

Superfoods

The Food and Medicine
of the Future

DAVID WOLFE



North Atlantic Books
Berkeley, California

“Is there anyone more passionate, dedicated, or knowledgeable about the tremendous benefits of superfoods to our bodies, minds, and planet? Not likely. Wherever you are in terms of what goes in your mouth, David Wolfe presents a compelling claim to add a little more vitality to your plate.”

—Angela Bassett, actress and author

“David Wolfe has written a brilliant, wisdom-filled, illuminating book that is essential reading for everyone interested in reaching optimal health! Superfoods are indeed the food of the future for a healthier world.”

—Patricia Bragg, ND, PhD, author and health crusader

“David Wolfe has become a dedicated expert in the field of living and superfoods. Anything he writes, I personally read and support. I consider David Wolfe’s works on superfoods a must-read.”

—Jay Kordich (“The Father of Juicing”), author and entrepreneur

“The knowledge David Wolfe brings us is vital for reaching the ultimate level of health, clarity, and understanding about the power of foods to heal ourselves and the planet. I believe that David, with his wealth of information, is hands-down one of the most important people of this century.”

—Justin BUA, artist and author of *The Beat of Urban Art*

“David Wolfe’s commitment, not just to humanity but to Mother Earth herself, is second to none. He has discovered the gift of his true purpose and is unabashedly sharing it with the world. The energy of compassion and pure love that he pours into every plant and everyone is the same. I know few people more committed to us all finding our inner joy through the miracle of growing and eating the best food ever and thereby experiencing every day as The Best Day Ever.”

—Demian Lichtenstein, motion picture producer and director

Other Books by David Wolfe

The Sunfood Diet Success System

Eating for Beauty

Naked Chocolate

Amazing Grace

Superfoods

The Food and Medicine
of the Future

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This book is dedicated
to my Mom—the best mom ever!



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How to Order Superfoods

Introduction

Why Superfoods? What Are Superfoods?

A new day is dawning on the world of nutrition. Our nutrition potential has finally caught up to our technology. Shipping, communication, computers, and increased knowledge about nutrition are allowing us to access incredible quality food products from around the planet in a way that had heretofore been impossible or simply unknown.

More and more people are opening up to organic foods and natural health. The organic food movement is taking grocery store chains by storm. We are approaching a critical mass of consumers shifting their purchasing power toward organic products. Would you like to join this leading edge of discovery and find out how to eat the healthiest foods possible?

These special foods fall into three ancient food groups that we are rediscovering in our present-day culture:

1. *Living, raw plant foods*: These are important everyday foods that include most fruits and vegetables, nuts, seeds, seaweeds, sprouts, grasses, fresh herbs, and fermented foods (e.g., sauerkraut). Living, raw plant foods and raw diets are the subject of my previous books *The Sunfood Diet Success System* and *Eating for Beauty*.
2. *Superfoods*: These include foods that have a dozen or more unique properties, not just one or two. For example, the goji berry is a source of complete protein, immunostimulating polysaccharides, liver-cleansing betaine, anti-aging sesquiterpene antioxidants, over twenty trace minerals, and much, much more.
3. *Superherbs*: These include herbs that have super tonic and adaptogenic properties as well as many other unique gifts. For example, the reishi mushroom helps support a healthy immune system, heart, lungs, and kidneys, and assists with rejuvenating brain and connective tissue. Another example, cat's claw (*uña de gato*), a superherb from Peru, contains a monoamine oxidase inhibitor that makes you feel happier and has properties that help your immune system fight off viruses. Superherbs will be the subject of a future book, and are contained in some of my recipes here.

We truly live in a time of unprecedented abundance. Having access to and knowledge of the world's greatest superfoods, superherbs, and living, raw plant foods at this level of quality is a first in human history. In spite of the seemingly insurmountable problems of civilization, we are still making progress in becoming healthier and more self-aware beings. We are finally discovering the power of adding into our diet an entirely new class of foods that benefits everyone with maximum nutrition, protein, flavor, health, energy, as well as a minimum calories and no trans-fatty acids.

