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## A bounty of blue

Blueberries, the antioxidant super food, shine in sweet and savory dishes

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Blueberries are not just for desserts. The berry's not-too-tart, not-too-sweet flavor lends itself to many savory dishes.

(Photo by Bob Fila)



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Blueberries

By Laura Vozzella  
Baltimore Sun

Think blueberries, and you think pie. But these blue beauties are ready to break out of the familiar lattice-topped role. Professional chefs and foodies alike have found the berry's not-too-tart, not-too-sweet flavor lends itself to many dishes.

At Clementine restaurant in Hamilton, Md., chef and co-owner Winston Blick uses the fruit in a blueberry-basil salad vinaigrette, in a jammy compound butter served on pork chops and in a side dish of sauteed greens and house-cured bacon. They even turn up in the restaurant's paté.

"For some reason, it works well with the savory or salty things," Blick said. "The part of the blueberry pie that's great is the blueberry [filling] with the salty

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crust."

He described blueberries as "well-balanced," meaning they are neither super-sweet nor super-sour.

"They don't punch you in the nose," he said. "So it goes with things."

Like chicken livers, believe it or not.

Blick incorporates dried blueberries that have been macerated in a Boordy Vineyards berry wine into his buttery, silky paté. (It might not quite qualify as health food, but it's high in iron and still better than pie, right?)

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"You get that little burst of fruit, and it's just lovely," said his wife and business partner, Cristin Dadant.

People are sometimes surprised to see blueberries show up outside the dessert menu. No one blinks at the blueberry double-layer cake with lemon butter cream, prepared by the chef's mother. But the blueberry-bacon butter listed with the pork chop?

"People come in and say, 'Blueberry-bacon butter?' And I'll say, 'Just try it,' " Dadant said.

The blueberry-bacon butter in question came about when Blick was looking for a fruity topping for pork. The sweet-toothed chef created a jammy concoction. His cooks pushed it in the direction of a compound butter. Eventually, he said, it "found its true place between the two."

One iteration along the way turned out "brilliantly purple."

"It was amazing," Blick said. "It would melt on the chop, melt down next to the mashed potatoes. It was this hugely beet purple."

The vivid color of the cooked berry in savory dishes puts off some people.

"It looks like a crime scene" is how food blogger Kathy Patterson described the blueberry ketchup she developed for a recipe contest sponsored by the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council.

Still, she would make it again for use in a blueberry barbecue sauce she cooked up for shredded pork shoulder.

"Blueberries have their own intrinsic spice when you cook them up," said Patterson, who blogs about recipes and restaurants at [minxeats.com](http://minxeats.com). "They have their own zing."

Jerry Edwards, owner of Chef's Expressions Catering and Consulting, is not a fan of the color either.

"Blue is not a good food color," he said. "It's a gorgeous color, but not to eat."

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