

# FOOD



## IT'S TIME TO PAIR UP WITH THE PEAR

By MARY ANN MENENDEZ

Delicate.  
Sweet.  
Juicy.  
DELICIOUS!  
The famous Greek poet Homer has been credited with saying the pear is God's gift to humanity.

And at this time of year, I agree. According to foodreference.com, "In the second century A.D., the Venus pear was famous, and is still popular in Europe. In Northern Europe monks studied and cultivated pears during the Middle Ages developing many hybrids with desirable characteristics. During the 17th century, the pear was the fruit of nobility and European courts. Painters always incorporated pears in their paintings particularly for still life and scenery themes."

Pears are members of the rose family and related to the apple and the quince.

This crop is the big No. 3 in our nation following apples and peaches. The website noted the most popular pear varieties sought out by Americans include: Bartlett, Bosc, Anjou, Comice, Winter Nellis, Kieffer, Seckel, Sugar Pear, Precoce Morettini, Eldorado, California, Packham, Rogue Red, Orient, La Conte, and Chinese Pear. There are over 2,500 varieties the world over.

Most enjoy eating the fruit out of hand but the pear can easily be incorporated into many recipes for poaching, baking and canning. The pear makes its way into main dishes, side dishes, compotes, salads, muffins, breads and whole variety of desserts like bars, cakes and pies.

For an easy irresistible appetizer or quick snack, pair up some cheese with your thinly sliced pear. A popular choice for gourmets is to place a poached pear atop vanilla ice cream. Smother both with chocolate sauce and enjoy.

The website, www.nutritiondata.self.com shows a medium-size pear has 103 calories with no fat, cholesterol or sodium. It ranks high for fiber at 6 grams or 22 percent. There is 1 gram of protein. Also included are 12 percent Vitamin C, 2 percent of iron and calcium, and 1 percent of Vitamin A.

### Pear-Pork-Pepper Stir Fry

- 2 pounds boneless pork
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon instant chicken bouillon granules
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 2/3 cup pear nectar
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 green pepper, cut in chunks
- 4 cups firm pears, cored, pared and sliced
- 2/3 cup almonds
- Hot cooked rice

Partially freeze pork; slice thinly into bite-size strips. In small bowl, combine cornstarch, brown sugar, bouillon and ginger. Blend in nectar, soy sauce and vinegar, set aside. Preheat wok or skillet; add oil and stir fry green pepper in hot oil about 2 minutes. Remove. Stir fry half of pork at a time, 3-5 minutes. Return all pork to wok. Stir soy sauce mixture and add to center of wok. When mixture begins to bubble, cook and stir until thickened and bubbly. Stir in sliced pears, green pepper, and cashews. Simmer 3 minutes more. Serve at once with hot cooked rice. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

### Crispy Pear Dessert

- 6 large pears
- 1 cup sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 2 tablespoons cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons nutmeg
- 2 sticks butter
- 2 cups sifted flour
- 2 cups brown sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Peel pears and cut into slices, then cubes about 1/2 inch in size. Mix pears, sugar, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg and 2 tablespoons of flour in pan. In a large bowl, combine butter, the remaining flour, and brown sugar, mashing until crumbly. Pour pear mixture into pan of choice. Sprinkle brown sugar mixture over pears. Bake for 35-45 minutes.

### Pear Pie with Sauce

- 1 pie crust
- 2/3 cup flour, divided
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 6 medium-sized, firm pears, peeled, cored, cut lengthwise into thick wedges
- 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons chilled butter, cut into small pieces

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly spray a 9-inch pie pan with cooking spray. Put pie crust into pan, set aside. Combine 1/3 cup flour, sugar, cinnamon, and salt in large bowl. Add lemon juice and pears to flour mix, toss to coat. Arrange pear mix in even layer in crust. Combine remaining 1/3 cup flour and 1/3 cup brown sugar. Add cold butter, cut with two knives until crumbly. Sprinkle over pears. Bake 1 hour. Cool 10 minutes.