It is becoming clearer that to achieve the best health ever, the best relationship with food ever, and to have the most fun with our food ever, we must consume superfoods, superherbs, and raw and living food cuisine. In doing so, we will find that our desire for less healthy foods will fall away naturally because we no longer find them as enjoyable.

Of these three food classes, superfoods are the most important and the focus of each page before you. Superfoods comprise a specific set of edible, incredibly nutritious plants that are not entirely classifiable as foods nor are they entirely classifiable medicines (such as herbs).

Superfoods are both a food and a medicine; they have elements of both. They are a class of the most potent, super-concentrated, and nutrient-rich foods on the planet—they have more bang for the buck than our usual foods. Extremely tasty and satisfying, superfoods have the ability to tremendously increase the vital force and energy of one's body, and are the optimum choice for improving overall health, boosting the immune system, elevating serotonin production, enhancing sexuality, and cleansing and alkalizing the body. Superfoods meet and exceed all our protein requirements, our vitamin and mineral requirements, glyconutrient (essential polysaccharide sugar) requirements, essential fatty acid requirements, immune system requirements, and so much more. Nourishing us at the deepest level possible, they are the true fuel of today's "superhero." Superfoods make having The Best Day Ever fast, easy, fresh, and fun!



Superfoods are a major focal point of nutrition because they not only help nourish the brain, bones, muscles, skin, hair, nails, heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, reproductive system, pancreas, and immune system, they also, over the long term, correct imbalances and help guide us toward a more natural and aboriginal diet. Consuming superfoods makes it dramatically easier to achieve your ideal weight, diet, and food habits. Superfoods will ease you into detoxification and the transition to more healthy foods—all without willpower. Additionally, superfoods help you do this without having to take dead vitamin and mineral supplements.

The scientific studies included in this book highlight some of the ongoing discoveries about superfoods as an essential part of a balanced diet. Superfoods allow us to get more nutrition with less eating. Most of us have had many experiences of eating all day just to keep our blood sugar up, yet we received very little nourishment in the process. We know that most of the conventional foods and fast foods today are nothing but empty calories.

Organic fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, sprouts, and other healthy plant foods are a very important part of our diet, but they do not compare to the nutrient density of superfoods. In my own diet, I eat fruits and vegetables primarily for flavor, fiber, and bulk, not for deep levels of nutrition. When it comes to real nutrition, only superfoods can meet and exceed all requirements.

Eating superfoods is a way to guarantee that you will get the nutrients you require to be healthy all the years of your life. Because superfoods are natural, they provide an abundance of synergistic elements in their natural state that work together in the human body in ways that scientists have not yet begun to fully comprehend. Scientists have yet to isolate and name all the nutrients found in plants. What we understand about nutrition by listing vitamins, minerals, protein, fats, and carbohydrates on the sides of packages does not give us

a complete picture. The common vitamins and minerals that we know of are not the only nutrients that matter. At this point we know of over a thousand vitamins, minerals, amino acids, short-chain sugars, polysaccharides, fats, oils, enzymes, coenzymes, antioxidants, and other substances that contribute to optimum health. In the years ahead, we will discover even more.

Due to the depletion of nutrients in conventional (and to some degree, even organic) food, we have continued to turn toward new possibilities for whole and balanced nutrition. Superfoods represent an awesome piece of the nutrition puzzle, as they are great sources of clean, hormone-free, pesticide, and chemical-free:

Protein	Vitamins
Minerals	Enzymes
Antioxidants	Coenzymes
Good fats and oils	Essential fatty acids
Essential amino acids	Polysaccharides
Glyconutrients	

Superfoods can and should be consumed in raw and organic form, because decades of research have demonstrated that living, organic raw food is superior in vitamin content, enzymes, coenzymes, protein, minerals, glyconutrients, and many other elements of nutrition. Even chimpanzees in zoos will select fresh, organic raw food in preference to other foods. Nature provides us with raw food. It is time to take advantage of all the scientific breakthroughs in the field of living enzymes! The superfoods mentioned in this book are loaded to the hilt with enzymes. They are, for the most part, the most enzyme-rich foods found in nature. They restore enzyme deficiencies and create enzyme abundance. This is the primary reason why superfoods should be eaten raw and why nearly all the recipes found in this book are made with raw foods, superfoods, and superherbs.

