

April's Try-Day Friday

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Limes in the Limelight

What is it? The lime is a small green citrus fruit that grows on trees. Limes, and lime trees, can vary greatly in size. There are a wide variety of limes worldwide, although in the USA, most limes come from Florida or California, and are pretty standard in size, flavor, and acidity. Lime juice is a good source of Vitamin C, and flavanoids, compounds which some research suggests may help protect against cancer and disease. Lime juice has anti-biotic properties and makes a good preservative, as with lime pickles, or a good additive to infused water, as thin slices. Lime juice has been shown to purify water, even of bacteria such as E. coli when exposed to sunlight for a few hours.



Where do I find it? Fresh limes are available today in most supermarkets. Lime juice is sold in most stores as concentrate in bottles, but read the label so you are not surprised by preservatives that may be present, and be aware that vitamin C breakdown does occur over time, even with preservatives present.

How do I choose it? A lime should be firm, but have a little “give” when lightly squeezed. If rock solid, they are not ripe and will need a few days on the counter to ripen. Ripe limes will yield more juice, although another trick is to microwave a tough lime for 10-20 seconds before squeezing or juicing.

How do I use it? Do not eat a lime straight. The tart and highly acidic fruit will be very sour and can cause sores on your gums. Lime slices can be added to drinking water, limes can be squeezed for their juice, or the peel can be zested over recipes. Lime juice or zest is often used in sauces, salsas, and marinades, and pairs great with chicken, fish, curries, rice, cilantro, and chiles. Key lime pie is a popular American dessert.

Fun Facts:

Have you ever heard (or used) the slang “Limey” for a British person? It originally referred to sailors only. Months on wooden ships on the high seas with little to eat but hard, dry bread led to poor health and deficiency diseases, including scurvy. Scurvy is a wasting disease where sores open on the skin and gums, hair and teeth can fall out, and a person feels exhausted constantly. Scurvy develops when people don’t get enough Vitamin C and is very rare in modern America because we have year round access to fresh produce, and fortify our food supply. The British hit upon a solution to scurvy without knowing exactly what it was or why their trick worked: they sent lemons or limes on board vessels and squeezed the juice into the sailors’ ration of grog. This kept the men healthy, but got them mocked as “Limeys”.

“Limelight” is another name for being famous, or in the spotlight, because Hollywood used to use very bright lights made from quicklime before electricity became the standard. Quicklime is a product of limestone, which has nothing to do at all with lime fruits.

Healthy Lime Recipes

Try these 2 low sugar, healthy home-made “hacks” for cool summer snacks with lime juice.

Home-Made Lemon-Lime Soda

Kids Version Ingredients:

1 Liter Bottle of Seltzer or Carbonated Water
Juice of 1 lemon and 1 lime
Optional: 1-2 tsp sugar or Erythritol antioxidant-rich sweetener such as “Truvia”

Instructions: Stir together, chill, and serve.

Or consider this Grown-Up Version below from theskinnyonconfidential.com



Fresh Avocado Lime Popsicles from ForgottenLiving.com

Ingredients:

2 avocados
1/2 C water
2 tsp lime zest
1 handful fresh mint or cilantro leaves
1/2 cup lime simple syrup



Instructions:

To make the simple syrup, mix 1 C sugar, 1 C water, and juice of 3 limes and bring to a boil. Boil until the mixture reduces and turns a light golden color. Cool completely and refrigerate.

To make the popsicles, scoop your avocado flesh out of the peels, and then blend all ingredients. Pour into popsicle molds, and freeze at least 6 hours. If you do not have popsicle molds, this makes a great sorbet. Pour the mixture into any air-tight container, and put in the freezer, stirring every 2 hours until the desired consistency is reached.

And check out Wichita's own ForgottenLiving.com for more healthy recipes, including:

“Whole Wheat Blackberry Scones with Lime Glaze”



and

“Roasted Green Chilis stuffed with Lime Wild Rice and Beans”