

Enhanced Food Pairings for Phytonutrient Benefits

These pairings highlight how combining foods can maximize nutrient absorption and amplify health benefits across multiple systems. Think about how many more of these there must be when we cook with whole foods.

Berries + Green Tea (Catechins): Polyphenols in berries enhance catechin effects, supporting heart and brain health.

Tomatoes + Olive Oil (Lycopene): Healthy fats in olive oil improve lycopene absorption, benefiting heart and skin health.

Garlic + Wine (Allicin): Allicin in garlic and polyphenols like resveratrol in wine combine to support heart health, improve circulation, and reduce oxidative stress.

Garlic + Tomatoes (Sulfur): Sulfur compounds in garlic enhance the absorption of lycopene in tomatoes, promoting heart health, reducing inflammation, and protecting against oxidative damage.

Turmeric + Black Pepper (Curcumin): Piperine in black pepper boosts curcumin absorption by up to 2,000%, enhancing anti-inflammatory effects.

Broccoli + Mustard (Sulforaphane): Myrosinase in mustard activates sulforaphane, enhancing detoxification and cancer protection.

Spinach + Citrus (Iron): Vitamin C in citrus increases the absorption of non-heme iron from spinach, supporting energy and reducing anemia risk.

Carrots + Avocado (Beta-Carotene): Healthy fats in avocado enhance beta-carotene absorption for vision and immune health.

Cherries + Dark Chocolate (Flavonoids): Flavonoids in chocolate amplify anthocyanins in cherries, reducing inflammation and supporting heart health.

Red Grapes + Almonds (Quercetin): Healthy fats in almonds improve quercetin absorption, amplifying anti-inflammatory benefits.

Red Bell Peppers + Kale (Vitamin C + Quercetin): Vitamin C in peppers amplifies the antioxidant action of quercetin in kale.

Asparagus + Eggs (Lutein): Fats in eggs improve lutein absorption from asparagus, supporting eye health.

Red Wine + Dark Chocolate (Flavonoids): Flavonoids in red wine and dark chocolate work together to enhance vascular health.

Cilantro + Avocado (Quercetin): Healthy fats in avocado improve the bioavailability of quercetin in cilantro, reducing inflammation.

Blueberries + Oats (Anthocyanins): Soluble fiber in oats enhances the antioxidant benefits of anthocyanins in blueberries.

Beets + Oranges (Nitrates + Vitamin C): Vitamin C in oranges stabilizes nitrates in beets, enhancing cardiovascular

Lemon + Tea (Catechins + Vitamin C): Vitamin C in lemon stabilizes catechins in tea, boosting their antioxidant potency.

Asparagus + Eggs (Lutein): Fats in eggs improve lutein absorption from asparagus, supporting eye health.

Cilantro + Avocado (Quercetin): Healthy fats in avocado enhance quercetin's anti-inflammatory effects in cilantro.

Kale + Olive Oil (Quercetin + Carotenoids): Olive oil improves absorption of both quercetin and carotenoids in kale, benefiting heart and skin health.

Garlic + Honey (Allicin): Honey enhances garlic's antimicrobial and immune-boosting properties.

Blueberries + Yogurt (Polyphenols + Probiotics): Probiotics in yogurt enhance the bioavailability of polyphenols in blueberries, promoting gut health and immunity.

Broccoli + Garlic (Sulforaphane + Allicin): Garlic boosts sulforaphane's detoxifying effects in broccoli, enhancing liver and cellular protection.

Red Bell Peppers + Kale (Vitamin C + Quercetin): Vitamin C in peppers amplifies quercetin's antioxidant action in kale, reducing oxidative stress.

Sweet Potatoes + Coconut Oil (Beta-Carotene): Coconut oil boosts beta-carotene absorption from sweet potatoes, supporting skin and vision health.

Buckwheat + Berries (Fiber + Antioxidants): Fiber in buckwheat complements the antioxidant benefits of berries, supporting gut health and blood sugar regulation.

Beets + Oranges (Nitrates + Vitamin C): Vitamin C in oranges stabilizes nitrates in beets, boosting cardiovascular benefits.

Red Wine + Dark Chocolate (Flavonoids): Flavonoids in red wine and dark chocolate work synergistically to support vascular and heart health.

Cumin + Lentils/Legumes (Digestibility): Cumin contains bioactive compounds like thymol and essential oils that stimulate digestive enzymes, reducing bloating and enhancing the breakdown of complex carbohydrates and proteins in lentils and legumes. This improves overall digestibility and minimizes gas production.

Feta + Watermelon (Hydration + Electrolytes): The salt in feta cheese helps replenish electrolytes, and watermelon provides hydration, potassium, and natural sugars. This combination supports hydration, muscle function, and recovery after exercise.

Beer + Onions (Quercetin): Quercetin in onions enhances the antioxidant effects of polyphenols in beer, supporting heart health and reducing inflammation.

Beer + Citrus: Vitamin C in citrus boosts the bioavailability of beer's polyphenols, enhancing antioxidant and immune-supporting benefits.

Beer + Spices: Anti-inflammatory compounds in spices like turmeric and cumin synergize with beer's polyphenols for broader antioxidant protection.