Because superfoods have a high level of inner vitality and life-force energy, they can be grown organically without chemicals or artificial fertilizers. Superfoods are not only great for you, they also help the planet, because their consumption encourages organic agriculture and appropriate use of farmland. (Why grow soy when you could grow chocolate?) Over the years we have tried farming with pesticides, herbicides, larvicides, genetic modification, hormonal altering, NPK chemical fertilizers (essentially “better living through chemistry”) and have ended up with an explosion of disease. Now it is time to rediscover the benefits of the Earth’s original superfoods.

Our focus within these pages will be upon what I perceive to be the top ten superfoods, as well as an additional group of “honorable mentions.” The top ten superfoods are:

Goji berries

Cacao

Maca

Bee products (honey, bee pollen, propolis, and royal jelly)

Spirulina

AFA blue-green algae

Marine phytoplankton

Aloe vera

Hempseed

Coconuts and coconut products

Adding Superfoods to Your Diet

Too many of us live in a state of poor health, lethargy, and moderate obesity. Life continues on, yet slowly we lose our full capabilities, and our quality of life decreases in spite of our material successes. Underlying issues of back pain, headaches, joint inflammation, arthritis, threats of cancer, skin problems, and insomnia begin to become more prominent. One day continuous chronic pain sets in as the discomfort increases. Doctor visits and surgeries only serve to mask symptoms or remove diseased tissue and fail to root out the underlying cause of the symptoms and poor health. Eventually the will to live becomes exhausted.

I am absolutely certain that nobody wants this to happen to them. I am also absolutely certain that this fate will befall nearly everyone unless each individual does something specifically about it. I am 100 percent sure it is possible at any age to change our destiny into one of pain-free, vibrant health by intelligently utilizing the power of superfoods, superherbs, raw and living foods, and holistic healing technologies. We can alter our course and remake ourselves right now at this very second by eating the best foods ever—superfoods. Superfoods are true health foods. They are known to improve the severity and symptoms of nearly every major disease condition known, including:

Allergies

Hepatitis

Arthritis

Herpes (I, II, Epstein-Barr)

Asthma

High blood pressure

Atherosclerosis

HIV infections

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

Hypoglycemia

Cancer (all types)

Insomnia

Chronic fatigue

Multiple sclerosis

Depression

Nervous system disorders

Diabetes (types 1 and 2)

Poor immunity

Eczema

Psoriasis

Heart disease

Manufacturing a New Immune System

As you read this book, you will begin to see a common pattern among superfoods: They actively work to “pre-load” the immune system with the raw materials necessary to maintain a healthy immune system and to mount healthy immune responses.

If you are paying close attention to health information worldwide, you have probably picked up on an important trend: increasingly, it is all about the immune system. With a well-chosen, organic, raw, plant-based diet, fresh raw materials provided by superfoods, and the immediate manufacture of specific immune-system weapons assisted by superherbs—they include the world’s greatest herbs, such as *pau d’arco* and cat’s claw from the Amazon, the medicinal mushrooms (chaga, reishi, maitake, shiitake, lion’s mane, coriolus, cordyceps, etc.), astragalus, schizandra berries, nettles, horsetail, and dozens of other superherbs—we stand a chance to improve our health in a way that has never been available to us in the past.

Detoxification: Breaking Syndrome X

Nearly everyone raised on a modern American or European diet has consumed mineral-deficient food, foods sprayed with pesticides, antibiotic-treated meat, hormonally altered dairy products, refined sugar, refined grains, and refined salt. In some cases, the toxic load can be overwhelming, causing a metabolic syndrome designated “Syndrome X.” Syndrome X is the inability to lose weight, accompanied by a dysfunctional immune system and low energy. Adding organic raw and living foods, superfoods, and superherbs to one’s diet can break the hold of Syndrome X, allow one to lose weight and achieve an ideal state of health.

