

LARGEST WEEKLY CIRCULATION IN THE HAMPTONS PLUS SPECIAL MANHATTAN DELIVERY

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COMPLIMENTARY

HEALTH, BEAUTY & FITNESS

Skin deep with Samantha Altea

Vegging Out

My favorite thing to eat and cook when the cold wind and rain seep into my bones is shepherd's pie. It's heart warming, tasty, easy to eat to make - minced meat and onions, delicious rich gravy, a layer of soft buttery mashed potato smeared over the top, and a sprinkling of cheddar cheese to crisp the peaks of potato. Gorgeous! But, unlike many others, I am conscious of how important it is to get a regular intake of vegetables, so I also add a few peas and carrots to my pie, although my Mum believes it to be complete sacrilege to add vegetables to this traditional English dish.

Isn't it funny how our eating habits and desires change with the seasons? In the summer, all I crave is salad and in winter, along with my famous shepherd's pie of course, I yearn for hearty soups and root vegetables in general, especially potatoes (my all-time favorite food).

It used to be that in winter we'd eat this kind of food in order to gain a little extra weight and therefore warmth. But these days, we've got down coats and Ugg boots for that...Now we just change our eating habits because it feels and tastes good. There's nothing like cauliflower with cheese, winter squash, Kale, or FRESH spinach (not the bagged kind these days, thank you very much.) Yum, yum and double yum. My mouth is watering at the thought of it all. But not only are winter vegetables delicious, they're also extremely healthy.

Here are my top five fab fav's for fall. So veg out with me for a minute while I explain why these five vegetables should be on this week's shopping list.

Brussels Sprouts

In England they are a must at any Christmas din-

ner table. But not only do they taste great, they're also rich in Vitamins K, C and A. They contain phytochemicals which help the body fight diseases, and even cancer. Sulforaphane, a major glucosinolate phytonutrient is also something that helps the body to detoxify unwanted enzymes. Sulforaphanes found in Brussels sprouts are known to help the liver produce enzymes that detoxify cancer-causing chemicals, too.

Winter Squash

This vegetable was so important to the Native Americans that they were buried with it in order to give them plenty of nourishment on their final journey. Like many other vegetables, the squash has been found to have cancer-fighting benefits. Squash may also reduce your risk of lung cancer because, like other orange-red vegetables, it's rich in beta-cryptoxanthin, a fat soluble pigment which works as an antioxidant, known as a carotenoid.

Full of Vitamin A, squash is ideal for people who have to deal with second-hand smoke, as this vitamin is linked specifically to the prevention of lung cancer.

Kale

The best part about Kale, besides its delicious, distinct flavor is that it contains more nutritional value for fewer calories than most other foods. A cousin of the Brussels sprout, Kale has sulfur-containing phytochemicals and is one of the vegetables with cancer-pre-



venting properties.

Yams

An excellent source of Vitamin B6, yams help the body break down something called homocysteine that can damage blood vessel walls. It's been shown that people who have had heart attacks, often have high levels of homocysteine. Yams are also a great source of potassium which helps to control blood pressure.

Cauliflower

This is known as a cruciferous vegetable, like broccoli, cabbage and kale and also has cancer preventing bene-

fits. Cruciferous vegetables contain compounds that help detoxify the liver as well.

Pumpkin

As it's almost Halloween, I can't leave out pumpkin and its health benefits for fall. Don't save it for pie, or to make a spooky lantern, instead, you can also load up on Vitamin A and fiber by adding pumpkin to your diet. A food fact to know is that pumpkin is fat-and-cholesterol-free and great for the weight conscious among us. It also contains beta-carotene, alpha-carotene and lutein which lower the risk of heart disease. These carotenoids have also been shown to help with vision loss in people over 50.

Who knew that vegging out could be so good for you? So, stock up on your veggies this fall and feel great.

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