**Sauce:**  
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar  
3 tablespoons heavy whipping cream  
2 tablespoons soft butter  
2 teaspoons water  
For sauce, combine brown sugar, cream and soft butter in small saucepan over medium-high heat. Bring to boil, cook 1 min, until thick. Serve warm over pie.

### Pear Almond Bread

- 2 cups sugar
- 3/4 cup oil
- 3 eggs
- 3 cups flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 cups fresh grated peeled pears

1 cup chopped almonds  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla  
1/2 teaspoon almond flavoring  
Cream sugar and oil. Beat in eggs. Sift flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and spices. Add grated pears and beat on medium speed until well mixed. Mix in flavorings and almonds until well blended. Bake in 2 greased, floured 9 x 5 x 3 inch loaf pans at 325 degrees for 1 hour and 10 minutes or until done to the touch. Make 2 loaves.

### Pear-Tuna Combo Salad

- 1 pear
- 1 (3 ounces) water-packed tuna, drained well
- 2 tablespoons diced green pepper
- 1 tablespoons French dressing
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- Pinch of sugar

Dice pear. Toss with tuna and green pepper. Combine dressing, lemon juice, and sugar. Pour over mixture and toss. Serve with favorite bread, rolls or crackers.

### White, Red & Blue Salad

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1/2 teaspoon honey mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon honey
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups shredded lettuce, rinsed and drained well
- 1 cups torn spinach, rinsed and drained well
- 4 lettuce leaves, rinsed and drained well
- 1 medium size Braeburn apple, core & thinly sliced
- 1 medium pear, cored & thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup fresh blueberries

Combine first 6 ingredients in a

small bowl, stirring with a wire whisk until blended; set aside. Combine shredded lettuce and spinach in a medium bowl. Pour 1/4 cup reserved vinegar mixture over greens, tossing gently. Place lettuce leaves on individual serving plates; spoon tossed greens on leaves. Arrange apple and pear slices alternately on leaves. Sprinkle blueberries over salads, and spoon remaining dressing over fruit.

### Bosc-Butternut Hot Dish

- 1 3-pound butternut squash
- 2 Bosc pears
- 1/3 cup slivered almonds
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons butter

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a two-quart baking dish. Peel squash, clean out the insides and cut into quarters. Slice the quarters into pieces about 1/2 inch thick. Set aside. Peel and core the pears and slice into pieces about the same thickness as squash. Alternate squash and pears in casserole, creating approximately 3 layers. Sprinkle with almonds, then the brown sugar after each layer and finally, dot the top of the casserole with the butter. Bake, uncovered, for approximately 35 minutes, until the squash is tender and cooked through. Makes 4 servings.

### Candied Pears

- 1 medium orange
- 1/4 cup raspberry jam
- 2 (2 and 1/2 inch) cinnamon sticks
- 1 (6-ounce) can frozen orange juice
- 8 firm pears

Peel and core pears. Peel orange and pull sections apart. In 5-quart saucepan add orange slices, raspberry jam, cinnamon sticks, frozen orange juice and pears. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes. Remove pears and bring back to a boil stirring often, sauce will thicken approximately 30 minutes. Pour sauce over pears, refrigerate for 3 hours. Pears can be made 3 days in advance and can be served hot or cold.

### Pear & Oat Cookies

- 1 1/2 cup diced pears
- 1 1/2 cups cream
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup sifted flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup uncooked oatmeal
- 1/3 cup raisins
- 1/3 cup chopped pecans

Using fresh, core and dice unpeeled pears. In a large mixing bowl, add cream, butter, brown sugar and honey. Add egg, beat until fluffy. Add vanilla. Sift together flour, baking powder and salt in a separate bowl. Add to creamed mixture. Stir in oatmeal, pears, raisins, nuts. Drop by teaspoons on lightly greased cookie sheet. Bake at 400 degrees for 10-12 minutes.

### Pear-Almond-Chicken Salad

- 3 cups cooked chicken, chopped
- 2 pears, unpeeled and chopped
- 1/3 cup celery, chopped
- 1/2 cup plain low-fat yogurt
- 1 tablespoon low-fat mayonnaise
- 3/4 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons almonds
- 1/4 cup currants

Combine yogurt, mayonnaise, mustard, ginger, and salt; set aside. In a medium bowl, toss together chicken, pears, celery, almonds, and currants. Pour yogurt dressing over chicken mixture; mix gently until ingredients are mixed well and moistened. Serve on leaf of lettuce, crackers or bread. Makes 6 servings.