When we begin adding organic, raw, natural superfoods, superherbs, and foods, an astounding metamorphosis can occur and Syndrome X can finally be turned around. Yet we must be very careful not to go faster than our bodies can handle. To be able to handle the metabolic change that occurs through inner cleaning, you need to transition at your own pace and begin where you are. Gradually move up that pace when you can.

The Ideal and the Noble

The ultimate conclusion of “you are what you eat” is that everything you put into your mouth is going to affect your mind, body, and spirit.

Humans have had to adapt to many types of foods over the course of time. In situations where food resources were scarce, those humans who could make-do on what was available were more likely to survive. There has been genetic pressure toward

adaptability of diet. Surviving long enough after eating something to let others know that you are still alive, however, is no criterion with which to ascertain what is an ideal diet.

With superfoods, for the first time ever, we get to experiment for ourselves with dietary ideals. We get to eat noble foods and activate our imaginations with the ideals that those superfoods generate within us.

The whole concept of self-healing really revolves around removing poisons, toxins, chemicals, and pesticides from our bodies while ridding ourselves of excess fat. Superfoods in particular contain substantially more nutrients (minerals, enzymes, polysaccharides, proteins, and healthy fats and oils) than cooked and processed chemically grown foods. The high energy content of superfoods delivers more goodies to our cells, which are then capable of throwing off toxins they previously lacked the energy to eliminate. This process is detoxification.

Acidity and Weight Loss

More and more scientific articles and books are being written about the “acid-alkaline balance and its effect on nutrition. Generally, with a poor diet, the inner environment of our bodies becomes more acidic, creating a breeding ground of disease-causing microbes and organisms. Three main food classes are needed to counteract this progression into acidity and chronic illness: green superfoods, green vegetables, and herbs.

High acidity is usually the primary contributing cause of being overweight. If the body's state is acidic, then the body will hold extra water to dilute the acids. Also, the body will store excess acids in the fat tissue, which leads to cellulite and weight gain.

It is important to understand that, when you detoxify, you may release acids from your fat cells and tissues. If these acids are not met with highly alkaline minerals bombarding the body from every direction in the form of green superfoods, green vegetables, and herbs, the problems can arise, ranging from fatigue, hot flashes, mood swings, and bone mineral loss to dental problems such as cavities. Eating superfoods, vegetables, and herbs is essential! It is our insurance policy for health and long life.

At this point, pretty much everyone knows that diets and typical diet strategies don't work. Well then ... what does work?

It is human nature that we do not like being denied things. As soon as you tell a child “No,” they are immediately finding a way to “Yes.” They will do what they want if they can get away with it. This habit never changes. We do the same thing as adults. Battling this quirk of human nature is like trying to stop the sun from setting or rising, or the planets from moving. Instead, we have to get in alignment with our true nature. What does that mean? How about

this: Instead of taking foods away from people, how about adding foods in? How about turning people on to all kinds of new food flavors, tastes, textures, colors, and combinations? Is it possible that the “good” food will be so good, and will make us feel so good, that we naturally move away from the “bad” food? In my experience, the answer is YES. In this way, the transformation in diet is accomplished without trying. Everything happens gracefully. That is the idea behind this book; that is the essence of superfood nutrition. We put the focus on all the great-tasting, super-healthy foods there are for us to discover and enjoy. To me, the superfood diet is the best diet ever because it requires only adding new gorgeous foods into my lifestyle at a pace that I enjoy and that feels great.

Any of the superfoods can be added into anyone’s diet. Simply find the ones you like and start guzzling them. Get out a blender and make entirely new types of shakes and smoothies out of superfoods. Make superfood treats and desserts. Create superfood salad dressing. Design superfood trail mixes. Make a tea out of your favorite superherbs and blend the tea with superfoods.

