

# Sweet potatoes provide a near year-round treat

You know that sweet potatoes are an important part of a Thanksgiving dinner. But you may not know that sweet potatoes are an important part of a healthy diet any time of the year.

Much of the rest of the country may think their season limited

to a Thanksgiving casserole, but southerners include sweet potatoes in non-holiday menus as well. Since fresh sweet potatoes are available all year, except in summer, they are a versatile as well as healthful part of any diet.

Sweet potatoes have four

times the official recommended daily level of beta-carotene, an antioxidant most researchers consider a valuable cancer-fighting nutrient. Studies have shown that high levels of beta-carotene in the diet or blood may also be associated with a decreased risk of coronary heart disease in men.

Fresh sweet potatoes have more beta-carotene than carrots and more vitamin C than tomatoes.

And just to set the record straight: The names are often used interchangeably, but sweet potatoes and yams are from different plant species. Sweet potatoes belong to the morning-glory

family. Yams belong to a different genus altogether. Jessica Harris, author of *The African Table*, says the confusion started when African slaves in the Caribbean called the local tubers, which were sweet potatoes, nyami, the Senegalese word for "to eat."

Fresh sweet potatoes don't store well unless kept in a dry, dark, cool place. They should not be refrigerated.

While many Americans only know sweet potatoes as part of a gooey, rich casserole, they are so rich in flavor and natural sweetness that they don't have to be candied or buttered to taste good. Even simple, undressed baked sweet potatoes can be delicious, since the high oven temperature concentrates their natural sweetness. After you bake them, try them as part of this sweet potato salad - good any time of the year.

## SWEET POTATO SALAD

3 pounds sweet potatoes  
salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped  
2 celery stalks, chopped  
chopped canned chiles, to taste  
1 1/2 cups non-fat plain yogurt  
2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, minced  
2 tablespoons shallots, minced  
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Scrub sweet potatoes and pierce all over with fork. Bake until soft, about 1 hour. While potatoes are baking, prepare dressing. Make dressing by mixing together yogurt, cilantro, shallots and lime juice.

Add salt to taste. Chill at least an hour before using to dress salad.

When sweet potatoes are baked, cool, peel and cut in 1/2-inch cubes. Place in large bowl and mix in salt and pepper to taste. Mix potatoes with bell pepper, celery and chiles. Mix dressing into potatoes to salad. Serve warm or chilled.

Serves 8.

Per serving: 237 calories, less than 1 g. total fat (less than 1 g. saturated fat), 56 g. carbohydrate, 8 g. protein, 7 g. dietary fiber, 56 mg. sodium.

AICR offers a Nutrition Hotline (1-800-843-8114). Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET, Monday-Friday, this free service allows you to ask a registered dietitian questions about diet, nutrition and cancer. The American Institute for Cancer Research is the only major cancer charity focusing exclusively on the link between diet, nutrition and cancer.

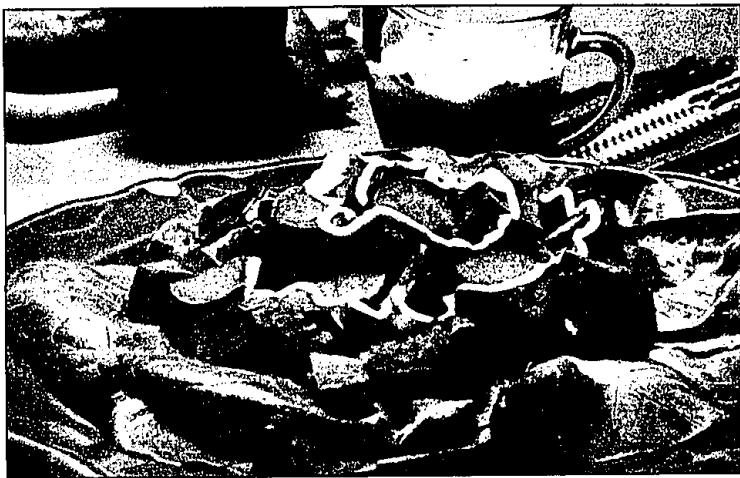
Source: American Institute for Cancer Research

## SWEET POTATO BURRITO

3 teaspoons vegetable oil  
1 onion, chopped  
4 cloves garlic, minced  
6 cups canned kidney beans, drained  
2 cups water  
3 tablespoons chili powder  
2 teaspoons ground cumin  
4 teaspoons prepared mustard  
1 pinch cayenne pepper, or to taste  
3 tablespoons soy sauce  
4 cups cooked and mashed sweet potatoes  
12 (10 inch) flour tortillas, warmed  
8 ounces shredded Cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Heat oil in a medium skillet, and sauté onion and garlic in until soft. Stir in beans, and mash. Gradually stir in water, and heat until warm. Remove from heat, and stir in the chili powder, cumin, mustard, cayenne pepper and soy sauce. Divide bean mixture and mashed sweet potatoes evenly between the warm flour tortillas. Top with cheese. Fold up tortillas burrito style. Bake for 12 minutes in the preheated oven, and serve.