### Healthy Pear Muffins

- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 and 1/4 cups whole bran cereal
- 1 (16-ounce) can pears, drained & diced
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1 egg, beaten

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Combine flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Add bran and diced pears. Combine with milk. Let stand 5 minutes. Add oil to beaten egg and mix well. Add to pear mixture. Stir only until dry ingredients are moistened. Fill greased muffin pans 3/4 full. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean.

### Poached Pears & Raspberries

- 6 medium Bosc pears with stems
- 4 cups water
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 vanilla bean
- 1 cinnamon stick
- Zest of 1 lemon

**Sauce:**  
1 pint raspberries  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/4 cup orange juice  
Whipped cream or vanilla ice cream  
Peel pears, leaving stems attached. Trim bases so pears will stand upright. Core seeds from pears. Soak pears in cold water with some lemon juice while preparing poaching liquid. In a large saucepan, combine 4 cups of water, sugar, cinnamon stick, vanilla bean and lemon zest. Cook over high heat until mixture boils. Add pears; reduce heat to low. Cover and continue cooking until pears are tender. Remove from syrup with slotted spoon and refrigerate to chill. Prepare raspberry sauce in blender. Combine raspberries, sugar and

orange juice and puree mixture. Serve pears on individual plates and drizzle with raspberry sauce. May be served on ice cream or whipped cream, if desired.

### Pear Sauce

- 6 cups pared, cored and cubed pears
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- Touch of nutmeg

Combine all ingredients in 2-quart microwave-safe measure or bowl. Cover and microwave on High (100 percent) for 6 minutes. Stir pear mixture; rotate dish one-quarter turn and microwave at High for 6 to 8 minutes longer or until tender. Puree in blender. Chill for a few hours. Refrigerate any leftovers.

### Pear Cranberry Dessert

- 4 firm ripe pears, peeled and sliced
- 12 ounces cranberries
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3/4 cup rolled oats
- 2/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter (cut into 1/2-inch pieces)
- 1/2 cup flour
- Pinch of salt

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Toss pears and cranberries, sugar and 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon in 10-inch round baking dish (prepared with non-stick cooking spray) until well blended. Combine oats, brown sugar, butter, flour, salt and 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon into large bowl and blend with fingertips until mixture resembles coarse meal. Sprinkle over first mixture and pat down lightly. Bake 45 minutes. Cool 1 hour. Serve with vanilla ice cream or orange sherbet, if desired.

### Pear-Shrimp Appetizers

- 1 (4 oz.) pkg. refrigerated crescent roll dough
- 1 container (4 ounces) garlic & herb-seasoned cheese such as Rondele
- 2 ounces tiny cooked & peeled shrimp or 1 (4 1/2 oz.) can shrimp, drained
- 2 firm, ripe pears, cored & cut into thin wedges

Open package of dough and unroll on a baking sheet. Separate the 2 rectangles of dough (do not separate triangles) and place side by side just barely overlapping; gently press edges together. Scoop cheese in a pile in the center of the dough then press shrimp over and into cheese. Bring the 4 corners of dough together on top; pinch edges together to seal package. Bake in a preheated 425-degree oven until dough is nicely browned, about 12 minutes. Transfer to a platter and surround with pear wedges. To eat, cut into cheese package with a knife and scoop mixture onto pieces of fruit. Makes 4 appetizers.

**ALCO**  
2402 Central Ave., Estherville, IA  
712-362-5889

juniors - misses - men - kids

**20 - 40% OFF All JEANS\***

Reg. 11.99 to 34.99  
\*edv everyday value  
priced jeans not included  
Expires Sun., Sept. 26, 2010

**Sears® Hometown Store**

**25% OFF all Freezers\***

Plus Extra **5% all Kenmore appliances with your Sears card\***

Offers good 9/24/10 thru 9/26/10.

**408 Central Ave. Estherville**