

## June is Bustin' Out All Over! Strawberries & Rhubarb

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### Strawberries

Hurray – strawberries are here! OK, they're from California and look like they've been given steroids, but they remind us of the smaller, sweeter local strawberries that will follow soon.

Here are some facts about strawberries:

- *Full of fight (phyte...)*: Strawberries are very good for you, being rich in phytonutrients which help ward off disease. This is true of all deep red or purple-hued berries and vegetables like blueberries and so on;
- *Eat fresh*: Strawberries lose their phytonutrients when processed or cooked, so give them fresh wherever possible for maximum health benefits;
- *Not for the very young*: Fresh strawberries shouldn't be given to babies under 1 as they can provoke a rash or another intolerance;
- *Buy organic*: Strawberries are one of the top 12 fruits & veggies most contaminated with pesticides, so buy organic.

Strawberries are most delicious and healthful served fresh with cream, ice cream, or that impossibly yummy creamy Greek yogurt with a drizzle of honey or maple syrup. A piece of pound cake or shortcake on the side completes this delicious summer picture.

### Rhubarb

Rhubarb is botanically a vegetable but classified as a fruit because that is how it is normally eaten. This long pink or red colored fruit is in season in May and June.

Here are some facts about rhubarb:

- Rhubarb contains few calories but needs a lot of sugar when cooked so the advantage is lost somewhat.
- In England it grows like a weed, making it a popular dessert fruit in that country. Here in the States, it is often combined with strawberries to make a pie.
- Like strawberries, I would avoid giving rhubarb to a baby under 1 year old as rhubarb's traditional role as a laxative or purgative could have some dramatic effects!

My favorite way to enjoy rhubarb is stewed (with either ginger or cinnamon which brings out the natural flavor of the fruit), and topped with a crumble that counteracts rhubarb's acidity. The following is my recipe for rhubarb crumble. Add a few strawberries if you wish!

## Sara's English Rhubarb Crumble

### Ingredients:

- 10 sticks of rhubarb
- 4 tbsp water
- 8 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp powdered ginger
- 4 oz butter
- 4 oz dark brown sugar
- 6-7 oz flour

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Cut the rhubarb into 3-inch long sticks and place on an oven tray. Sprinkle with the water and sugar and roast in the oven for 10 minutes.
3. Once cooked, remove from the oven, sprinkle with ginger and mix well. Put into an ovenproof dish (if you want to have strawberries with your rhubarb, toss in a few at this point).
4. Rub the butter into the flour and sugar to make the crumble topping. Sprinkle over the rhubarb and bake in the oven until the crumble is golden and you can see the rhubarb juice seeping up the sides of the dish.
5. Remove and allow to cool slightly before serving with ice cream or heavy cream.