



# Pear Passion

Bring a breath of fresh air to your spa's menu during the cold winter months with delicious pears.

Unlike the tartness of an apple or the tang of citrus, pears are a delicate, juicy fruit with a grainy texture that tickles the tongue. Their aromatic scent also makes a great addition to skin care creams and lotions, as well as aromatherapy oils and candles.

## Facts

There are nearly 1,000 varieties of pears, but only seven are grown commercially. The apple-shaped to teardrop-shaped fruit with its luscious texture has been sought after throughout history. In Western Asia, its use can be traced back 3,000 years. Pears were noted as "the gift of the gods" by the Greek poet Homer in his epic *The Odyssey*, and they were brought to the United States by the pilgrims. In the 1800s, people would pay up to \$20, which today is equivalent to \$222, for a taste of the rare fruit.

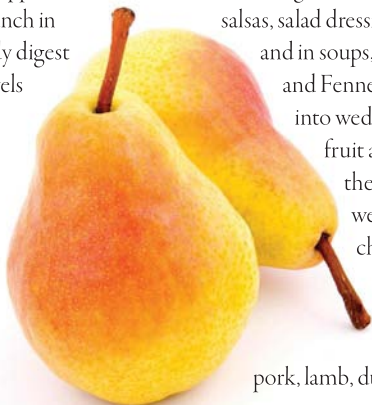
Pears are low in calories, are fat-free, and offer an excellent source of fiber, potassium, vitamin C and copper, making them a powerful punch in any diet. Fiber helps the body digest foods, lowers cholesterol levels and binds to cancer-causing chemicals in the colon. Potassium is an electrolyte that maintains the body's fluid levels, and helps to regulate blood pressure and heart function. Vitamin C and copper act as strong antioxidants that

protect against free radicals. Pears also make a tasty energy-boosting snack for clients on the go or for use along with a pear-themed treatment.

## In the kitchen

Pears can be combined with other fruits, such as apples, bananas and oranges, to create a plethora of delicious desserts—from tarts to scones. Red Mountain Spa in St. George, Utah, tantalizes guests with Poached Pear with Edible Flowers, and The Oaks at Ojai in Ojai, California, arranges pears in its Mincemeat Pear Pile/Strudel. See the recipe for **Red Crimson Pear Phyllo Strudel**, courtesy of Chef Steve Pernetti, of Cal-a-Vie in Vista, California, and a *Skin Inc.* magazine editorial advisory board member.

Pears also make a flavorful addition to salads, such as Canyon Ranch's Winter Pear and Stilton Salad With Port Dressing and Toasted Walnuts; in salsas, salad dressings and chutney; and in soups, such as a Pear and Fennel Soup. Slice pears into wedges for use in a fruit and cheese tray—the juicy fruit mixes well with pungent cheeses, such as Stilton, chèvre or pecorino, and complements pork, lamb, duck and ham.



## Quick Facts

- The soft, juicy, sweet fruit is related to the apple and the quince, and is a member of the rose family.
- The pear is a great source of fiber, potassium, vitamin C and copper.
- Referred to as "the gift of the gods" in Homer's *The Odyssey*, pears also were considered to be a luxurious item in the court of Louis XIV.
- The first pear tree in the United States was planted in 1620, brought over by the early colonists.
- Pears ripen quickly, so those found at the grocery store often still are hard. Place unripened pears in a brown paper bag, and store at room temperature for a few days. Press your thumb near the stem end of the fruit—they are ready to eat if slightly soft to the touch.
- First available in late autumn, December is the one month when most varieties of pears can be purchased.

## In the spa

The fragrance of pears has grown in popularity and is featured commonly in skin care products—especially in lotions and creams—because of its light, airy scent. Creative Nail's Scentsations Pear & Dandelion Lotion softens and hydrates, while OPI's Avojuice Pear Juicic contains soothing pear extract, avocado and aloe vera. Pevonia

Botanica's Ligne Sevactive-Dry Skin Line includes pear seed extract that helps to preserve the skin while hydrating, and Karen Klein Candles feature a Pear-Water Lily-Sicilian Lemon scent. Sattvic [Purity] in the New Age Health Spa Signature Teas collection is a wholesome blend of pear, blood orange, caffeinated green tea, rosehips and hibiscus.

The signature treatment at Aquanox Spa in the Trump International Sonesta Beach Resort in Sunny Isles Beach, Florida, is its Aqua Therapy, which highlights a Starfruit Pear Body Lotion. Barely Pear Polish, the signature treatment at Spa Gaucin at The St. Regis Monarch Beach Resort & Spa in Dana Point, California, exfoliates the skin using a sugar and pear mix. Any one of these treatments would be enhanced by a refreshing glass of pear champagne and a pear wedge. Or, for spa packages lasting longer than three hours, offer clients a light pear salad with low-fat balsamic dressing.

## Make it with pear

Have clients sip on a pear cocktail during a pear pedicure, or combine a fruity body treatment with caramelized poached pears. Whichever way you slice it, pears feature a tantalizing, tingly taste that is light, flavorful and ripe for all seasons. ✂



## Red Crimson Pear Phyllo Strudel

from Chef Steve Perneti at Cal-a-Vie in Vista, California

Makes 12 servings

- 6 (2 pounds) red crimson pears, peeled, cored and sliced
- 1/2 cup (2 1/2 ounces) dried cranberries or cherries
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 6 12- x 16-inch sheets phyllo dough
- Butter-flavored nonstick cooking spray, or a mixture of 1 teaspoon melted butter and 1 teaspoon almond oil
- 1/2 cup amaretti cookie or graham cracker crumbs
- 12 ounces regular or frozen nonfat vanilla yogurt
- 12 mint sprigs
- 36 raspberries

### Cinnamon cream

- 1/2 package extra-firm silken tofu
- 1/4 cup pure maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon almond oil
- 2 tablespoons sugar-free sweetener
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Combine pears, dried cranberries or cherries, brown sugar and cinnamon in a saucepan, and cook for about 10 minutes, or until tender. Let stand for 10 minutes to cool.
2. Layer two sheets of phyllo on a work surface, and spray with nonstick cooking spray. Sprinkle with cookie or graham cracker crumbs. Duplicate the layers two times. Spread the pear mixture over the phyllo. Roll phyllo from the 12-inch side to enclose the filling.
3. Place the roll on a baking sheet sprayed with nonstick cooking spray. Bake for 25 minutes. Cool for 10 minutes before slicing to serve. Arrange on serving plates.
4. Drizzle cinnamon cream over strudel. Serve with regular or frozen vanilla yogurt, and top with mint sprigs and raspberries.

### For cinnamon cream:

Combine the tofu, maple syrup, almond oil, sugar-free sweetener and cinnamon in a blender, and process at high speed until smooth. Chill in the refrigerator for 1 hour.

Recipe courtesy of Cal-a-Vie, created by Chef Steve Perneti, Skin Inc. magazine editorial advisory board member.