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Berry Good

It's summer time and the living is easy.
So put down your blackberry
and pick up a blueberry.

This is the time of year
when we have the
best choice of quality
fruit and vegetables,
and it's a real pleasure
to go to the market.

Let's make the
most of it!

Did you know that the more colour fruit and veggies have typically means more nutrition? The deep green leafy salads are more nutritious than say iceberg lettuce. Therefore, you can imagine how nutritious berries are, with all that colour.

Summer berries are much smaller than the other fruits, but they really pack a punch. Blueberries, cranberries, strawberries and raspberries are all loaded with antioxidants. Fresh berries should be covered and stored in the refrigerator, and used within five days. Best not to wash them before you have to, and you can save a bit of summer by freezing them too.

Blueberry fields - The blueberry plant is thought to be one of the oldest plants on the planet and is native to North and South America, Asia, and Europe. Mention is made of them in European writings around the time of Virgil c.70 BC and blueberry jam was made in the court of James V of Scotland in 1513.

An antioxidant powerhouse - Blueberries are literally bursting with nutrients and flavour, yet very low in calories. Researchers at Tufts University recently analysed 60 fruits and vegetables for their antioxidant capability. Blueberries came out on top, rating highest in their capacity to destroy free radicals.

Blueberries, have more antioxidants, called anthocyanins, than any other food - three times more than the second richest sources, red wine and green tea. Both blueberries and cranberries help ward off urinary tract infections. Berries are particularly rich in antioxidant vitamin C.

Blueberries can also help relieve both diarrhea and constipation. In addition to soluble and insoluble fiber, blueberries also contain tannins, which act as astringents in the digestive system to reduce inflammation.

Brainpower with Blueberries - Research with animals has suggested that blueberries help protect the brain from oxygen deprivation and may reduce the effects of age-related conditions such as Alzheimer's disease or dementia. Studies also suggest that blueberry-rich diets improved both the learning capacity and motor skills of aging rats, making them mentally equivalent to much younger rats.

Night vision - Extracts of bilberry (a variety of blueberry) have been shown in numerous studies to improve nighttime visual acuity and promote quicker adjustment to darkness and faster restoration of visual acuity after exposure to glare. This research was conducted to evaluate claims of bilberry's beneficial effects on night vision made by British Air Force pilots during World War 2 who regularly consumed bilberry preserves before their night missions.

Reducing sugar cravings - Taken over an extended period, blueberry leaf tea is a milk regulator of blood sugar that apparently helps to reduce sugar cravings. Drink one cup in the morning and one in the evening for at least three months. You can find blueberry leaf tea in health food stores.

The yum factor - The best thing with blueberries, and all berries, are that they are so tasty. It can be difficult to eat food that we know is very healthy for our bodies, but is otherwise not much to look forward to. Berries don't fall in that category though. In muesli, a smoothie, or vinaigrette dressing, served on ice cream, salad, toast, or with your favourite chicken dish, the variations are endless.

