As the summer approaches, many people start thinking about taking vacations. Whether you’re taking a trip around the world or staying in your own backyard, you can still give your taste buds a vacation. Different cultures use a wide range of foods in their cuisine, and they can be as healthy as they are tasty. Read on to learn about common foods from countries across the globe, and why it’s great to eat them.

**Greece**

- **Olives** are a good source of monounsaturated fat. They contain vitamin E and vitamin K, and a variety of antioxidants and anti-inflammatory chemicals such as phenols and flavonols.

- **Tomatoes** contain lycopene, which is believed to have cancer-fighting properties. They also are a good source of vitamin C, vitamin A, and fibre.

- **Figs** are high in fibre. They are a good source of the minerals calcium, potassium and iron, and may even help control blood glucose levels in individuals with diabetes.

- **Greek yogurt** is higher in protein than regular yogurt, making it more filling. It is also a good source of calcium to help maintain strong bones.

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**Tasty Tidbits**

- In Japan, a nice musk melon (similar to a cantaloupe) may sell for over $300 US.
- Greek people consume more olive oil per capita than any other country.
- In India, creamy yogurt is often added to dishes, and is the main ingredient in “Lassi”, a yogurt shake.
- In Peru, Cebiche is a common seafood dish that is not cooked with heat, but by marinating in citrus juice (the juice triggers denaturation of the meat protein, causing it to “cook”).
### Japan

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<th><strong>Soybeans</strong> are a good source of protein. They are low in cholesterol, and also an excellent source of calcium, iron and zinc.</th>
<th><strong>Seaweed</strong> is rich in calcium, magnesium and vitamin C. It is high in fibre and contains heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids.</th>
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- **Mushrooms** are a source of vitamin D, selenium and potassium. They promote a healthy immune system with a rich phytochemical content.
- **Mustard greens** are a good source of vitamin C and beta-carotene. They also contain folate and vitamin K.

### India

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<th><strong>Chickpeas</strong> are a good source of fibre and protein. They contain many vitamins and minerals like manganese and folate.</th>
<th><strong>Mangoes</strong> are a good source of beta-carotene, lycopene and vitamin C, which are all antioxidants. They are also a source of calcium and magnesium.</th>
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- **Spinach** is high in fibre, and a good source of vitamin K and B vitamins. It is also a source of minerals such as iron and potassium.
- **Black beans** are high in protein and fibre, and low in fat. They are also a good source of iron, phosphorus and folate.

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<th><strong>Lentils</strong> are a lower fat, vegetarian source of protein. They are also a source of folic acid, iron and magnesium.</th>
<th><strong>Quinoa</strong> is a whole grain and a great source of fibre. It is also a good source of magnesium and vitamin B2.</th>
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- **Turmeric** may help delay liver damage, lower carcinogen levels in foods and may help in the treatment of arthritis.
- **Hot peppers** contain capsaicin, which has been linked to destroying cancer cells and preventing sinus infections.
Southwestern Black Bean Soup

Ingredients
- 1 19 oz can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 ounces smoked bacon, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- Chipotle chile in Adobo sauce, chopped, to taste
- 1 teaspoon cumin seed, toasted and ground
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 1 red pepper, diced
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 cups chicken or vegetable stock or water
- 1 14 ounce can plum tomatoes
- Coarse salt and freshly cracked black pepper, to taste
- Handful fresh coriander, chopped, to taste

Directions
1. In a large pot, heat vegetable oil on high. Add the onion and sauté until soft and golden, about 4 to 5 minutes. Add the smoked bacon and cook until golden, about 3 to 4 minutes. Add chipotle chile, cumin, carrots, celery, red pepper, bay leaf and chicken stock. Bring to a boil.
2. Add beans. Reduce heat to low. Simmer until vegetables are almost tender, about 25 minutes. Add tomatoes, cover and continue to cook soup until soup has thickened, about 15 to 20 minutes.
3. Transfer 1/3 of soup to food processor or blender, puree until smooth. Pour pureed mixture back into remaining soup. Stir to blend. Finish with chopped fresh coriander. Serve immediately.

“This black bean soup has a bold, fiery flavor, so if you are sensitive to spice, adjust the addition of the Chipotle chile as needed. This soup goes great with some freshly made corn bread and a garden salad, for a light supper or a weekend brunch with some friends.”

Credit: http://www.foodnetwork.ca/recipes/Herbs/recipe.html?dishid=6304
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