

What's in a name?

Here's a fun fact... Cantaloupe is the name used interchangeably with muskmelon for the round to oval, netted type of muskmelon grown in the Southwest. However, the true cantaloupe has a hard, warty rind and green flesh and is not widely grown in the United States.

They are also members of the cucumber family, which includes squash, pumpkins, watermelons and gourds.



Cantaloupe Q&A

Q. What is the difference between a honeydew and a muskmelon?

A. Muskmelons develop a netting on the outside, while honeydew melons are smooth. Honeydew melons are closely related to muskmelon but ripen later. Most honeydew melons have white or green flesh and mature within 100 to 120 days after planting. Honeydew melons do not slip from the vine as muskmelons do and are mature when they become creamy to golden yellow in color and the blossom end softens slightly.

Q. What causes poor flavor and lack of sweetness of cantaloupes with smooth rinds?

A. Poor soil fertility (especially low potassium and sulfur), cool temperatures, wet or cloudy weather, choice of a poorly adapted variety, loss of leaves by disease or picking the melons before they are ripe can all contribute to poor quality.

Cantaloupe Salad

Serves 4
Serving Size: 1/2 cup

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 cup fresh mint, chopped
- 1/2 small cantaloupe, cut into chunks
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, cut into halves
- 1 small cucumber, peeled and diced

Directions

1. Whisk oil, vinegar, sugar, salt and pepper together in a large bowl.
2. Add mint, cantaloupe, tomatoes and cucumber, and stir until well coated with dressing.
3. Cover, and store in fridge for two hours before serving.



Nutrition Information (per serving)
 Calories: 102 Sodium: 159mg
 Fat: 7g Carbohydrate: 9g
 Saturated Fat: 1g Fiber: 1g
 Cholesterol: 0mg Protein: 1g

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CANTALOUPE



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Why eat cantaloupe?

Cantaloupe is full of vitamins and minerals needed to keep the body healthy. Its orange color is due to beta-carotene, which serves as a great source of **vitamin A**. Vitamin A helps us maintain healthy tissue and bones, functional retinas in the eyes, skin cell growth, and a strong immune system. Making cantaloupe part of your regular diet helps you avoid symptoms associated with vitamin A deficiency, such as loss of vision and a weakened immune system. Each one cup serving of cantaloupe contains more than enough Vitamin A recommended daily for adult men and women!

Cantaloupe is also a great source of **Vitamin C**. Vitamin C is important because it protects your cells from oxidative damage. Preventing this damage is helpful in fighting against diseases. It also helps your body make collagen, a protein essential in maintaining strong bones and skin.

Grow

Cantaloupes, also known as muskmelon, grow on a **vine** and are warm weather loving plants. The soil has to warm to at least 65°F in order for the seed to germinate. Plant seeds in rows after the dangers of frost have passed, 1 inch deep and 18-24 inches apart. The rows should be spaced at least 5 feet apart to allow enough room for the plants to flourish. Cantaloupes usually grow best in fertile garden soil. They require pollination by bees for fruit growth to continue. They have both male and female flowers, which are only open and receptive to pollination for one day. If the female flower is not pollinated, the fruit shrivels up and falls off. A tip for attracting bees to the cantaloupe is planting salvias and sunflowers near the garden. When cantaloupe is ripe, the rind changes green to tan or yellow and the vine will naturally slip from the fruit when it is ready to harvest.

Buy

Choose **fresh** cantaloupe that is fragrant and that has a cream or yellowish undertone between the netting (the pattern on the outside skin). The stem end of the melon should give to a little pressure, but the stem should not be attached to the melon. If you find melons for sale that have little stubs of vine sticking out of them, they were harvested too early and probably won't be very sweet. Avoid any melon with a bruised exterior.

Store

Whole, **uncut** melons can be left on the **counter for 5-15 days** depending on ripeness. Whole, uncut melons will last in the refrigerator for a few weeks. Once **cut, refrigerate** cantaloupe for **up to 5 days**. Do not remove seed from the unused cut portion of cantaloupe until ready to use, because the seeds help maintain moisture. Cantaloupe's texture will change when frozen or canned, therefore, those storage methods are not recommended.

Prepare

Thoroughly wash cantaloupe before consuming. Melons are almost always eaten raw. Cantaloupe can also be grilled.

Use a large sturdy knife to **cut** the melon in half lengthwise. Use a large spoon to remove the seeds and strings. Cut each half into wedges. To dice, as for a fruit salad, carefully slice the flesh from the skin and chop each wedge of flesh into desired size.

Cut cantaloupe into wedges and remove the skin. Brush each wedge with oil and place on a **grill** at medium heat, turning over every few minutes for 10-12 minutes.

Arkansas Cantaloupe

Melons are divided into two groups: Citrullus (watermelons) and Cucumis (the muskmelon cantaloupe group). The culture of muskmelons is similar to cucumbers, although they have a longer growing period. Most varieties popular in Arkansas have salmon-colored flesh (some are green fleshed) and netted rinds and are properly called muskmelons. The name describes the aroma (musk or perfume) of the ripe fruit.

Want to find an Arkansas cantaloupe grower? Visit <https://ar.foodmarketmaker.com/> and search for the term "cantaloupe."

Did you know?

Cantaloupe is part of the **fruit** group! The chart below shows how much fruit is recommended for you and your family to eat each week.

Recommended Weekly Amount of Squash		
Children	2-3 years old	1 cup
	4-8 years old	1 to 1½ cups
Girls	9-18 years old	1½ cups
Boys	9-13 years old	1½ cups
	14-18 years old	2 cups
Women	19-30 years old	2 cups
	31+ years old	1½ cups
Men	19+ years old	2 cups



What can't a melon do?

It canataloupe!