**Turn to
Page 10
for
Recipes!**

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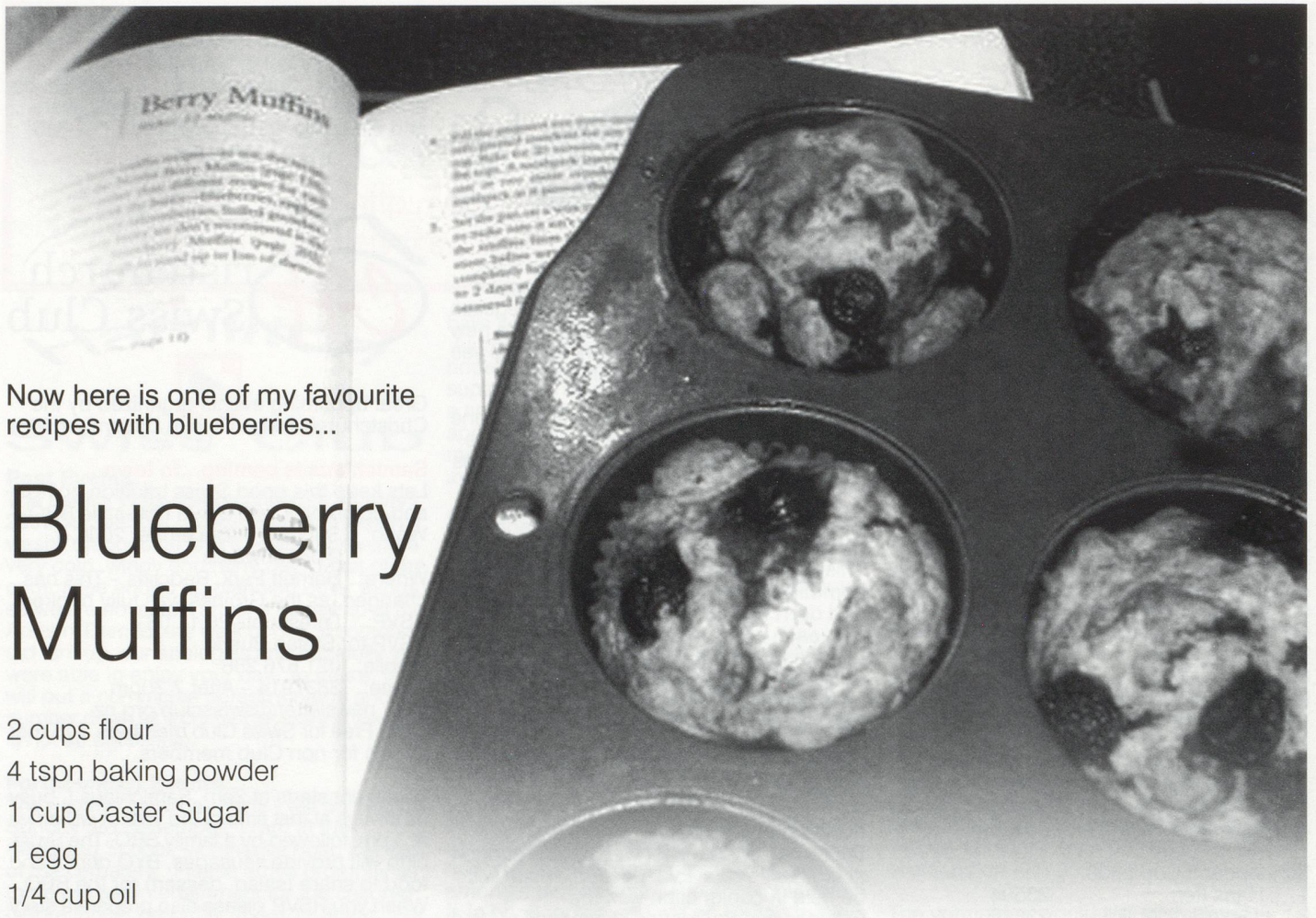
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Now here is one of my favourite recipes with blueberries...

Blueberry Muffins

- 2 cups flour
- 4 tspn baking powder
- 1 cup Caster Sugar
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 1 tspn grated lemon rind
- 2 tspns lemon juice
- 1 1/2 cups blueberries

Preheat the oven to 200C. Mix all dry ingredients together. In a bowl or jug mix all the wet ingredients, and add to the dry ingredients. Don't overmix or the muffins will be tough and will rise unevenly. Spoon into well-greased muffin tins and bake for 15-20 minutes. Cool on a wire rack and dust with icing sugar to serve. Blueberries can be fresh, canned or frozen. If using frozen, use them straight from the freezer (no need to thaw). Canned blueberries need to be well drained.

Tip No 1 -
For muffins that slide right out of their tins, place the hot muffin tins on a wet towel for a second before turning over.

Tip No 2 -
After squeezing lemons for cooking, freeze the rinds. Whenever you need freshly grated lemon rind you can grate it from the frozen lemons and save yourself having to use up a lemon just for its rind.

Now for a couple of Christmas Cookie recipes...

Brunslit mit mandeln

- 250gr grated almonds
- 250gr sugar
- 1 1/2 tbsn flour
- 2 tbsn cocoa
- 1 egg white
- 1 tbsn water

Beat sugar and egg white for 2 minutes. Add cocoa, nuts, flour and water. Place teaspoonfuls on a greased tray, and leave to dry for several hours. Bake for 10 minutes at 200C. This recipe is without chocolate, but the biscuits are tastier with cocoa.

Honigleckerli (this recipe is without flour)

- 125gr grated hazelnuts
- 125gr grated almonds
- 250gr sugar
- 50gr orange peel (finely cut)
- 2 tbsn honey
- 2 egg whites
- 4 tbsn icing sugar

Mix well the hazelnuts, almonds, sugar, honey, orange peel and egg whites. Leave in the fridge for 1hr and roll 5mm thick on icing sugar. Cut out different forms and arrange on a buttered tray. Bake on low heat for 25 minutes or until golden brown. Ice while warm with egg white, lemon juice and icing sugar.



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Christmas poem

Wenn du ganz lebst,
ganz und gar versuchst zu sein,
was du sein kannst,
strahlst du,
geht Licht und Waerme von dir aus,
wirkst du.

Wenn du dich ganz sein laesst,
kommen die Menschen auf dich zu,
freuen sich in deiner Naehe,
empfinden sich neu,
nehmen einander wesentlich wahr,
sehen vom Nebensachlichen ab.

vom Alter
vom Reichtum,
von der Herkunft,
von Titeln.

