

Better Nutrition, Feb, 2003 by “Your European Auntie”

In recent years, we have discovered the benefits of antioxidants in our diet, so the pharmaceutical industry has raced to synthesize more powerful varieties. But in chasing new discoveries, we've forgotten a time-honored natural source of antioxidants: sea buckthorn berries (*Hippophae rhamnoides* L.).

Known in ancient Greece, this plant was also called "sallow thorn" because the berries can stain the skin yellow.

Native to Europe and some northern regions of Asia, it's a potent "free radical" scavenger--which means it retards aging and helps prevent cancers. What's its secret? Sea buckthorn berries have a high dosage of several antioxidant components usually only found separately. And the vitamin C content is among the highest for any plant--fourth after rose hips, hot chili pepper and sweet red pepper.

The vitamin E content is second only to nuts and seeds, which have a high fat content. Also, sea buckthorn berries provide high levels of beta-carotene.

But where can you find them? Capsules are hard to locate--you may have to trek around a few health food outlets. Or if you're looking for a good excuse to fly to Europe ...

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