

Karen Berrios®

12

**PERUVIAN
SUPERFOODS**



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Published in the United States by:
Kareliz Wellness, LLC, 41593 Winchester Rd, Suite 200, Temecula, CA 92590

karenberrios.com

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INTRODUCTION

When I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer, I received an amazing invitation was given to me, to embark into a healing journey and bring order to my body, mind, and soul.

Early in my healing journey, I changed my eating habits to a whole food diet and implemented superfoods into my diet to pack myself with nutrition, boost my immune system and nourish my body to help me restore and rebuild from within. It is common knowledge that Superfoods are a powerful source of nutrients, vitamins and minerals and along with physical activity, I believe this to be the best plan for health and longevity.

I sincerely hope you find this ebook as helpful and teaching as I do.



As the great Hippocrates once said, let food be thy medicine, and medicine be thy food.

God populated the world abundantly with foods that would heal our bodies and nourish our souls. Some of these foods, much more than others.

Superfoods are ones that are said to have healing abilities in the body. These foods can be found all over earth, but there is a place where superfoods are abundant- yes, I'm talking my home country of Peru.



Peru has superfoods that can't be found anywhere else. Why is this?

It has to do with their diverse topography and their microclimates. Many of these foods cannot be found anywhere else on the planet, and if they are, they are often not nearly as rich in healing compounds due to soil quality or lack of elevation in which they are grown.

I invite you to dive deep into these twelve Peruvian superfoods. See if there are

foods you have never tried, see if there are certain things in the description that turn on a light bulb for you on something you can help support in your own body, think about adding in new culinary excitements to your routine cooking and diet.

We'll even showcase some of our favorite KB recipes at the end of this.





**12
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MACA

This Peruvian superfood looks like a potato, but it is actually part of the cruciferous family. This makes Maca more similar to broccoli (but a very different taste!)

This root has incredible healing abilities. It is an abundant source of antioxidants and cancer-fighting compounds and has been used and consumed for its healing properties in the Andes region of Peru for thousands of years. (Source) See this study for how powerful the antioxidants of Maca can be.

Maca is an adaptogen, which is defined as “herbal preparations that increase attention and endurance in fatigue, and reduced stress-induced impairments and disorders related to the endocrine and immune systems.” A very well-researched and well-documented 2010 study shows the way adaptogens work in our bodies. They have been shown to have a therapeutic impact on our bodies on a cellular level.





Maca can help with sexual function and libido. A 2015 double-blind clinical study set out to determine if maca could help restore sexual function in women taking anti-depressant medication. The study had remarkable results warranting additional follow-up studies.

Maca can even help with hormones as it's a cruciferous vegetable and it helps to balance estrogen.

Maca can help improve mood. A 2014 study showed that maca reduced cortisol

levels and proved anti-depressant qualities of the root when taken for six weeks.

What does Maca taste like? It's typically sold as a powder and the powder has a slightly sweet, nutty, earthy flavor, which makes it an incredible addition to smoothies, cereal, soups, stews, or pretty much anything else you might be making.

Make sure you get high quality Maca, straight from Peru and grown at the highest elevations possible. Shop ours here!

YACON

Yacon syrup or powder can be extracted from the roots of the Yacon plant. This grows natively in the Andes and has been used medicinally for hundreds of years in South America.

Many people compare the syrup to molasses, so it has a wide range of uses.

Yacon is high in soluble fiber. This is great for digestion. In fact, is one of the highest dietary sources of fructooligosaccharides (sometimes known as FOS), which is a type of fructan. One category of soluble dietary fiber is Fructans. (Source)

Yacon has 1/3 the caloric intake of sugar. Making it a fantastic substitute. Only 20 calories per tablespoon.



Yacon can help with weight management.

When the bacteria in our guts digest the fructans, they produce something called short-chain fatty acids. These have powerful anti-obesity effects, at least we are seeing these studies in rats.

What does Yacon taste like? One of the best descriptions I have seen (besides it being close to molasses) is that it is a cross between hydrating fruits like watermelon, apples, and pears with a touch of celery.





