

Watermelon



Selecting

The watermelon is a member of the berry family known as pepo, whose fruits have hard outer rinds. Watermelon rinds are green with darker green stripes or yellow spots. The sweet inner flesh of the fruit can be red, yellow, orange or white, depending on the variety, though red is the most common type found in our grocery stores. The more vivid the colour of the flesh, the sweeter the taste tends to be.

Watermelon shapes can be round, oval or elongated melon form, and the fruit can weigh from 5 pounds (2 kg) to as much as 50 pounds (23 kg).

There are many checkpoints when selecting a watermelon. The brownish, dry stem should still be attached. Examine the skin to see that it is dull and slightly waxy, and yields only slightly to finger pressure.

Check that the underside, where the melon would have sat on the ground, is pale yellow or a creamy colour and not white or light green. The watermelon should not have any flat sides and should feel heavy for its size.

Nothing should rattle when you shake it. If you hear seeds when shaking the melon, it is overripe.

Try the “thump test” by flicking your middle finger off your thumb against the melon. If you hear a deep, rich hollow sound the watermelon may be a good choice.

And be sure to smell the melon to check that it has a pleasant, sweet aroma.

Storing

Watermelons should be stored in the fridge and will last up to a week uncut.

Once cut, wrap tightly with plastic wrap and store in the fridge. Use quickly after it is cut since it will only last a couple of days.

Preparing

Wash the outer rind of the watermelon and then slice into wedges, or cut away the rind and cut the flesh into chunks.

Eating

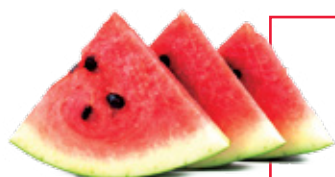
Everyone looks forward to watermelon season. This delicious fruit is a favourite when served as is, but is also enjoyed in drinks and salads.

Seasonality

Watermelon is in season from July to September.

Nutrition

A 1/2 cup (125 mL) of watermelon has 24 calories. Watermelon is high in lycopene and a source of Vitamin C.



Try this refreshing take on gazpacho for a healthy summer treat:

www.halfyourplate.ca/recipe/watermelon-gazpacho/

