GET THE BLUES

“Use these luscious, ripe blueberries in place of fresh fruit in smoothies, milkshakes, muffins, pies and desserts or as a topping for cereal, yogurt and ice cream,” says the label of President’s Choice frozen Wild Blueberries. The company’s frozen Organics Wild Blueberries are every bit as versatile. There’s nothing wrong with fresh blueberries, of course. But when they’re imported from distant locales, you pay a premium for fruit that bears only a passing resemblance to the berries of your childhood. That sweet-and-tangy burst of flavour you get from the smaller wild berries is often lost in the sweeter, larger, fleshier imported blues.

Granted, frozen blueberries lose some of their firmness when thawed, so you might not want to eat them right out of a bowl. But they’re great with plain low-fat yogurt or in bran muffins, whole-grain pancakes, hot or cold cereal, oatmeal cookies, or just about anything else. In fact, if you throw them into your smoothie while they’re still frozen, they’ll make it milkshake-cold. Mmmm.

In some preliminary studies, researchers have found that feeding older rats the equivalent of ½ to 1 cup of blueberries every day helps them find their way through mazes. Does that mean that berries can help people remember where they left their keys or in which film they last saw that movie star? It’s far too early to know.

But one taste of these wild blueberries is a sure-fire way to bring back memories of blueberries past...maybe even those you picked yourself.

President’s Choice: (888) 495-5111

PUDGY PUDDING

“A warm and sweet treat featuring traditional toffee pudding served with a scoop of vanilla bean ice cream and smothered with rich caramel sauce.” That’s how Boston Pizza describes its Sticky Toffee Pudding.

A “warm and sweet treat” sounds so quaint. It doesn’t quite convey what this traditional British dessert brings to the table. That would be 760 calories’ worth of sugar, white flour, and (we’re guessing) some butter and/or palm oil, since the ice cream is likely to supply only about half of the dish’s 18 grams of saturated fat (nearly a day’s worth).

That’s more calories than the New York Cheesecake (600) or any other Boston Pizza dessert except the Chocolate Explosion (870). Why you could even order an Individual Pepperoni Pizza for 750 calories, except that the pizza has “only” 13 grams of sat fat and nowhere near the pudding’s 18 teaspoons of added sugar.

Not dining at Boston Pizza in the near future? You can enjoy Sensations by Compliments Sticky Maple Pudding in the comfort of your dining room. That way, you won’t have to walk too far to see if its 480 calories are already showing up on your bathroom scale. (Compliments’ version is smaller and comes sans ice cream, though the box hints that it’s “great with a scoop of French vanilla.”)

At least sticky pudding has an honest name. Expect it to stick to your ribs...and belly...and hips...and thighs...and arteries.

Boston Pizza: (604) 270-1108
Compliments: (866) 672-0061

Margo’s Cream of Cauliflower Soup

Sauté 1 chopped onion in 1 Tbs. of olive oil. Add 1 chopped large head of cauliflower, 1 quart of low-sodium vegetable broth, and 2 cups of skim milk. Simmer until tender, about 20 minutes. Purée with a hand blender and season with black pepper and up to ¾ tsp. salt.

About CSPI, publisher of Nutrition Action Healthletter

The Centre for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), founded in 1971, is an independent non-profit consumer health group. CSPI advocates honest food labelling and advertising, safer and more nutritious foods, and pro-health alcohol policies. CSPI’s work is supported by Nutrition Action Healthletter subscribers and foundation grants. CSPI accepts no government or industry funding. Nutrition Action Healthletter, which has been published in the U.S. since 1974 and in Canada since 1996, accepts no advertising.

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