CAMU CAMU

Camu Camu is a sour berry. To scale, it has more natural Vitamin C than any food on the planet! Isn't that amazing? So much power in a little scoop of powder can really help out our immune systems in a tremendous way. A single dose is 1200% of our daily requirement for Vitamin C!

Camu Camu is loaded with antioxidants. (Source) People preventing or treating cancer, or those who just want extra protection for

their bodies, will want to combat free radicals as much as they can, and antioxidants help mop these up and clean our bodies of them.

Camu Camu can help lower inflammation. Camu Camu has been shown to help when it comes to lowering free radicals and inflammation. When we get an excess of free radicals in the body, inflammation can go up. This powerful little fruit can help tremendously when taken regularly.



Camu Camu protects the immune system. Did you know that in order to keep our natural killer cells (the cells that fight disease and infection) we need to have an abundance of vitamin C in the body? One teaspoon of Camu Camu gives you more than your daily recommendation of vitamin C in one swoop!

What does Camu Camu taste like?

Camu Camu is a tangy, sour fruit. We definitely recommend hiding it in smoothies

or in your cooking. It is easily disguiseable, but on it's own it's quite bitter!

Again, you want high quality Camu Camu! From any other country, it is just not the same. Shop ours here and dive into even more of the benefits!



GOLDEN BERRIES

Golden berries are closely related to the tomatillo. It is a brightly colored, orange fruit that is also known as Inca berries. They grow in warmer regions of South America and are in the nightshade family.

Golden Berries are high in antioxidants.

Again, this is what you want to be getting more of in your diet if you are wanting to up your bodies defense mechanisms against disease and illnesses. In fact, golden berries have over 34 healing compounds within them! (Source)

Golden Berries can help with inflammation. (Are you sensing a trend here? Many Peruvian superfoods have antioxidative and antiinflammatory properties!) There was one study where they extracted from the husk of golden berries and saw that it reduced inflammation in mice with inflammatory bowel disease. These mice treated with the extract of golden berries also had lower levels of inflammatory markers in their bodies. Other test tube studies have shown to be positive when it comes to lowering inflammation with the use of golden berries.



Golden berries can help with your immune system. Golden berries have a high amount of Vitamin C in them as well as polyphenols, which are a special kind of antioxidant. Studies in human cells (we love human trials!) have shown that golden berries can help in the support of regulating the immune system. The polyphenols can block specific inflammatory immune markers.

What does golden berries taste like? Many people say they have a citrusy-tropical, very sweet taste!





CACAO

First thing's first, we are not talking chocolate, which comes from cacao. We are talking cacao in its purest form! Cacao, in scientific terms, is called Theobroma Cacao. Native to tropical regions in Central and South America, the cacao tree (it's fruit) was eaten by pre-Columbian cultures 4,000 years ago. We're talking the Mayans-- it's been around a LONG time! It was referred to as "food of the gods."

Cacao is very high in polyphenols. Polyphenols are antioxidants and they are naturally occurring micronutrients that can

be found in plants, food, and teas. There are many studies that confirm polyphenols are incredible for the human body- especially for cardiovascular benefits.

Cacao can help lower blood sugar. This is because it is rich in flavanols. Flavanols are a kind of flavonoid and flavonoids are a kind of antioxidant. Flavanols in general help lower blood pressure because flavanols help improve nitric oxide levels in the blood. When you have good nitric oxide levels in your blood, the function of your blood vessels performs much more effectively.

There was an interesting study on a group of people who drank cacao regularly (think- an entire island of people!) and when they compared them to people who don't drink cacao on a regular basis... they noticed that the cacao drinkers had significantly lower blood pressure as a collective group.

Cacao can help with cardiovascular health. Many people know that taking aspirin everyday can help with thinning of the blood (which helps prevent heart attacks) but taking aspirin everyday can have adverse effects on the liver. It is shown that taking cacao everyday can lower your cholesterol, which has a blood thinning effect.

This controlled study was particularly interesting. It was a thorough and extensive collection of all studies done on cacao flavanols in relation to cardiovascular activity. They concluded that short term -and possibly long term- cacao most certainly does help with heart health.

