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Good Eats



Wow. The beginning of July. You know what that means?

A bounty of flavorful, locally grown produce - and more - at the [farmers market](#).

"Good eats," says Alton Brown, star of the Food Network [show](#) of the same title.

Sweet corn. Heirloom tomatoes. Zucchini. Salad greens, peppers and fresh herbs. In Idaho, where I'm living right now, there's also lamb, summer sausage and of course, potatoes.

Berries. Apples. Fruits and veggies you've never even heard of before. What a treat. It's a foodie lover's dream and everyone's place to experience the best food that summer has to offer.

[The Original Farmers Market](#) is in Los Angeles at Third and Fairfax and celebrating [75 years](#). This summer, several contestants on the current version of [The Next Food Network Star](#) are giving cooking lessons at this venerable landmark, courtesy of [Sur la Table](#).

Not to mention [Pike's Place Market](#) in Seattle, WA. Recently celebrating its 100th birthday, visiting Pike's really feels like a European experience. The crowds, the flowers, the produce ... but the flying fish are uniquely Seattle.

Oh man, the [Ferry Plaza Farmers Market](#). Love that place. Food, cheese, wine and the San Francisco Bay. It makes me feel good just to walk through there.

On Long Island, in the Hamptons, all you need to do is ride your bike down a country road and pony up to one of the market stands *right in the field where the food is grown*. Heavenly. Ride over to the fish market, too, for a little Montauk tuna caught that morning.

'Course, you can always ride to the [Amagansett Farmers Market](#), one of my favorites. Make sure you have a backpack - or a basket - on board, though. Wouldn't want to leave any of that luscious, fresh food stuff behind. Find out where your [local farmers market](#) is and plan a visit. Many of them are open year 'round, but make a trip especially in the summer. Your mind, body and soul will thank you. Photo Credit: [kurtw2007](#)

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Feel Good



I've always been fascinated by sensory deprivation tanks. Ever since my days of reading material written by [Carlos Castineda](#), finding peyote growing along a main downtown street in Albany, New York and hanging out with a guy who thought he could visit the libraries of Venus anytime he pleased (yes, the planet).

But that's another story.

Do you remember the movie starring actor William Hurt called, *Altered States*? That is an oldie-but-goodie. Years ago while living in New York City, I remember hearing about a place in Hell's Kitchen where you could book time in a sensory deprivation tank.

Wonder if it's still there.

[Blue Light Flotation](#) in Chelsea is reportedly the longest operating flotation service in the city.

These days, they call them rest chambers, flotation or [isolation tanks](#), where one goes to experience "floating." It is reported that my beloved Dallas Cowboys even had one in their locker room.

Wonder if they moved it to the new stadium.

The point of floating is to create a pure state of relaxation by screening out all other stimuli. Although Hollywood likes to make us believe even more can happen in there.

Ever watch [Fringe](#) on FOX?

Photo Credit: [tomislavmedak](#), Touch Me Festival 2008, Croatia

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Super Food for 2009

Have you heard of the baobab fruit? Already, foodies are touting it as the "super fruit" for 2009—and it's not yet available in the United States.

Grown in Africa, the fruit comes from the *adansonia digitata*, or "upside-down" tree. The word "baobab" means "monkey bread." It's reported that it tastes like a melon, and is a good source of riboflavin.

Perhaps you'll see it in your local food store sometime this year. What you can find there already is the simple almond, though.

Described as the "good-for-the-gut nut," almonds improve digestion and increase levels of good bacteria in the digestive tract. Eating just 25 almonds each day could boost your immune system.

And this is true for this year and beyond.

Be sure to check out my blog at www.sleep-deprivation.com.

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Caring for Your Skin

Whether you're young or not so young, female or male, living in a warm climate or a cold one, caring for your skin is essential to healthy living.

Facials immediately come to mind—and wouldn't I like to indulge in one—and so does caring for the skin of your hands, as the signs of aging can really come to light on the hands. Protecting skin from damaging rays of the sun is up there on this list, too.

These days, all you need to do is peruse the "health and beauty" aisle of your favorite grocery store to find fabulous products to help you create a customized skin regimen performed in the privacy of your own home.

According to About.com, the [four basic skin care needs](#) are cleansing, exfoliation, moisturizing and applying sunscreen. So simple, even a child does it, right? Well, there are a lot of products to choose from, and not all of them need to cost you an arm or a leg.

[St. Ives](#) offers an array of low cost, effective skin products as well as a dermatologist and a "skin profiler" feature on their web site that help you choose the right products for your skin type. Many consumer-driven skin care product lines have these sorts of help features online, too.

[Ahava](#) offers a silky hand cream that is hypo allergenic and keeps your hands smooth even after washing dishes. The company uses salts from the Dead Sea.

Another more local favorite of mine is [Sabon](#), another line using the minerals from the Dead Sea to create products. Sabon products smell heavenly, as their special touch is the wonderful scent combinations such as lavender apple. Yum!

Protecting your skin from the sun doesn't always mean lathering on sunscreen. [UVSkinz](#) manufactures sun protective clothing for kids and adults who spend a great deal of time playing outdoors.

Natural ingredients seem to play an important role in consumer buying habits today, and the market has risen to the call. So when you do visit the health and beauty aisle, consider that, too.

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Food Combos that Boost Nutrition

Did you know that enjoying certain foods in combination can give you a huge boost in nutrients? "Adding just one food to another can make a tremendous difference in your total nutrient intake and offer significant health gains," Tara Gidus, RD, a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association, tells [Prevention](#).

Not only that, this can be true for snack foods, too! Take a look at how these simple food combos can help with a variety of healthy living goals:

Want to lose weight? Add just ½ cup of chickpeas to salsa instead of all those chips and you'll add to your protein intake and fill up faster without a lot of extra calories.

Stifling PMS? Sprinkle a third of a cup of nonfat powdered milk into low-fat chocolate pudding—you'll get 40 percent of your day's calcium and 50 to 100 percent of your vitamin D requirements, shown to reduce the risk of developing PMS.

Is heart health your goal? Combine seltzer and grape juice for an afternoon drink instead of soda to help lower blood pressure, reduce LDL cholesterol and blood clots.

Lowering your risk of cancer? How about having a burger for dinner—but don't forget the ketchup. Just a tablespoon adds enough of the antioxidant lycopene to block cell-damaging free radicals.

Trying to build stronger bones? Adding just six sprigs of parsley to any dish of pasta adds a full day's supply of vitamin K, important for bone health.

Keeping the dentist at bay? Cut down on cavities with a drink of unsweetened cranberry juice and water to prevent the buildup of cavity-making bacteria as well as plaque formation.

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