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Salba Smart – Super Bowl Treats that Are Good for Your Heart

February 1, 2010 by [Julia Wasson](#)

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Salba Smart sells a wide variety of delicious — and healthy — foods for your Super Bowl party or any other occasion. Photo: Courtesy Salba Smart

On Super Bowl Sunday, when you dip your hand into a bag of pretzels or grab some chips and salsa, you can take good care of your heart while indulging your junk-food craving. Yeah, I know. You've heard lots of claims of "healthy" foods that "taste good, too" — but do they?

Many of the "healthy" snacks I've tried are less than satisfying. But [Salba Smart](#) snacks are both delicious and good for you. My friends and I can testify to their taste, and the fact sheets give ample evidence of their health effects.

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Pretzels: Good, good, good!



Delicious and crispy, even after two weeks! Photo: Courtesy Salba Smart

A couple of weeks ago or so, a representative from Salba sent Blue Planet Green Living a big box of samples (gratis) for us to review. As I write this post, Joe and I are both eating Salba Smart pretzels. “Good, good, good!” he says spontaneously. “I like these a lot!” He’s munching pretzels while working at his computer (presumably being careful not to drop salt crystals in his keyboard). We’re not exactly *fighting* over the bag, but we’re each making sure we have a stash on our own side of the desk.

I’m a little bit surprised there are any pretzels left, come to think of it. We began sampling them just after the box arrived two (or was it three?) weeks ago. We started with the Thin Twisted Pretzels (made with organic flour).

These are the ones that look like they’re tied in knots. We made short work of that 7 oz. package in just two days.

Then we started on the pretzel sticks — the bag we’re

deep into tonight. We had been interrupted by a trip out of town for a long weekend — and had forgotten about them by the time we got back.

So, now we’re digging in once again to sample more of the Salba goodies so I can write this article. The strange thing is, these pretzel sticks are still crisp and fresh some two weeks after opening them. I don’t eat pretzels all that often, yet it occurs to me that pretzels do go stale. But these didn’t. Hmmm. That’s a definite plus.

Nutritional Benefits

But taste and crispness are not what’s most important. The reason Salba Smart pretzels (and all the other Salba snacks) are good for you is the grain they’re made from. Grown in Peru, Salba is a white relative of the small, black chia seeds, those little seeds you wet and stick to a clay chia pot. But, according to the literature provided with our samples, Salba is leagues ahead in health benefits. If you’re curious about the [difference between Salba and chia](#), you can read a [fact sheet](#) on the Salba website.

Following are some facts nutritional facts about Salba, provided by the company:

- - Higher in Omega-3 than flax and salmon
 - Higher anti-oxidants than blueberries and pomegranates
 - Plant origin ensures maximum absorption and health benefits
 - 0g trans fats, 0g sugars, 0 gluten and certified non GMO

Salba is the richest whole food source of Omega 3 fatty acids and fiber found in nature. Every serving of Salba provides over 3,000 mg of Omega 3’s and over 5000 mg of dietary fiber. It is also high in antioxidants, protein, calcium and iron. Salba has less than 0.5 g net carbohydrate per serving. It is all-natural, has no trans fat, is gluten free, has almost no carbohydrates and is non-GMO.

Ounce for ounce Salba grain provides three times more iron than spinach, 15 times more magnesium than broccoli, and six times more calcium than whole milk. Salba grain is the only food, (including grains, vegetables and fruits) that is part of each of the six groups of the USDA Food Guide Pyramid.

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A Medical Patent

What? A healthy grain has a *patent*? And it's *not GMO*? That seems counter-intuitive these days. Yet, it's true. The Salba seed was developed over 15 years of selective breeding — *natural* plant breeding, *no* gene splicing. The growers received a medical patent (60-274.256), described by the company literature as follows:

This invention is in the field of the management of diabetes and is concerned with dietary approaches to such management, more particularly, it is concerned with methods of improving associated metabolic abnormalities, specifically with Salba, and methods of use in these seeds in lowering blood pressure, blood glucose and post-prandial glycemia, as well as associated risk factors such as inflammatory factors (hi-C reactive protein), coagulation (fibrinogen, factor VIII, Von Willebrand and fibronolytic factors such as t-PA, iron status and endothelial function).

Salsa



The Salba salsas are good — but don't expect them to be hot! Photo: Courtesy Salba Smart

Okay, so your heart health isn't the foremost item on your mind as you reach for a snack during the Super Bowl — or while watching a movie, waiting for your kids at soccer practice, or any other time you might want something to munch on. Most likely, you're looking to satisfy your palate. Salba can do that too, depending on what kind of flavors you prefer.

In our package, we got three jars of Salba salsa: Mild, Medium, and Hot. All three have a fairly heavy tomato taste. I don't particularly care for hot, spicy foods, so I was quite happy with both the Mild and the Medium. Joe and I took the Medium and the Hot salsas to a potluck, and the general feedback from attendees was that the Hot just wasn't hot. I didn't try the Hot salsa, so I can't say that firsthand, but it fits with my impression of the mildness of the other two varieties.

