

Raspberries

A juicy bite of summer

by *Kelsea Daulton*

NOTHING SAYS SUMMER like a colorful bounty of berries. Raspberries can also be enjoyed throughout fall, depending on the plant variety. All varieties are self-fruited perennials, though their individual canes are biennial. Raspberries are overwhelmingly associated with the color red, though they also occur in yellow, red, purple and black (also called blackcaps).

Red and yellow berries are known to be the hardiest and sweetest, while blackcaps are the least resilient to disease. Purple raspberries, a hybrid of

black and red, fall in the middle of this scale. While there are several varieties, there are two main types with different fruit-bearing habits and growing requirements. Summer-bearers yield one crop per year in the summertime; ever-bearers yield two crops per year, one in summer and one in fall. Most canes won't bear fruit their first year, when they're called primocanes. When they pro-

duce fruit the following year, they are known as floricanes. Each year new canes are produced from the crown and the bases of old canes. Red raspberries are able to grow new canes from the roots.

The most well-known raspberries are red summer-bearing cultivars. The plants fruit around mid-June to mid-July. Ever-bearing varieties fruit in June or July on the lower flo-

Raspberry Sauce

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pint raspberries
- 1 cup cold water
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch

DIRECTIONS

1. Whisk the cornstarch into the water until it is smooth. Add this to a saucepan along with the raspberries, orange juice and sugar. Bring to a boil.
2. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring constantly, or until the desired thickness is reached.
3. Transfer the sauce to a blender and puree it until smooth, then strain it through a fine sieve. Serve warm or cold on ice cream, shortcake or the dish of your choosing.



Raspberries provide vitamins A and C, minerals and ellagic acid, which has shown evidence of being a cancer-preventing compound.

ricanes and from August to the first frost on the top of the primocanes. For ever-bearers, their first crop usually proves lower in both quality and quantity. They yield the best harvest when only allowed to bear fruit in the fall.


Raspberries need one inch of water per week and should be planted in fertile, well-drained soil with a pH of 5.5 to 6.5 to thrive. Raspberries shouldn't be planted in soil where bramble berries, tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, eggplants or roses once grew because these plants can infect the soil with diseases that will attack raspberries. Remove all weeds the year before plant-

ing to get a jump on weed control. Mulches of straw, sawdust or like materials are useful in controlling weeds. Raspberry plants need six to eight hours of full sun and normally grow in USDA Zones 2 through 7. Plant early in the spring in hedge-rows or use the hill system. The method of planting should depend on the plant variety.

Prune summer-bearing red raspberries in the spring and right after harvest. During the spring pruning, remove any weak or diseased canes, plus any that produced fruit the previous year. Prune ever-bearing red raspberries once or twice a year,

following the same guidelines. Alternatively, cut all the canes of the ever-bearing types to the ground in early spring to make the plants fruit only in the fall. Prune black and purple raspberries three times a year: spring, summer and after harvest.

Many different varieties are available. The recently introduced 'Raspberry Shortcake' is notable because it's a thornless dwarf that can thrive in a large pot, making homegrown raspberries a possibility for those with limited gardening space.

Learn more about planting and pruning raspberries in this instructional video. 

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