

Healthy food for your table: *the pomegranate*

by Dr. Lorinda Sorensen

Until recently, it was a little-known fruit used mostly for decorations. Now, we know it to contain the shining stars of fruit-based antioxidants. I am speaking of the pomegranate, the red seedy fruit that comes of season in the fall and winter, and many people wonder how to we are supposed to eat it.

The name *pomegranate* is Latin for apple of many seeds (*pomum* "apple" and *granatus* "seeded." The Latin name is *Punica granatum*).

The first many of us ever hear of a pomegranate is the Greek tale of Persephone. Persephone was the daughter of Demeter, the goddess of

the harvest and fertility. One day Hades, the lord of the underworld, abducted Persephone, and would not return her. Demeter was so upset that the land became barren; life came to a standstill. Hades agreed to return Persephone, under protest. She could only go free if she had not had any food. But she had. While she had been in the underworld, she had consumed some pomegranate seeds. For each seed she had eaten, she was to live with Hades for a month.

This is one of the myths to explain the seasons, but also to explain rebirth and regeneration. For the time that Persephone is with Demeter, the grounds flourish, flowers and grains grow, and the

world is beautiful; when Persephone is away, thanks to the pomegranate seeds, the stagnate winter is here.

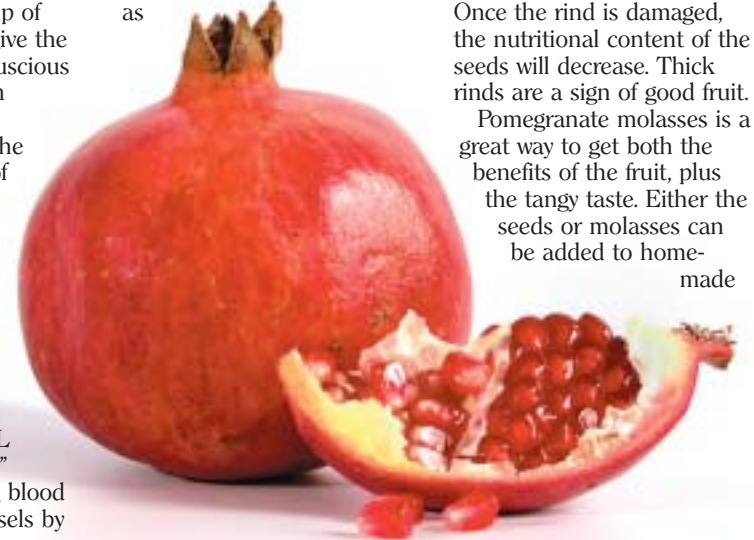
While the pomegranate is not the only fruit with many seeds, it has been used as symbol of fertility, and with that, marriage. At one time it was considered to represent the Christian church: many seeds inside one larger piece of fruit. Some also consider the pomegranate to be the forbidden fruit found in the garden of Eden, and indeed the fruit is native to the Middle East. In one Islamic tradition, one seed in every fruit comes directly from heaven.

So pomegranates are rich with folklore and symbolism. That is all very nice, but

should you eat them? Yes! Recent medical studies have found that pomegranates are high in the flavonoids called anthocyanins, a group of antioxidants which give the fruit and seeds the luscious red color; and tannin polyphenols, which account for 92% of the antioxidant activity of the whole fruit. These polyphenols are similar, and at least one is the same, as the antioxidants found in green tea. They are protective for the cardiovascular system, reducing LDL cholesterol (the "bad" kind), and improving blood flow through the vessels by decreasing platelet aggregation. In essence, the consumption of pomegranate decreases the risk factors for heart disease.

The symbolic association of the pomegranate with fertility is not just a myth. Pomegranates contain compounds that have an estrogen-like activity. This does not necessarily mean they will increase your levels of estrogen, but it may alter the way your body responds to its own estrogen, in a more favorable way. This has been shown by a reduction in estrogen-dependant breast cancer and prostate cancer. Pomegranate extracts block the activity of the enzyme aromatase, which is involved of the synthesis of estrogen

in fat cells of both men and women. Excess estrogens contribute to the types of cancers listed above, as well as



as a supplement. The fruit can be kept for as much as six months as long as the rind has not been damaged. Once the rind is damaged, the nutritional content of the seeds will decrease. Thick rinds are a sign of good fruit. Pomegranate molasses is a great way to get both the benefits of the fruit, plus the tangy taste. Either the seeds or molasses can be added to home-made

endometriosis, fibrocystic breast disease, fibroid tumors and infertility.

