bowl. Sprinkle half over the pastry. Arrange the starfruit slices over the top. Sprinkle remaining sugar mixture on top.
5. Bake 25 minutes, or until the tart is puffed and golden brown.
6. Allow the tart to cool at least 5 minutes before serving. Top each slice with a scoop of ice cream if desired.

## Starfruit Cranberry Sauce growingupbilingual.com

### Ingredients:

- 2 starfruit
- 1¼ cup orange juice
- 1 cup sugar
- 12 oz fresh or thawed cranberries
- 1 Tbsp fresh ginger, grated
- 1 tsp allspice
- 1 cinnamon stick

### Instructions:

1. Slice fruit into ½" crosswise slices, dice and set aside.
2. Combine orange juice and sugar in a heavy saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring.
3. Reduce heat to simmer; cook 5 minutes.
4. Stir in the starfruit, cranberries, ginger, cinnamon, and allspice.
5. Simmer, occasionally stirring until berries pop (about 8 minutes).
6. Set aside to cool. Serve chilled or room temperature.

## REFERENCES

- USDA National Nutrient Database  
Ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7958541/>
- <https://theveganatlas.com/guide-to-star-fruit-carambola-with-tips-ideas-recipes/>