The superfood diet approximates what I perceive as the underlying approach of the great Taoist herbal masters of Chinese history, which is to add in the most powerful superfoods and superherbs, knowing that you will naturally lose interest in the unhealthier foods in your diet. Superfoods also go a long way toward making us more balanced in behavior and demeanor due to remineralization of our tissues and the superior, well-rounded nutrition that superfoods provide.

Superfood Seeds

The goal of this book is to support you in selecting the healthiest superfoods on the planet while providing new options of what you can grow in your garden. As long as we are going to grow something, why not grow superfoods along with our tomatoes and lettuce?

The logical next question is: Where do I get seeds for superfoods, or baby superfood plants? The answer is that they are usually contained in the food itself. For example, we recently did a planting experiment on a sample of organic goji berries. We planted sixty-four goji berries (tearing them open to allow the seeds to be exposed to the soil). Of these, every one sprouted. That’s a 100 percent sprouting ratio!

When you bring superfoods into your body, your energy changes, and as a result your focus of attention will shift as well. It is likely that you will reassess your values (what you consider important). You may see the world with more energy behind your eyes: with the added boost, it becomes easier to live in a state of appreciation. Over time, you will likely perceive the world as a more amazing place than ever before, because you will feel better.

more often. I eat superfoods every day, and they make me feel the best ever, always!



A Note on the Recipes

The recipes in this book range from beginner and intermediate to advanced, for all levels of superfood enthusiasts. Because some of the ingredients may be new to you, I have included a glossary of these ingredients at the back of the book to help acquaint you with any unfamiliar terms.

Some of the items in these recipes are exotic and unique. Online shopping makes them easily accessible. Depending on your budget, you may choose smaller or larger sizes of the listed superfoods, superherbs, and supplements in order to give them a try. Prices on these items vary, so spend your money wisely, experiment, and play. Remember, a little bit of these ingredients goes a long way.

The kitchen appliances referenced in the recipes are recommended but not required. For example, a high-speed blender is mentioned in numerous recipes. This type of blender commands a significantly higher price in the marketplace than a typical home blender. I have been using the Vita-Mix® blender since 1980 and I know they are durable and worth the investment. A simple home blender may be substituted for a high-speed blender in the recipes, even though they are not quite as great. When it makes sense for you, purchasing a high-speed blender will make superfood recipes even easier to create.

Another appliance worth discussing is the dehydrator. I recommend Excalibur dehydrators because I have been using them regularly since 1998. I have never found any other dehydrator that I enjoyed using as much or that worked as effectively. If the Excalibur is outside of your range right now, then using a stove at low temperatures is recommended for dehydration purposes.

Enjoy all the superfood recipes and join us in enjoying the prosperous abundance found in superfoods—the food of the future!





The Top 10 Superfoods



Goji Berries

Fountain of Youth

Latin Names:

Major Asian varieties: *Lycium barbarum*, *Lycium chinensis*

Major American varieties: *Lycium andersonii*, *Lycium berlandieri*, *Lycium brevipes*, *Lycium californicum*, *Lycium carolinianum*, *Lycium cooperi*, *Lycium exsertum*, *Lycium fremontii*, *Lycium halimifolium*, *Lycium macrodon*, *Lycium pallidum*, *Lycium parishii*, *Lycium puberulum*, *Lycium torreyi* (*Lycium* is also spelled *Lyceum*, depending on the reference text or web site)

Common Names:

Goji Berry, Wolfberry, Boxthorn, Matrimony Vine, Desert Thorn

Superfood Type:

Berry (fruit)



The following parts of the goji berry bush have also been used in herbal preparations or as food:

