



Berry Yummy Smoothies

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 5 / **Cook Time** / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

blend: to stir together two or more ingredients until just combined; blending is a gentler process than mixing.

peel: to remove the skin or rind from something using your hands or a metal tool.

Equipment

- ☐ Blender (or pitcher + immersion blender)
- ☐ Liquid measuring cup

Ingredients

Berry Yummy Smoothies

- ☐ 2 bananas
- ☐ 1/2 pkg silken tofu ******(for SOY ALLERGY sub 1 C plain Greek yogurt OR dairy-free/nut-free plain Greek yogurt)******
- ☐ 2 C fresh or frozen blackberries
- ☐ 1/4 C honey
- ☐ 1 1/2 C milk ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 1 1/2 C dairy-free/nut-free milk)******

Food Allergen Substitutions

Berry Yummy Smoothies

Soy: For 1/2 pkg silken tofu, substitute 1 C plain Greek yogurt OR dairy-free/nut-free plain Greek yogurt.

Dairy: For 1 1/2 C milk, substitute 1 1/2 C dairy-free/nut-free milk.

Instructions

Berry Yummy Smoothies

peel + blend

To a blender (or pitcher for use with an immersion blender), have your kids peel and add **1 banana, 1/2 package silken tofu, 2 cups blackberries, 1/4 cup honey**, and **1 1/2 cups milk**. Blend until smooth.

Featured Ingredient: Blackberry!

Hi! I'm Blackberry!

"I'm kind of sweet, kind of tart, and you can often find me growing along trails. If you pick me while you're out walking or hiking, wait until I'm ripe and watch out for thorns!"

History

The blackberry is a plant and an edible fruit from the Rose family. The fruit is a collection of black drupelets. The fruit is juicy, sweet, and slightly tart.

The blackberry's origin is unclear, however, they have been eaten for at least 2,500 years. The stomach contents of an Iron Age woman from about 500 BCE, found in a Danish bog, revealed she had recently eaten blackberries and millet (a cereal grain).

Ancient and more recent cultures used parts of the blackberry plant and fruit for traditional medicine. The Greeks used them for gout and sore throats. The Romans made tea with the plant's leaves to cure illnesses. They were used in the 18th century to aid in digestion and stomach ailments. Indigenous Americans also found medicinal uses for blackberries.

In the Middle Ages, blackberry wines and tonics were seen as more affordable than beer and mead (honey wine). In the 18th and 19th centuries, blackberry cordials, jellies, and jams became popular.

The United States has been responsible for the development of some blackberry cultivars and hybrids. The loganberry is an example of a hybrid blackberry and raspberry, accidentally developed in 1881 by James Harvey Logan, a judge and horticulturalist from Santa Cruz, California.

The marionberry is a blackberry cultivar released in 1956 as part of a USDA breeding program with Oregon State University. It was called "marionberry" after Marion County, Oregon, the county in which it was developed.

The largest blackberry producer worldwide is Mexico. The state of Oregon is the top producer in the United States.

Anatomy

The blackberry comes from the *Rubus* genus and Rosaceae family. Perennial flowering plants in the Rose family include blackberries, dewberries, and raspberries.

The fruit grows on bramble bushes, thorny shrubs that are part of a thicket, or a dense group of bushes or shrubs. Thornless varieties have also been developed.

Botanically, the blackberry is not a berry. *Rubus* or bramble fruits are aggregate fruits consisting of a collection of drupelets (small, individual drupes, a fleshy fruit with thin skin and a central stone or seed). One difference between a blackberry and a raspberry is that the blackberry's torus or core stays with the fruit when it is picked. The raspberry's core does not remain, which leaves a hollow core in the fruit when picked.

One blackberry species, *Rubus armeniacus* or "Himalayan" blackberry, was introduced to North America by Luther Burbank in 1885 in Santa Rosa, California. He imported the seeds from India. It was cultivated throughout the US by 1915. However, it soon began to grow uncontrolled and is now considered an invasive species. It is often found growing around lakes and in parks.

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Blackberries are ready to pick from June through August, depending on where you live. You can tell they are ripe when they are plump and black, not red or purple.

In the southern US, they may be ready by early summer or June. In the Pacific Northwest, they ripen by late summer, usually August. In other parts of the country, blackberries are ripe sometime in between. Fresh blackberries are great as a snack whether you buy them from the store or pick them right off the plants! Blackberries are added to jams, jellies, and desserts, like pies, tarts, and crumbles. They can also be added to salads and made into sauces for meats.

Nutrition

Blackberries are a rich source of manganese and vitamins C and K. They are high in fiber, low in sugar, and have very little fat.

The fruit contains omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids. Compounds in blackberries may help prevent inflammation, heart disease, and some cancers.