

The Pear-fect fruit!

freshpick
for better health



Looking for a nutritious quick and easy snack? A side dish to compliment your dinner or a great finishing treat? Be sure to check out pears! Pears make a great addition to any meal because they fit in anywhere; they can be featured for breakfast, lunch, dinner, dessert and, of course, snacks. Pacific Northwest Canned Pears need no preparation, and combined with the fruits versatility fit perfectly into anyone's hectic schedule. Often times we associate such convenient foods with less than desirable nutrition, but pears are a delightful exception to the rule. They are a good source of carbohydrates, potassium and fiber, and are virtually fat and cholesterol-free! On top of that, a 1/2 cup serving rings in at under 100 calories!

Pacific Northwest Canned Pears are a popular choice, with the average American consuming 3.67 pounds of the fruit every year. All Pacific Northwest Canned Pears are a variety called Bartlett, invented by English schoolmaster John Stair in the 18th century. Bartlett pears are ideal for canning because they maintain their sweet flavor and unmistakable texture, which is all the more important considering the short harvest season for pears...a mere four weeks beginning in early August. Because Bartlett pears are so perfect for canning, we can enjoy them year round instead of only a few weeks each year.

So take some time to try the deliciousness of pears and you might just say that pears are one of nature's most "pear-fect" fruits!

It's All History – Pears

- 5,000 BC - Feng Li, a Chinese diplomat, gave up his position and became consumed by grafting pears and other fruit as a commercial venture.
- 800 BC - The Greek poet Homer gave praise to pears in *The Odyssey* referring to the fruit as "a gift of the gods."
- 1700's – A great flourishing of modern pear variety cultivation began taking place in Europe.
- 1800's – The pear tree was immortalized alongside a partridge in the traditional Christmas carol, "The Twelve Days of Christmas".
- 1812 – John Stair Enoch Bartlett "discovered" the pear variety that, up until that point, had been known as the Williams pear, named for a horticulturist who further developed the variety created by John Stair in the 18th century. Unaware of the variety's true name, Bartlett began distributing the pears in the Pacific Northwest using his own surname, which stuck in the fledgling United States, although much of the world still refers to the variety as the Williams pear.
- 1849 - Bartlett pears made their journey west with the California Gold Rush.
- Today, nearly 150,000 tons of Bartlett pears are harvested and canned each and every year in the Pacific Northwest. That's a whopping 30 million pounds!

Sources: Pacific Northwest Canned Pears, USA Pears

Did You Know?

- Bartlett pears are not only ideal for canning, but respond particularly well to the volcanic soil prominent in the Wenatchee, Yakima and Hood River Valleys of the Pacific Northwest.
- Scholars believe pears were first cultivated in the mountain valleys between Russia and Turkey.
- There are more than 3,000 varieties of pears, and the most popular pear in the United States is...you guessed it...the Bartlett.
- Pears are harvested when they are fully mature, but not yet ripe. This keeps the fruit's flavor at its peak.

Sources:
Pacific Northwest Canned Pears, USA Pears



Try Pears!

Here is a delicious recipe you can try at home using Pacific Northwest Canned Pears.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST PEAR PITAS MAKES 4 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 can (15 ounces) Bartlett pear slices, drained
- 4 pita bread rounds, halved
- 4 lettuce leaves, large, washed and drained
- 8 ounces thinly sliced ham
- 8 slices (8 ounces) cheddar cheese
- Prepared low-fat ranch salad dressing

METHOD:

To assemble sandwiches, open pita pocket halves and line with lettuce. Layer enough ham slices, pear slices and cheese to fill each pocket evenly. Drizzle with ranch dressing as desired.