Seeds

Flowers

Leaves

Roots

History, Facts, and Legends

Goji berries grow on a bush that develops like a vine when grown in the shade. At the very largest, the goji bush will grow six feet tall and will have a radius of around three feet. The ovate leaves range in length from half an inch to four inches depending on location and variety. Red striations are sometimes seen in the bark of the plant. Although not specifically

thorny plant like a rose, some American goji berry varieties can develop some thornlike stems. During the nonflowering seasons (summer, fall, and winter), the goji berry bush may lose some or all of its leaves, which makes it more difficult to recognize. In spring, however, the leaves fill out beautifully and pale-white to purple flowers enrich the plant, usually beginning in March in the northern hemisphere. Following the flower pollination, fruit berries will soon follow. Goji berries range in color from pale yellow to dark sunfire orange to deep red. Sometimes the raisin-sized goji berries are oblong, like footballs. I have even seen goji berries that are shaped like small peppers. Often the berries are entirely spherical.

There are an estimated eighty-five species of goji berry in Asia and fifteen species in North and Central America. It is possible, based on this geographic dispersion, that the goji berry was brought to North America by groups who migrated from Asia, either by boat or across the Bering Land Bridge.

The goji berries of Asia and America are remarkably similar. The history of the Asian varieties is better documented, researched, and consecrated in legend and lore, but both the Asian and American goji berry varieties deserve special attention because their histories and health-giving properties are so rich.

All goji berries that I have studied and grown are remarkably adaptable. The goji berries grow as wonderfully in harsh, dry deserts as they do in the tropics. Goji berries also tolerate freezing winters and have been recorded to grow well in such places as Nova Scotia and British Columbia. Perhaps most interesting is that goji berries can handle daily swings in temperature as great as 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

The goji berry was categorized under the Linnaean Latin categorization system under the genus *Lycium* (or *Lyceum*). From its Greek root, the word *Lyceum* means “school of learning.” And that is what the masters of Chinese herbalism believed the goji berry could provide. Legend has it that one can tune into a pharmacopeia of herbal data contained within the plant simply by eating goji berries. Further, some believe that if one studies, grows, and eats the goji berry, it is able to teach you the fundamental principles of Chinese herbalism.



Asian Goji Berries

Because of the goji berry's extraordinary nutrient value, rich red-orange color, and pleasant full-bodied taste, the Chinese, Mongolian, and Tibetan peoples have been growing the alkaline goji berry plant for an estimated five thousand years. To preserve the fruit, it is often dried until similar to a dry raisin in texture.

In Chinese tradition, the spirit or *deva* of the goji bush is often represented as a young virile female who is—interestingly—not of Asian ethnicity. Ningxia Province in China, where goji berries are primarily grown, has more centenarians than the rest of the country, and the residents of the province age more gracefully. They are more active, healthy, and vibrant than elderly people in Western countries. Of course, goji berries are a key ingredient in the healthy diet. The Chinese hold a strong belief that this fruit can significantly extend life.



The famed Li Qing Yuen, whom legend has it popularized both goji berries and ginseng and is said to have lived to the age of 252 years (1678–1930), consumed goji berries daily. The life of Li Qing Yuen is the most documented case of extreme longevity known. The legend of Li Qing Yuen says that when Li was eleven years old he met three Taoist sages who were purported to be over three hundred years old. They taught Li about spring water and the science and fine art of longevity, proper diet, and herbalism. Later in his life, at the age of fifty, he was said to have met another Taoist sage who told Li he was five hundred years old. When Li inquired about the secret of his extreme longevity, the sage taught him to consume a goji berry soup each day. Li Qing Yuen is said to have given a lecture at the University of Beijing at the age of two hundred. When the emperor of China discovered such a long-lived person within the empire, he invited Li to the royal court. Within a few months of living in Beijing, Li Qing Yuen was dead, apparently either from eating the processed food provided by the royal kitchen or from exposure to the toxicity of the city.

Even if Li Qing Yuen's longevity is just a myth, it does demonstrate a recognized relationship in the culture between the goji berry and longevity.

By the way, as far as I have been able to uncover from studying the life of Li Qing Yuen for over a decade, his daily tea consisted of goji berries, ginseng, and reishi mushrooms. You can make this tea at home and it is delightful. I often use wild reishi mushrooms that I pick from the forest behind my home.

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