Wenn du ganz lebst,
schaffst du eine neue Welt
neue Moeglichkeiten
geerdeten Himmel,
himmlische Erde.

Wenn du so sehr lebst,
wie du nur kannst,
so wesentlich,
so gruendlich
dann wird durch dich
WEIHNACHTEN ...

Max Feigenwinter

What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace. Agnes M Pharo.

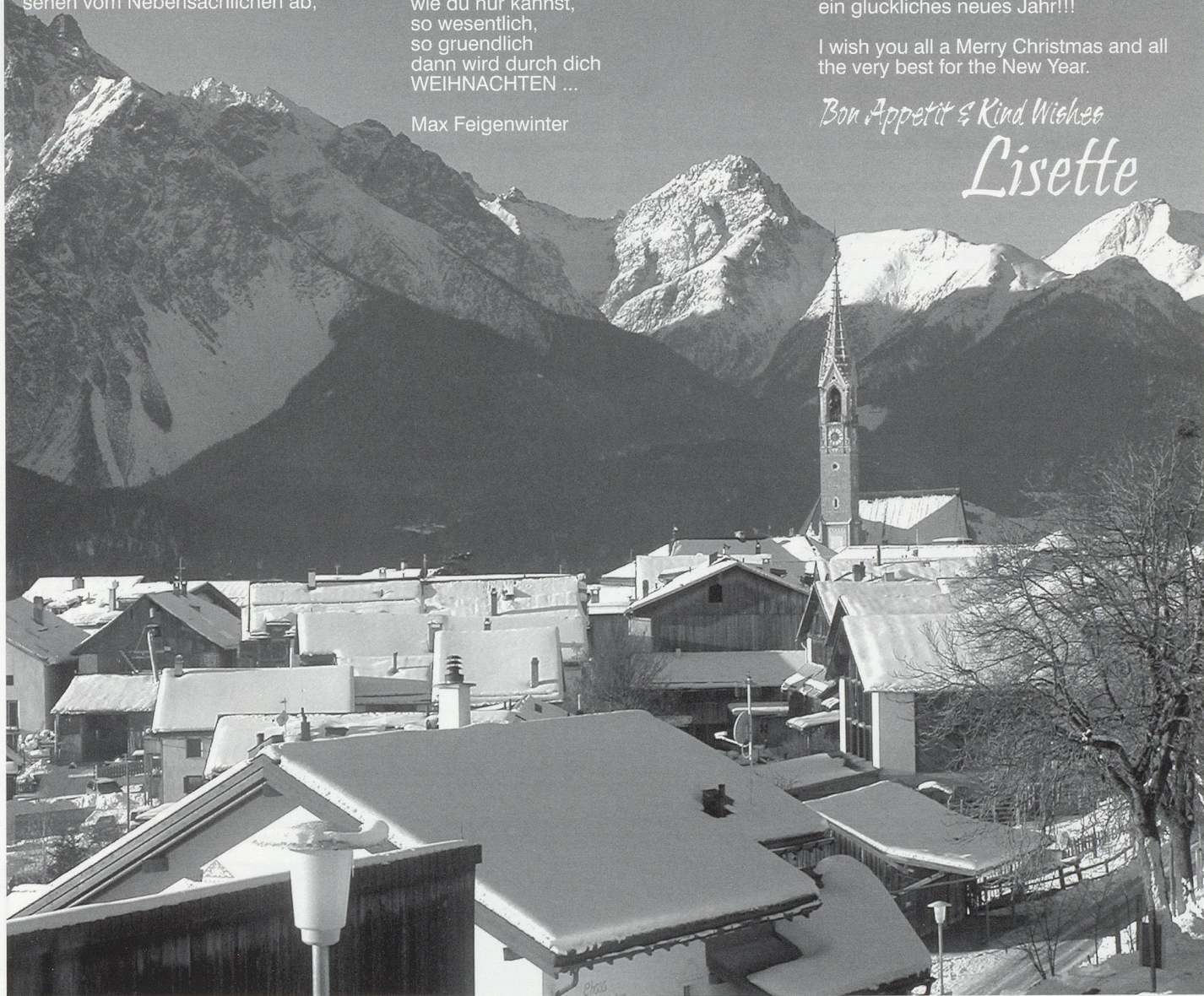
Je vous souhaite de bonne fete de fin d'annee et tous mes meilleurs voeux de sante et bonheur pour 2007.

Ich wunsche Euch von Herzen frohe Weinachten und einen guten Rutsch in ein gluckliches neues Jahr!!!

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and all the very best for the New Year.

Bon Appetit & Kind Wishes

Lisette



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