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super salba

Learn why this gluten-free superfood could become your favorite kitchen staple

By Vera Tweed

"Salba" may sound like a sexy dance or an exotic genre of Latin music, but in fact, it's an ancient grain whose qualities are perfectly suited for modern-day health challenges. Prized by the Aztecs as a superfood (although the word, as we know it, hadn't been invented yet), Salba offers a simple way to improve digestion, increase energy, help heal a variety of conditions, and even lose weight. And it's gluten-free.

For people with digestive distress, such as those with celiac disease, the results are "almost instantaneous," says Sherrill Sellman, ND, a Tulsa, Okla.-based naturopathic physician and author of *The Return of the Ancient Seed*. "They start to have more energy and they are able to heal and repair," she says. "So their mood changes and they really notice some incredible improvement." Sellman's patients have also experienced relief from arthritis pain, improved hair growth, easier weight loss, and fewer colds and flu.

Salba can also help diabetics. In a study published in *Diabetes Care*, Salba improved blood sugar levels and lowered blood pressure and inflammation among a group of 20 people with type 2 diabetes. Those in the study consumed about 3 tablespoons of the seed per day.

How Salba Works

When mixed with a liquid food or digestive juices, Salba becomes gel-like, enabling easy absorption of its nutrients. In the stomach, it creates a sense of fullness, which helps control appetite. Salba is also high in omega-3s, antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, fiber, and protein, a highly absorbable, synergistic combination of nutrients.

How to Benefit from Salba

Add 1 tablespoon of Salba seed or 2 tablespoons of ground seed to your daily diet. Supplements are also available for specific health situations.

Because Salba seed is virtually tasteless and "disappears" in food, while adding valuable nutrients, Sellman calls it "stealth nutrition." The seeds can be added to soups, sauces, smoothies, cereals, or just about any food. They can also be used in baking, such as Sellman's favorite muffin recipe (right).

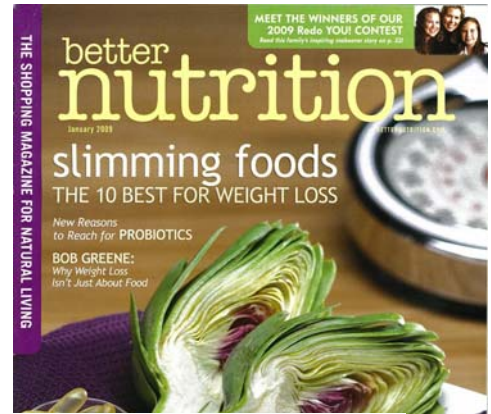
As another option, Sellman suggests making a Salba gel: Add ½ cup of Salba seeds to 3 cups of warm water. Shake and let sit for 15 minutes. The gel can be refrigerated for up to two weeks. In baking, ¼ cup of the gel can be used in place of an egg. It can also thicken puddings, dips, salad dressings, sauces, and other foods. †

DID YOU KNOW?

1 Tbs. Salba seed includes:
2,500 mg omega-3 fats
760 mg omega-6 fats
250 mg omega-9 fats
92 mg calcium
46 mg magnesium
2.5 g protein
4.2 g fiber

Product Examples

You have a few choices when it comes to Salba products. For foods featuring Salba, pick up some **Organic Salsa** and **Tortilla Chips** from **Salba Smart**—each is packed with Salba. **Core Naturals** has an extensive line of Salba-based products; try their **Salba Ground** or **Salba Seed Oil Gelcaps**.



Salba Banana Coconut Muffins

Makes 6 muffins

- 2 Tbs. coconut oil
- 3 eggs, room temperature
- ¼ cup mashed banana (1 small ripe banana)
- 1 tsp. alcohol-free vanilla flavor (such as Frontier Herbs) or vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ cup coconut flour
- 2 Tbs. Salba seeds
- 1 Tbs. shredded coconut
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. baking powder
- 2 Tbs. raisins (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Spray muffin cups with cooking spray.
2. Mix together oil, eggs, banana, vanilla, and salt. Add coconut flour, Salba seeds, shredded coconut, cinnamon, and baking powder, and whisk together until smooth. Fold in raisins, if using.
3. Pour into muffin cups. Bake 15 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center of muffins comes out clean.

PER SERVING: 127 CAL; 5 G PROT; 9 G TOTAL FAT (5 G SAT FAT); 9 G CARB; 106 MG CHOL; 150 MG SOD; 4 G FIBER; 2 G SUGARS