



Taken from: www.naturalhealth365.com/polenta.html

Polenta has a legacy dating back to the 1700's – when it was made popular in Italy. It was considered peasant food because it was plentiful and cheap. Naturally, polenta became a diet staple in the winter months when food was scarce. Maize, the American Indian word for corn, means “that which sustains life”. It is right behind wheat and rice as the most important grain in the world. In addition, it's one of the best foods to supply long-lasting energy.

Health Benefits

The source of your food is important:

Even though corn is one of the healthiest, low calorie foods – it's a good idea to rotate and mix polenta with other vegetables. Note: today's corn is almost entirely genetically modified – so polenta MUST come from an organic source or (potentially) suffer the health consequences.

According to the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry, foods made from milled yellow corn including polenta provide a natural and excellent source of carotenoids. Dr. Mario Ferruzzi of Purdue University stated: “It is easier to digest the carotenoids from milled corn foods than those in carrots and spinach.” Carotenoids are fat soluble meaning they are easier to digest when combined with some fat.

Delicious (healthy) food – anytime:

Polenta is a low carbohydrate food rich in vitamin A and C making it a good source of the carotenoids, lutein and zeaxanthin. The concentration reaches a level of 1,355 micrograms per 100 grams. The level of beta-carotene is 97 micrograms per 100 grams with health benefits like, cancer and heart disease prevention. Research studies have shown that corn can support the growth of friendly bacteria in our large intestine and can also be transformed by



Healthy Foods

Health Benefits: Polenta

these bacteria into short chain fatty acids (SCFAs). These supply energy for our intestinal cells, which lowers the risk of colon cancer.

An easy way to prepare meals:

Polenta is a wonderful dish that goes with breakfast, lunch and dinner entrees and it can be served hot or cold, soft or hard making it one the most versatile foods. Since polenta is gluten free it can easily replace wheat based meals. In fact, many health stores will sell pre-made polenta or you can easily make it by boiling water and stirring in cornmeal until it thickens. One of the easiest ways to prepare it is to add the cornmeal to cold salted water, bring to a boil shut off, and let it stay in a covered pot until it becomes thick. Then it can be served hot or refrigerated until it can be sliced.

The flavoring you use will determine how the polenta will be used at the dinner table. You can try some herbs and spices like Cajun, pepper, chipotle, and teriyaki to add flavor to any dish. By the way, spices will help speed up your metabolism!