Cacao can boost your mood. There is a link between cognitive function and cacao. Scientists argue that it's due to the flavanols, it's ability to help produce serotonin (a natural mood stabilizer), and simply... the notion that cacao is a sensory experience, and eating it and smelling it is incredibly pleasing. There is a lot to be said about the correlation between cacao and cognitive function. (See this analysis [here](#).)

Speaking of a sensory experience! ;) One of the greatest tasting and high quality cacaos you will ever encounter is that of the criollo tree. Only 5% of cacao is from this tree. Make sure to check ours out! Both the powder and the nibs.

What does cacao taste like? Remember, it is different than chocolate but does have the chocolate, warm essence to it, but pair that with a bit of bitterness.



MESQUITE

Mesquite comes from Mesquite trees. We often see it sold as Mesquite flour and it has been around for hundreds of years. Let's get into the benefits of using it in your culinary experiences.

Mesquite is multi-faceted in its nutrition profile. It is high in protein, rich in iron, lysine, potassium, zinc, and manganese.

Mesquite is good for digestion. This is because it is high in soluble fiber and low on the glycemic index.

Mesquite can help with building and maintaining muscle. Mesquite is incredibly high in protein so it's wonderful after a workout. It also makes for a great vegan source of protein as many people are turning away from the popular whey protein. It is also said that Mesquite can help the body regulate cortisol and as our cortisol can raise during a workout, this is a nice way to help bring it down.

What does Mesquite taste like? As flour, it has a sweet and almost nutty taste to it. On it's own it has a smokey, barbeque like flavor to it.





LUCUMA

Scientifically classified as Pouteria lucuma, Lucuma is from a tree native to South America. Lucuma was nicknamed the “gold of the incas.” For centuries, it’s been used as a tried and true remedy for health.

Lucuma is high in antioxidants and polyphenols. Antioxidants scavenge for free-radicals in our body- which present themselves when there is too much oxidative stress. It’s very important that we are consistently incorporating antioxidants into

our bodies because this can help ward off diseases and cancer in the long run.

Peruvian fruits, in general, have been shown to have amazing antioxidant content. Many of them being great for the heart.

Even just a tiny serving of Lucuma packs a big dose of antioxidants and polyphenols. Lucuma even has flavonoid polyphenols, which work extra hard for our bodies when we get them through foods. Flavonoids are extracted from plants.

Lucuma can help you reach your daily fiber goal. The great thing about Lucuma is that it is packed with both insoluble and soluble fiber. (One serving packs 2 grams of fiber!)

Insoluble fiber is linked to your digestive system. It helps bulk up stools so that it passes more smoothly through your system.

Soluble fiber feeds the good bacteria in your gut. This, in turn, produces beneficial short-chain fatty acids.

Lucuma helps insulin sensitivity. Studies have been positive showing how much Lucuma can help with regulating insulin.

It is low glycemic and helps to regulate blood sugar. Even though Lucuma is high in carbs, we must remember it is a complex carb. Which, unlike a simple carb, will not raise our blood sugar. Instead, it will slowly break down in the body.

What does Lucuma taste like? Lucuma has a very unique flavor. In fact, it is the most popular ice cream flavor in Peru! Some people say it is a mix between caramel, sweet potato, malt, and fruit!

By the way, if you want the best tasting Lucuma you will ever try, you must visit our shop and check out our powder! Great for coffees, teas, smoothies, and baking.





SACHA INCHI

Known as the Inca peanut, Sacha Inchi is the seed of a wild plant that has been used in food for thousands of years. It is a star-shaped, small fruit and it grows in the highlands of Peru. Often we see it sold as a powder, seed, or oil.

Sacha Inchi is rich in fatty acids. Fatty acids are a major source of energy and they are precursors of essential substances within the body- both structural and metabolic. During digestion our body will break down fats into fatty acids and we absorb them into the bloodstream. (Source)

Sacha Inchi can help with hair growth. Healthy hair start with a healthy scalp and the oil from Sacha Inchi has been said to give us just that- a healthy scalp. (Source) The reason for this is because it is so high in Omega 3, 6, and 9. It's tough to find a food that has a beautiful balance of all three! Leave it to Peru. ;)

What does Sacha Inchi taste like? Simply put, it has a nut-like flavor to it.