Traditional uses of the pomegranate include using the rind as a worming treatment. In India it is included in remedies for diarrhea and Irritable Bowel Syndrome. The rind also contains some of the polyphenol tannins, but it is the least used part of the fruit. With the seeds being the easiest part of the fruit to use, they also high in vitamin C and have slightly less potassium than a banana.

There are many ways to buy pomegranate fruit. It is available, of course, as a fruit, as fruit juice, as pomegranate molasses, and in extract form

cranberry sauce, to make the holiday table extra special. The seeds are great in many kinds of salads, ranging from arugula and spinach to topping a fruit salad. Pomegranate juices are great, if a little costly, but beware that some may add extra sugars, and that many juices are best if consumed right away.

For those who would like to experiment with pomegranates in savory dishes, check out a good Persian cookbook. Persian stew, called khoresh, frequently have pomegranates as an ingredient. Of course, we should not forget about

See page 15

CRYSTALS BOOKS MUSIC ART DRUMS & RATTLES

Stargazers

Spiritual Gallery & Bookstore

www.stargazersbookstore.com
12727 N.E. 20th, Bellevue 425.885.7289
Dec. Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed, Thur, Sat 10-6
Friday 10-7 • Sun 12-5

ANGELS SMUDGING HERBS CRYSTALS
CHINESE POSTERS & CARDS SHAMAN ART

Daytime Classes:
Dec 1: Gemstone Therapy - Chinese 5 Element Theory - Metal Element, Part 2 with Gayle Alizar, Sat 12-3pm, \$30
Dec 15: 22 Steps to Success with Krysta Gibson, Sat 12-3pm, \$45

Friday Evenings:
Dec 7: Transforming Present Reality Using Crystals with Diedre Berg of Chrysalis Crystals
Dec 14: Holiday Seance with Sophia
Dec 21: Winter Solstice Ceremony with Tess Sterling
Dec 28: Drumming Circle with Tess Sterling

Winter Psychic Fair and Gem & Jewelry Show
Saturday Dec 8 (10-6pm) & Sunday Dec 9 (12-5pm)
Mini Readings, Aura Photos, Spirit Portraits, Mini Massages PLUS Awesome Crystals and exquisite jewelry offered by Chrysalis, the premier stone dealer!

SPECTACULAR, UNIQUE PENDANTS, EAR RINGS, BRACELETS & RINGS

GOOD COMPANY

Back by Popular Demand!
Due to popular demand, Good Company is back!

People have said they miss this wonderful opportunity to network so we are offering the Good Company lunches again - with a twist! Instead of having speakers, we will get together just to enjoy lunch, visit, share what we are doing with one another, and make referrals!

First Tuesday: Dec. 4, Jan 2 (Wed.), Feb. 5, Mar 4, April 1
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
No reservations required. • No prepayment required
Cost is the price of your lunch - the buffet costs \$6.99!
(Vegetarian available.)

Chef Chen's, 15704 Mill Creek Blvd. #9 Mill Creek, WA
425-338-3300 (for directions only)

For information about Good Company, call 425-356-7237 or 206-799-7753

A Monthly Gathering of People Of Positive Influence

People of Positive Influence (PPIs) are those who are living their lives in such a way as to be a positive influence on the world around them. It doesn't matter what kind of work you do or where you do it. If you are helping to make the world a better place, if you are reading *New Spirit Journal*, you are a PPI! Join us for a monthly network gathering.

Sponsored by Krysta Gibson and Rhonda Dickson of *New Spirit Journal*

Reiki Healing
Master Level Reiki Healing
Beginning to Advanced Training

www.circlegreen.org Shannon 425-377-9790

Ananda
Institute of Living Yoga

Offering Individual Courses & 2-year Programs in:

- ☞ Kriya Yoga
- ☞ Raja Yoga
- ☞ Living Yoga
- ☞ Meditation Teacher Training
- ☞ Ananda Yoga Teacher Training

Ongoing Classes & Events: Ananda Temple in Bothell 425-806-3700 & Ananda Teaching Center, Seattle 206-527-4343
www.AnandaSeattle.org www.InstituteOfLivingYoga.org
www.livingwisdomschoolseattle.org

Meditation & Festival of Light
Every Wednesday 7:30 - 9:00
Ananda Seattle Teaching Center

Meditation & Yoga Classes
Held at two convenient locations.
Call for a magazine or visit Ananda online!

Living Wisdom School
1st grade, kindergarten, preschool
Offering Spirit-centered, nonsectarian environment using yoga techniques to enhance concentration, calmness & self-awareness.
(Fall 2008 will include 2nd grade)