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Short Communication

Bamboo associated foods: a review

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One of the renewable resources of bamboo is the edible bamboo shoots that sprout from the rhizome. Our ancestors had discovered the goodness of bamboo leaves and shoots in their diet centuries before the human race did. Bamboo (*Bambusa* spp.) belongs to the grass family and it is the tallest grass known to human. The versatility of this grass is tremendous as it has an unimaginable number of uses like making furniture, chopsticks, sleeping mats, blinds, boat masts, baskets, fishing poles, and cooking utensils to being used as food, especially in Asian cuisine. After April rains we find bamboo shoots sprouting from the main bamboo. These are eaten as food and should be cut before they grow a foot tall. There are also winter shoots that are tastier but difficult to procure. Bamboos abound in Asia and bamboo shoots are used as traditional vegetable. The empty hollows found in larger bamboo stalks are used to cook rice and soups, enhancing food with a subtle and distinctive flavor. Keeping the importance as a food, an attempt has been made to gather the information on food values of bamboo shoots and presented here.

Bamboo shoots not only add variety and flavor to a dish but there are also many health benefits as well. Bamboo shoots are very low in calories and rich in edible fiber. It also helps in good digestion and boosts the immune system. Bamboo shoots are rich in potassium. They keep cholesterol levels in check as well as prevent colon cancer. They are a good source of lignans and other antioxidants which have anti-cancer, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, and anti-viral properties. Cooking methods also determine the nutrient components and antioxidant capacities of bamboo shoots. According to a Chinese study, 'stir-frying could increase antioxidant capacities of bamboo shoots and could obtain the maximum retention of antioxidant capacities. Besides being a good source of selenium, bamboo shoots have 17 amino acids and plenty of minerals including calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, copper, manganese,

selenium, and iron. Juice of tender bamboo shoots is used to clear maggot-infested wounds, sores, and ulcers. Syrup made with bamboo juice and palm jaggery is used to induce abortion in early pregnancy, initiate labor pains when delivery is overdue (called the uterotonic properties), and also to clear out the placenta after childbirth. In an Austrian study published in the journal *Planta Medica*, the researchers found that bamboo is one of the uterotonic plants. Bamboo shoots are good for respiratory problems, menstrual disorders, and threadworms. Bamboo leaves are rich in hydrocyanic and benzoic acid. A decoction made with tender leaves is used to treat diarrhea. The outer leaves or the sheath of bamboo shoots has to be peeled and the inner cream colored and a tender portion is used as a food ingredient. The shoot is sliced thinly ([Zhang et al. 2011](#)).

Storing fresh bamboo shoots

Fresh bamboo shoots will keep in your crisper drawer for about two weeks — any longer than that and they become bitter. Keep them away from light.

Cooking bamboo shoots

Fresh bamboo shoots require a bit of elbow grease to eat. Their outer leaves must be pared away, although some cooks leave a layer of the outer leaves on the shoots during boiling. Fresh shoots shouldn't be eaten raw because of the cyanide compounds present in them. The shoots should boil with rice bran to reduce toxic elements ([Rhonda 2021](#)).

Preserving bamboo

Pickled bamboo shoots are used in several different cuisines, including Burmese, Filipino, and Chinese cooking. Fermented bamboo shoots are common in Indian cuisine as a pickle. You can also cook fresh bamboo shoots and then freeze them for longer-term storage ([Xu 2008](#)).

10 best bamboo shoots recipes

Now that we've laid out what parts of the bamboo plant are used in cooking and how good it is for you, we should probably get down to the best bamboo meals. Don't worry; we've included the links to the actual recipes so that you can try them for yourself ([Shivaraman 2017](#)).

- 1) Bamboo shoot, Mushroom, and Long Bean Stir-Fry
- 2) Beef and Broccoli
- 3) Mu Shu Chicken
- 4) Slender Bamboo Shoots with Ground Pork
- 5) Lumpia Rolls
- 6) Shrimp-and-Pork Dumplings with Bamboo Shoots
- 7) Hot and Sour Chicken Soup
- 8) Clear Soup with Bamboo and Tofu
- 9) Shrimp Egg Foo Young
- 10) Indonesian-Style Fish with Tamarind-Turmeric Sauce

The above information revealed that bamboo shoots are important food for human beings used in different countries and they should be cultivated to fight against food problems.

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