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## CHASING THE WINTER BLUES

Even the dreariest of winter days can get a shot of blue skies and sunshine when you enjoy fresh fruit. Now through early spring, fresh blueberries of the highest quality arrive from South America every day, bringing the colors and flavors of summer to North American homes.

At this time of year, blueberries are packaged in 4.4-ounce containers, giving you one whole cup of blueberries to enjoy. How can you maximize those fresh blueberries when you get them home?

**Blueberry Polenta Cake** (pictured) is a splendid baked dessert for family or guests. You'll love the flavors of fresh blueberries baked in a sweet, lemon-scented cornmeal batter. The cake is dense and moist, so even a small slice delivers a big finish to a meal! And it keeps, well wrapped, for up to a week. If you like, stir up warm **Blueberry Compote** to serve with the cake. The compote is also a tasty topper for ice cream or custard.

When you're in a hurry, try **Blueberry Ricotta Parfaits** for a dessert that tastes sinful but has only 229 calories and 7 grams of fat per serving. And you get the bonus of half a cup of fruit in each serving! They're great for dessert or you can make these tasty parfaits in the morning for the kids to enjoy after school.

Fresh blueberries bring a ray of warmth to breakfast or brunch – especially in winter! Take a big, fragrant **Blueberry-Filled Dutch Pancake** out of the oven

to please kids and adults alike. The pancake ingredients are whirled in a blender then baked in the oven and covered with a juicy fresh blueberry sauce. One pancake serves six – and it's easy!

Blueberries are renowned not only for their flavor but for their impact on health. The USDA recommends adults enjoy two cups of fruit a day – all year round. Fresh blueberries can help you fulfill that recommendation. A half-cup of blueberries has just 40 calories and contributes to our daily intake of dietary fiber and vitamin C. Also, scientific studies show that blueberries contain antioxidants that may be beneficial to good health. Antioxidants help to neutralize free radicals, which are linked to the development of a number of diseases, including cancer, cardiovascular disease and other age-related conditions such as Alzheimer's.

For a wealth of information and more recipes visit [www.blueberry.org](http://www.blueberry.org).

### **Blueberry Fast Facts and Quick Tips**

- Fresh blueberries are simple to use! No peeling, chopping or stemming – just rinse and eat or add to your favorite recipes.
- About half of highbush blueberries are eaten fresh. The others are marketed as frozen, canned or dried.
- More and more people are eating blueberries every day. And for good reasons. They contain antioxidants and are convenient for snacking or a flavorful ingredient in your favorite recipes. It just makes good sense to include blueberries in your daily diet.
- Need a super-quick dessert? Heat 1/4 cup blueberry jam or fruit spread in the microwave then stir in 1 cup fresh blueberries to serve over ice cream or cake.
- Take-out Breakfast. Make yourself a light tasty breakfast to take with you: in a disposable cup, layer fresh blueberries, your favorite flavor yogurt with granola or crushed cereal. Cover the cup, grab a spoon and off you go!

## **BLUEBERRY POLENTA CAKE**

1 cup cake flour (or 1 cup minus 2 tablespoons  
all-purpose flour)

3/4 cup yellow cornmeal

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

3/4 cup granulated sugar

1/2 cup vegetable oil

1 large egg

1/3 cup plain low-fat yogurt

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1/4 teaspoon grated lemon rind, packed

1 package (4.4 ounces) fresh blueberries  
(about 1 cup)

1 tablespoon confectioners' sugar, optional

Blueberry Compote, optional (recipe below)

Preheat oven to 350°F. With parchment or wax paper, line the bottom of a 9-inch cake pan and spray well with cooking spray. In a small bowl, stir together flour, cornmeal, baking powder, and salt. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the granulated sugar, oil, egg, yogurt, lemon juice and rind; fold in flour mixture until just combined, then fold in blueberries. Transfer to prepared pan; bake until cake springs back when gently pressed in the center, about 35 minutes. Cool pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. With a knife, loosen edges before inverting cake onto a cake plate to cool to room temperature. Just before serving, sift confectioners' sugar over the top or serve with Blueberry Compote, if desired.

**YIELD:** 8 portions

**Per portion:** 314 calories, 42 g carbohydrate, 15 g total fat

**Blueberry Compote:** In a small pan, combine 2 packages (4.4 ounces each) fresh blueberries and 1/4 cup maple syrup. Over high heat, bring to a boil; reduce heat to low and simmer just until the first berry pops, 1 to 2 minutes. In a cup, combine 2 tablespoons water and 2 teaspoons cornstarch. Stir mixture into blueberries; cook and stir until thickened. Remove from heat and stir in 1 teaspoon lemon juice or 1 teaspoon vanilla.

YIELD: 8 portions, about 3 tablespoons each

Per portion: 49 calories, 12 g carbohydrate, 0 g total fat



**CAPTION:**

Scented with lemon and bursting with blueberries, Blueberry Polenta Cake becomes a special dessert when served with Fresh Blueberry Compote.

**Please credit:**

**U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council**

Photo # BC-IC-26

### **BLUEBERRY RICOTTA PARFAITS**

- 1 large banana, cut into 1/4-inch cubes (about 1 cup)  
or 1 cup other fruit, diced
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice, divided
- 1 cup part-skim ricotta
- 3 tablespoons blueberry fruit spread
- 1 package (4.4 ounces) fresh blueberries (about 1 cup)
- 12 vanilla wafers, coarsely crushed (about 1/2 cup)

In a medium bowl, toss banana and 1 teaspoon lemon juice; fold in ricotta. In a microwave-safe bowl, melt fruit spread and remaining lemon juice on high power, 10 to 12 seconds. Add blueberries to fruit spread mixture; stir to coat. In each of four parfait or dessert dishes layer: 1 tablespoon wafer crumbs; 1/4 cup ricotta mixture; 2 tablespoons blueberries; repeat layers, ending with blueberries. Serve immediately or cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate to allow crumbs to soften, about one hour.

**YIELD:** 4 portions

**Per portion:** 229 calories, 34 g carbohydrate, 7 g total fat

## **BLUEBERRY-FILLED DUTCH PANCAKE**

2 tablespoons butter, softened  
6 large eggs  
1 cup lowfat milk  
2/3 cup flour  
1/3 cup sugar  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 package (4.4 ounces) fresh blueberries (about 1 cup)  
1/4 cup light corn syrup

Preheat oven to 425°F. In a 13 x 9-inch glass baking dish, evenly spread butter over bottom and sides. In a blender jar, combine eggs, milk, flour, sugar, salt, and vanilla; blend until smooth. Pour batter into baking dish; bake until pancake is golden brown and puffy, 20 to 25 minutes. Meanwhile, in a small skillet over medium heat, heat blueberries and corn syrup just until the first blueberry pops, about 2 minutes; remove from heat. Remove pancake from oven; pour blueberry syrup into the center of the pancake; cut into 6 pieces. Serve immediately.

YIELD: 6 portions

Per portion: 270 calories, 37 g carbohydrate, 10 g total fat