

# Nopales

## What are they?

Nopales are a vegetable made from the pads of the prickly pear cactus, after being peeled and de-spined. They are flat, hand-sized, and are either purple or green. Native to Mexico, these plants are commonly found in Mexican and New Mexican cuisine. Though generally sold fresh in Mexico, they are available canned, bottled, and dried as well.

## Vitamins and Minerals

Nopales offer several naturally available vitamins including A, B1, 2, 3, and vitamin C. They also contain the minerals calcium, magnesium, sodium, potassium, and iron.

## Fiber

Nopales have both soluble and insoluble fibers. The soluble fiber provides energy, lowers blood sugar, elevates mood, and suppresses the appetite. This causes fat buildup to be prevented and fat breakdown to be increased. The insoluble fiber, lignin, increases satiety and eliminates excessive binges.

## Toxins

Nopales have the ability to remove toxins from the body. Ammonia, free radicals and environmental toxins such as alcohol and cigarette smoke all suppress the immune system. By eating Nopales, such harmful toxins can be removed from the body.

## Vegetarians

Nopales are a wonderful vegetable for vegetarians. They contain 17 different amino acids, along with many vitamins, minerals, and fibers. These all work to address the needs of a healthy vegetarian diet.

## Hyperglycemia

Nopales have helped many people in dealing with hyperglycemia which is especially important for people with type II diabetes. By increasing the body's levels and sensitivity to insulin, Nopales stabilize and regulate blood sugar. Maximal hypoglycemic effects are evident 4-6 hours after Nopales ingestion.

## Other Benefits

- Reduces cholesterol
- Aids in liver detoxification
- Prevents damage from eating spicy foods
- Prevents damage from taking aspirin
- Helps to prevent blocked arteries
- Balances and calms the nervous system
- Gentle alternative for psyllium
- Helps prevent hangovers when ingested before drinking
- Decreases plasma LDL levels
- Helps to diminish cellulite
- Helps with fluid retention
- Decreases risk of heart disease