Potato Crisps

The Bar-B-Que Potato Crisps — not my fave, but someone sure liked them. Photo: Courtesy Salba Smart

We received several types and varieties of chips. The Baked Original Recipe Potato Chips are somewhat sweet, and not very salty. They have an interesting — and unusual, I think — flavor for a potato chip. I can't quite describe what they taste like, but they're totally unlike any potato chips I've eaten before. I'm not a huge fan of them, but they're not offensive; maybe they're just too bland for me.

The Baked Bar-B-Que Crisps disappeared fairly rapidly — but it wasn't me who ate them, as I don't care much for barbecue flavoring on chips. Someone made short work of them, though. My only evidence is the tiny pile of crumbs left in the bag, but that's good enough to see that whoever ate them liked them a lot.

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The third variety of potato crisps is the Baked Cheddar & Sour Cream Potato Crisps. Again, most of these disappeared somehow (we've had a number of gatherings of family and friends in the past couple of weeks), though not quite as many as the Baked Bar-B-Que Crisps.

Organic Tortilla Chips



Take your pick of three: Organic White Corn, Organic Yellow Corn, or Organic Blue Corn Chips. Photo: Courtesy Salba Smart

Probably the most universally popular item we received (though it's not fair to compare them to the pretzels, as we apparently forgot to share those with anyone) were the tortilla crisps. We had a bag of Organic White Corn Tortilla Chips, a bag of Yellow Corn Tortilla Chips, and a bag of Blue Corn Tortilla Chips.

At one potluck dinner we attended, I asked some of our friends to tell me which kind they preferred. Some were adamant that they liked the white corn variety. Equally as many were adamant that they liked the yellow corn chips. My own favorite? The blue corn chips, hands down.

Another friend, Miriam (BPGL's international editor), wrote the following after trying some of the chips at a potluck, then agreeing to take the remainder home to review:

When I grabbed a few corn chips from a bowl at a potluck recently, I was unprepared for the delightful discovery I was about to make. I'm not one to rave about food products, although I am a person who cares about what I put in my body and reads labels. What I discovered first of all was the unusually robust, nutty flavor of the not-too-salty, extra-crunchy, organic yellow corn tortilla chips manufactured by Salba Smart. After I read the label, however, I decided I would probably never buy another brand again:

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- 8x more Omega-3s than salmon
- 30% more antioxidants than blueberries
- 25% more fiber than flax seed
- 6x more calcium than whole milk
- 2x more potassium than a banana
- 15x more magnesium than broccoli

Wow! I immediately checked the local food co-op to see if they were on the shelf. Not. Today I'll take them the (empty) package and see what I can do about getting them on the shelf. These are just too good to ignore.

I also received the following message from Gay, Miriam's sister, with the subject line "Where did you get these?" Miriam brought home a pkg. of chips that were really good plus quite healthy which she said you gave her. I've looked several places for them, but no luck. Do you remember what the brand was and where you got them? I'd like to get some.

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Salba Whole Grain



So, enough about snacks. I want to tell you about my absolute favorite Salba product, and it has very little to do with snacking. The product I like best is the whole grain Salba. To be quite honest, I didn't bother to open the package until just a few days ago. I wasn't all that interested in spreading a bunch of tiny seeds on top of my cereal or salad. I eat plenty of seeds and nuts to get protein (I'm almost a vegetarian — getting there), and didn't care to add another one.

Still, in the interest of writing a fair review, I opened the package and sprinkled about a teaspoonful on my cereal. I figured it would be akin to eating bird seed. But I was wrong.

The Salba quickly softens around the edges, but stays crunchy on the inside. It's a bit sticky when wet, and clings to the bowl if it escapes floating in my (rice) milk. It's easily digestible, and didn't cause me any kind of stomach upset.

I like the flavor of the Salba seeds. Again, I'm not sure how to describe the flavor — maybe a bit nutty, but not really. A bit sweet, but not terribly. "Pleasant" is about the best description I could come up with. Joe typically doesn't like to sprinkle small seeds, such as flax, on his food. But he tried the Salba, and he likes it, too. Now we sprinkle the Salba seed on our cereal every morning. We haven't tried it in salads

or sauces, yet, as suggested on the package, but it's only a matter of time. Given the heart-healthy benefits of Salba, it will remain a consistent part of our daily diet.

By the way, there's a ground form of the Salba seed, too. I haven't tried it yet, but it's going to be perfect for adding to cranberry bread or zucchini bread the next time I bake.

Where to Find It

You can purchase Salba products at any of the following:

Whole Foods Market

Vitamin Cottage

www.efoodpantry.com

www.amazon.com

If you cannot find Salba products at your local food co-op, share this article with their purchasing department or customer service. Or send them to the [Salba Smart website](#).

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