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Superfood

POWDERS YOU
NEED IN YOUR LIFE



11 SUPERFOOD POWDERS YOU NEED IN YOUR LIFE



Superfood is a marketing term used to suggest that some foods have health benefits resulting from an exceptional nutrient density. In a nutshell, they're crushed plants, fruits or spices and they've been taking over our newsfeeds in the last 12 months.

Although they are not a replacement for real, unprocessed fruit and veg, they are super easy to get into your diet. You can enjoy them added to a juice or smoothie or sprinkled over yoghurt.



ACAI BERRY

Acai berry is a relative of the blackberry family and is high in antioxidants, including anthocyanidins, thought to lower inflammation. It also has cardio-protective and immune boosting properties.

What's also exciting is that, in test tube studies at least, acai extract increased the process of autophagy in brain cells.

Autophagy is the natural process by which old, damaged cells are cleared out. This doesn't happen efficiently as you age, so it's worth investing in some preventative measures now. It has a lovely, sweet yet sharp taste a bit like raspberries. Choose a powder that's been freeze dried to preserve the antioxidants and add it to your smoothies, porridge, protein/ bliss balls or granola.

ASHWAGANDHA

This bitter adaptogen (cleverly, it adapts to what your body needs) is very popular in Ayurvedic medicine where it is used to help people deal with stress and feel generally less frazzled.

Research also shows it might be helpful in diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, possibly by stopping the loss of tiny connections between neurons in your brain. 1001font

Make a nutty smoothie adding 1/2 tsp to unsweetened almond milk, with 1 scoop vanilla protein powder, and 2 tbsp each of tahini and cocoa powder.

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BAOBAB

this superfood powder comes from the fruit of the African baobab tree (sometimes called the tree of life). It has a lovely sherbety taste and is high in vitamin C, potassium and fibre.

Its superpowers including balancing blood sugar levels and supporting digestive health. It's also thought to have antimicrobial, antiviral, anti-oxidant, and anti-inflammatory properties.

It's perfect in smoothies, where it's sweet flavour can off-set some of the stronger green powders.





CACAO

If you've ever read that chocolate has superpowers, this is why. Cacao is made from the raw beans/ seeds of the cacao tree, which preserves the nutrients. Regular chocolate and commercial cocoa (note the difference in spelling), on the other hand, come from the roasted beans.

The raw stuff is full of antioxidants, magnesium, iron, calcium and fibre. Aside from containing ingredients that increase production of brain chemicals that promote pleasure and focus, cacao has also been shown to have a positive effect on cardiovascular disease and blood pressure.

You'll find cacao either as powder or as cacao nibs. You can use them both in smoothies (delicious with a ripe avocado), a healthy hot chocolate, in puddings and baking.

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Chlorella

this is also derived from algae, usually grown in the Far East. This powder is rich in carotenoids, which can improve skin. Chlorella is a fantastic source of protein, chlorophyll, fibre, iron, vitamin C and omega-3 essential fatty acids, as well as antioxidants, including lutein and zeaxanthin, which support eye health. Like spirulina, it's also used to assist the removal of heavy metals from the body. It tastes a bit like seaweed - so best buried in a fruit smoothie. Consider combining it with a sweeter flavoured superfood powder like baobab to balance it out.

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Moringa

The leaves of the moringa oleifera tree (found in African and Asia) is chock full of antioxidants and carotenoids, which may help improve cholesterol ratios and manage blood sugar levels as well as protecting the liver, kidneys and heart. The flavour is nutty and peppery, so they work well added to fruity smoothies..



SUPER GREENS

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Spirulina

this superfood comes from blue-green algae found in freshwater. It's grown all over the world and has been used for centuries. High levels of chlorophyll give it a fantastic colour.

Spirulina is high in protein, vitamin B12, calcium, magnesium and iron. It also contains a good level of protein, fatty acids, iron, magnesium, calcium and B vitamins.

Nutritionists recommend it for helping to combat heavy metal toxicity, to support liver health, lower cholesterol and blood pressure.

The intense flavour can make fruit smoothies take on a sludgy colour, but don't let this put you off!





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MACA

The indigenous people of the Andes have used this malty-flavoured root vegetable as a natural remedy for a huge range of conditions for thousands of years and there are benefits for every single woman. There is plenty of evidence to support maca's use for decreasing some of the most pesky symptoms of menopause, including hot flushes, night sweats, insomnia, vaginal dryness, low libido and depression. It's also an aphrodisiac and studies show it can boost sexual satisfaction.

The South Americans have used maca as a fertility wonderstuff with centuries of anecdotal success. It's also high in potassium, calcium, vitamin C, vitamins B6 and B3, copper and iron, plus it's a good source of protein. Perfect in smoothies but you can also add it to your porridge, pancakes or use in baking.

MATCHA

Matcha is made from the finely ground leaves of the *Camellia Sinensis* plant – the same plant used to make green tea. The difference? Green tea leaves come in tea bags while matcha is powdered and (if you really want to get into the technicalities), the harvesting process has some small but important differences.

Matcha has a much better nutritional profile – you'd have to drink more than 10 cups of green tea to match matcha simply because it's made by grinding the entire tea leaf into powder, instead of steeping the leaves in hot water. In fact, it has 137 times more antioxidants than green tea. Matcha is also high in L-theanine, a compound linked to feelings of focus, alertness, and sustained energy.

You can make your own matcha tea, of course, but you can use this superfood powder in juices and smoothies, too.





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WHEATGRASS

you might well have heard of wheatgrass given its popularity over the last few decades. You can now buy frozen wheatgrass to pop into your smoothie, but the powdered sort is incredibly handy. Although there is wheat in the name, wheatgrass doesn't actually contain gluten.

It does, however, have plenty of vitamins A, C and E, iron, calcium, magnesium, and as well as antioxidants like glutathione. Nutrition professionals like wheatgrass for its purported cholesterol and inflammation-lowering properties.

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TURMERIC

Curcumin, the compound behind turmeric's bold yellow colour may help reduce inflammation, and is (in capsule form) a popular choice anyone with arthritis or inflammatory bowel conditions. It's widely used in Asian cooking. You'd struggle to eat enough to gain the medicinal benefits from eating a few curries, but turmeric gathering popularity in smoothies and lattes.

Make a turmeric latte for two with 350ml unsweetened almond milk, 1/4 tsp ground turmeric, 1/4 ground cinnamon, 1/4 ground ginger, 1/2 tsp vanilla extract, 1 tsp maple syrup, and a grind of black pepper (to make the turmeric more easily absorbed in the body). Put the ingredients in a saucepan and whisk over a gentle heat (ideally with a milk frother). Once hot, pour into mugs and sprinkle with a little more cinnamon to serve.

