

A woman with curly hair, wearing a light green cardigan, is smiling and cooking in a kitchen. She is holding two wooden spoons and stirring a large stainless steel pot on a stove. The background shows a kitchen with a range hood and wooden cabinets.

In the Mood Foods

by Brenda Stokes

Over the centuries, people from all over the world have tried using substances from the land around them as natural libido boosters.

From vegetables to fish, foods have been prepared to produce desired effects in people for as long as humans have walked the earth. And why should modern day be any different? People still experiment with different foods in order to discover their aphrodisiac properties and feel a boost in sexual energy. While we search for the ultimate love potion, many foods provide biological effects that help bring on sensations of arousal.

Want to get in on the yummy fun?

Here are some mood foods and general preparation tips to keep your dinner table (and bedroom!) spicy.

mood foods

The following yummy dishes are hazard free, unless of course you have an allergy to one of them. Otherwise, bon appétit!

- **Asparagus** – According to Chris Kilham, medicine hunter and author of *Hot Plants, Nature's Proven Sex Boosters for Men and Women* (St Martin's Press), the asparagus vegetable has a substance called asparagine in it that acts as a urinary tract stimulant. "This can produce a sensation of sexual excitation," says Kilham.
- **Garlic** – This tasty additive can actually improve erectile function. How, you ask? According to Kilham, garlic can help reduce serum cholesterol and platelet buildup in the blood vessels. With this improved blood flow, the genitals are much more receptive to arousal.

- **Chilli Peppers** – These spicy delights literally make your body hot. According to Diane Brown, author of *The Seduction Cookbook* (Innova Publishing, Feb 2005), "the physical sensation of eating (peppers) is similar to the way you feel when you're getting hot and heavy with someone you really like." For instance, you start to salivate like crazy, and your face gets warm and flushed. Peppers are also vasodilators, which, says Kilham, increase your circulation and stimulation level.
- **Coffee** – Caffeine is a known stimulant, but for some people, this central nervous system stimulation results in turning up the heat, says Kilham.
- **Chocolate** – This sweet treat is delicious to other parts of your body besides the taste buds. Specifically, dark chocolate has a great effect on your brain, according to Kilham. "Chocolate

contains PEA (phenethylamine), a substance naturally produced in the brain when we are in love," he says. This tasty concoction also boosts dopamine levels, which is directly related to sexual arousal.

- **Oysters** – The high zinc content in oysters really gives the libido a boost, says Brown. "Men may be more sensitive to oysters," says Kilham, "because the zinc is absolutely essential to healthy sexual function and a healthy prostate."
- **Figs** – In ancient times, figs were a symbol of the male and female sexual organs, which is a notion that has proliferated into modern times, according to Brown. A favourite of Cleopatra, figs definitely boost the libido to new heights.
- **Scallops** – Loaded with phosphorus and zinc, scallops help improve sexual function by influencing testosterone production, says Brown.

● **Ginger** – Because of this root’s phallic shape, it has long been thought of as an aphrodisiac. “But its flavour and aroma are what make the senses pop,” says Brown.

setting the mood

Libido boosting foods may be a great way to enhance your sex life, but food is just food without the appropriate attention to detail. Brown suggests using the “KISS”

method when preparing a love inducing meal: “Keep It Simple and Sexy!” Don’t serve the most elaborate and filling courses, either – you want to have blood flowing to the erogenous zones, not the stomach! Keep it light with easy to digest foods. Try serving finger foods. You and your loved one can take turns feeding each other in a seductive way.



You can also change the environment where you would normally eat. Set the table with candles and roses. Make a picnic on your patio. You can even leave a trail of rose petals to the bedroom to hint at what is to come!

health concerns

The aphrodisiacs of the world rarely cause health problems or are deemed unsafe, says Brown. Unless you’re allergic to the food, there shouldn’t be any trouble with eating libido-enhancing dishes. “Of course, there are those rare and repulsive foods that have been rumoured to have aphrodisiac qualities,” says Brown, “such as Rocky Mountain oysters (bull’s testicles), shark’s fin soup or rattlesnake blood.” Another exotic food you should probably steer clear from is the Japanese puffer fish.

“Wrongly prepared, this fish is toxic due to a buildup of poison in the liver.” In general, you should be careful when experimenting with foods you’re unfamiliar with. Exotic doesn’t always mean erotic.

Besides the actual foods themselves, be sure you are healthy enough to handle sexual activity, says Kilham. Be sure, “your heart can take it ... or be prepared to die happy in the saddle,” he

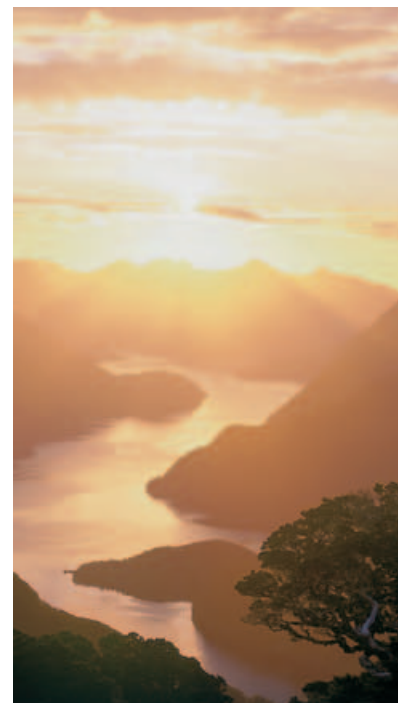
says. If you’re in tiptop shape, however, then a few libido boosting foods should be of no harm at all.

A lot of people go for chemical solutions to their libido troubles as well, but this may be unnecessary. “Most people can get a substantial boost in their sexual drive by eating healthfully and exercising regularly,” says Brown.

Unless a certain disease or dysfunction is causing your sexual slump, a sensual massage or chocolate-covered strawberries may be all you need.

the mood truth

Do the above libido enhancing foods and tips work? Chris Kilham offers some parting thoughts on the subject. “Many people derive great value from aphrodisiac foods. This has been so for thousands of years. Billions of sexually satisfied users can’t be wrong.” There’s no one thing that will work for everybody. And since everyone is different, that adds to some of the fun! “Is some of the effect of aphrodisiacs in the mind?” Kilham remarks, “Let’s hope so – the brain is our most important sex organ!” Let your imagination run wild with all of the possibilities. ✍



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