

KUMQUATS

**Ingredient
of the Month**

Presented by ACFEF Chef & Child Foundation
and Clemson University



Meaning “golden orange” in Chinese, kumquats are tiny citrus fruits with edible skin that resemble small oranges. They are about the size of a large grape and come in several varieties with varying flavors. They have the same juicy and soft texture as an orange, with a little extra chewiness from the rind, or skin. The rind of a kumquat is extremely sweet, but the pulp

containing the seed and the fruit is quite tart. Kumquats are the only citrus fruit that can be eaten in their entirety—skin and flesh. Kumquats are native to Indochina and China, but they were brought to the United States and are now cultivated in Florida and California. Kumquats are winter-friendly fruits and are usually available from around November until April.

Healthy ingredient contribution

FIBER: Kumquats are high in fiber. Insoluble fiber promotes regular bowel movements, cleanses the colon of bacteria and helps regulate pH in the intestines so that microbes are prevented from producing cancerous substances. Soluble fiber helps lower LDL cholesterol and, thus, helps reduce the chance of heart disease, as well as helping regulate blood sugar for people with diabetes.

VITAMIN A: Kumquats are a good source of vitamin A, which promotes good vision and helps form and maintain teeth, skeletal and soft tissue, mucus membranes and skin.

VITAMIN C: One kumquat provides about 14% of a person's daily value of vitamin C. Vitamin C is an essential vitamin that we must obtain from our diet because our bodies cannot make it. It helps boost immunity, promotes healthy gums and teeth, and acts as an antioxidant to prevent cell damage.

IRON: Kumquats provide iron, which promotes brain development and function, regulation of body temperature and muscle activity.

CALCIUM: By offering a good source of calcium, kumquats promote bone strength and skeletal stability.

POTASSIUM: Kumquats are also a rich source of potassium. Potassium is needed for muscle and nerve activity, and to maintain fluid balance in the body.

Varieties and uses

Kumquats are usually used in vinaigrettes, sauces, relishes, garnishes and desserts. A ripe kumquat can be sliced and served raw in salads or as a garnish. While kumquats are more likely to be found cooked, they can be candied or pickled whole or in preserves or marmalades. Kumquats in the U.S. include mainly the Nagami and Meiwa varieties. The Nagami are tarter, while Meiwas are sweeter. Below are descriptions of these and other varieties.

HONG KONG WILD

- Native to Hong Kong
- Round in shape
- Peel is orange or scarlet and, when ripe, it is thin and not very fleshy
- Three or four small segments with plump seeds

MARUMI

- Introduced to Florida from Japan
- Round in shape
- Peel is golden yellow, smooth, and has large oil glands, thin, aromatic and spicy
- Four to seven segments with one to three seeds in each (seeds are smaller than those of the Nagami)

MEIWA

- Grown in China, still rare in the U.S.
- Possibly a hybrid between Marumi and Nagami
- Short-oblong to round and wide
- Peel is orange-yellow and very thick
- Usually seven segments and often seedless or few seeds
- Best when eaten fresh and whole

NAGAMI

- Variety most often cultivated in the U.S.
- Oval in shape
- Four or five segments with each containing two to five seeds

Storage

Refrigerate kumquats wrapped in a plastic bag for up to a month.

Serving size

An average serving size of kumquats is 100 grams, which is roughly five whole individual fruits. One 100-gram serving would provide you with 75% of your daily vitamin C needs, 5% of your vitamin A, 5% of iron, 25% of dietary fiber and 5% of carbohydrates.

Contributions to this article were made by Katharine Bradley and Zac Hopkins from Clemson University's Culinary Nutrition Undergraduate Student Research Group.

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RECIPE

KUMQUAT BEET SALAD

Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients:

4 large beets, tops removed and ends trimmed
1½ cups kumquats, halved
1 lime, juiced
1 T. extra-virgin olive oil
¼ t. salt

⅛ t. freshly ground black pepper
¼ cup crumbled goat cheese
2 T. pine nuts, toasted
2 T. chopped chives

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Wrap each beet in foil.
3. Roast until soft, about 1 hour.
4. Cool slightly; remove foil.
5. Rub off skins; cut into wedges.
6. Toss beets with kumquats, lime juice, oil, salt and pepper.
7. Top with cheese, pine nuts and chives.



Nutrition Information

Calories: 170	Fiber: 6g	Calcium: 8%
Fat: 9g	Protein: 5g	Iron: 8%
Sat. Fat: 2g	Vitamin A: 6%	
Carbs: 19g	Vitamin C: 50%	

This recipe was tested by Clemson University's Culinary Nutrition Undergraduate Student Research Group.