**Vitamin packed:**  
Sweet potato salad is loaded with vitamin A and beta-carotene. Surprisingly sweet potatoes have more vitamin C than tomatoes.



## Focus from page B1

A strong U.S. dollar allowed bottled foreign wines to increase their U.S. market share to 22 percent as total shipments. Compared to the French franc and Italian lire, the dollar reached its highest level in 16 years. This prompted importers to load up on foreign wine bargains. Also good consumer wine news.

### Chardonnay still leads

U.S. supermarket data from ACNielsen/Adams points again to chardonnay as the varietal

wine sales leader. It's followed by white zinfandel, merlot, and cabernet sauvignon. While white wines remain the color of choice, red wines have grown a phenomenal 124 percent since 1991.

Vic Motto of the wine industry analyst firm Motto, Kryla & Fisher cites pinot noir, red zinfandel, sauvignon blanc, and syrah as the hot varietals showing fast growth.

Even with a strong dollar, which made export sales more challenging, there was a 3- per-

cent increase. Top California-wine-loving export markets were the United Kingdom, Canada, and the Netherlands (considered a destination port for distribution to other European countries), Japan, and Switzerland.

### Bordeaux wine uncorks passion

For Valentine's Day 2002, kissing and telling won't get you into trouble and might win you a romantic four-day, five-night trip for two, complete with chateau accommodations in Franco's Bor-

deaux wine region. In 250 words or less, let your imagination run wild, describing the date of your dreams or your most romantic evening including Bordeaux wine. Log onto the website [www.bordeaux.com](http://www.bordeaux.com) to enter. Entries will be accepted until Feb. 10.

The Healds are Troy residents who write about wine, spirits, food, and restaurants for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. To leave them a voice mail message, dial (734) 953-2047, mailbox 18648.



## Ugliest Bathroom Contest

Sponsored By WJR AM 760 Radio, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Building Industry Association and Mathison Supply of Livonia, Garden City and Canton.

### Win A \$10,000 Dream Bathroom!



- Air Massage Massage Bathtub by Jason
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- Tile Tub Surround
- Installation by J&M Home Improvement
- And More!

Take a photo of your ugly bathroom and bring it into any Mathison Supply store or mail it to WJR, Ugliest Bathroom Contest, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Ste. 800, Detroit, MI 48202.

The winner's bathroom will be upgraded with new fixtures, tile, medicine cabinet and accessories with a value of up to \$10,000.

And, be sure to visit the WJR and Mathison Supply booths at:

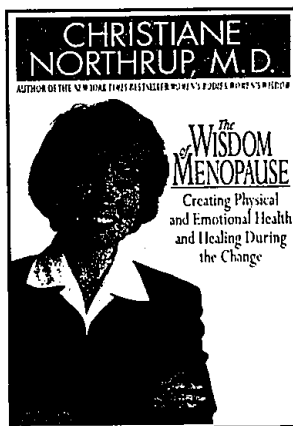
**HOME IMPROVEMENT SHOW**  
**NOVI EXPO CENTER**  
**JAN. 31-FEB. 3, 2002**



All entries become the property of WJR and must be received by April 12, 2002. No cash equivalents. Judge's decision is final. No purchase necessary. Winner will be announced May 18, 2002.

Employees of WJR Radio, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, BIA and Mathison Supply are not eligible to enter.

## Crittenton Hospital Medical Center presents CHRISTIANE NORTHROP, M.D. "The Wisdom of Menopause"



The bottom line is this: The menopausal transition no longer means you've entered life's final chapter. Rather, it is a passageway to a new beginning, a second spring.

- Christiane Northrop, M.D.

## WOMEN'S WELLNESS CONFERENCE

7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 14

Shotwell-Gustafson Pavilion, Oakland University

Tickets are \$25. Seating is limited, so please call

248-652-5269 to purchase your tickets today.

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