GINGER

Ginger is an amazing herb and it's loaded with various nutrients that have multiple health benefits. It is a flowering plant that originates from Southeast Asia and is also grown in the Andes Mountains. It has been used for thousands of years thanks to its taste and therapeutic properties. It can be consumed fresh, dried, powdered, as a juice or oil, and it's also added to processed foods and cosmetics. Its main compound is gingerol, which has anti-cancer, anti-inflammatory, and anti-oxidative properties. (Source.)

Ginger is great for nausea. There is a reason why people are often eating ginger candies or sipping on ginger tea when they are sick- it has a calming effect on the body! It's best sipped. If you were to get a 1oz shot of ginger, make sure to dissolve it in 8oz of water and sip it slowly rather than just drink it all at once. (Source)





Ginger can help with period cramps.

Want to know something interesting? The main enzyme found in ginger is called Zingibain. It protects our bodies from inflammation by inhibiting our body's production of prostaglandins. Prostaglandins are inflammatory and can trigger the cramps women feel during their period while the uterus sheds its lining. Drink up! (Source)

Ginger helps with indigestion.

If you find yourself ever feeling bloated or uncomfortable after eating, try eating or drinking ginger. In fact, it is even safe enough to use while on a fast (if you drink the tea.)

What does ginger taste like?

Anyone who has tried ginger knows that it has a very distinct taste. I think of it as sharp, warm, spicy, and a mix between citrus fruits and bitter earthy herbs.



CHIA SEEDS

Chia seeds are these teeny tiny black seeds that come from the plant *Salvia hispanica*. Many experts believe chia seeds are one of the healthiest things we can eat, and believe it or not, they are related to the mint family.

The Chia seed plant does not grow in too many regions of the world. I'm not surprised, Peru has the perfect climate for growing Chia seeds. Our brand is all organic and fresh, from farm straight to us-- check

them out! In the mean time, enjoy learning a few of the benefits of chia seeds.

Chia seeds can help you reach your daily fiber goal. Oh yes, almost all the carbs in chia seed are fiber. Isn't that awesome? Many people are deficient in iron and chia seeds are so versatile. Use them in salads, for sweeter breakfasts, or in smoothies! They can even hold a place in baking. Fiber is important because it helps keep a diverse gut flora and gives it something it needs.



Chia seeds are high in Omega 3s. Omega 3s are important for the brain, skin, heart, and so much more. Omega 3s even help inflammation levels in our bodies! Many Vegans and Vegetarians (Even meat eaters) aren't getting enough. Chia seeds provide an adequate amount of Omega 3s even in one serving.



Chia seeds help reduce blood sugar levels. You might notice another theme of Peruvian foods is that many of them help with blood sugar! Chia seeds are no different. There have been animal studies that found insulin sensitivity could be improved by eating chia seeds, and they could help control and stabilize blood sugar within the body.

What do Chia seeds taste like? They taste like a cross between a poppyseed and a tapioca pearl. Very minimal and not overpowering with any dish you include it in.

CAT'S CLAW

What we call Cat's claw is derived from its crushed roots and bark. It is from Central and Southern America and is a woody vine.

Cat's Claw can help with antiaging and cancer. This plant has been shown to prolong life and can reduce oxidative stress. It even helps with DNA repair.

Cat's Claw can help reduce inflammation. Cat's claw has been used for the treatment of Rheumatoid arthritis and other ailments like knee pain in the body. It can do this by increasing the amount of

antiinflammatory cytokines in the body-amongst other impressive things!

There was a study done for 8 weeks that supplemented of cat's claw and maca root (see our number one) and showed that it could reduce pain and stiffness in people with osteoarthritis. People in the study needed pain medication less frequently too which is awesome.

What does Cat's Claw taste like? Many people find the tea to be a mix of woody and bitterness.





GRAVIOLA

Graviola is a medicinal food that we can get from the stems, leaves, and fruit of this evergreen tree. Typically we use it as a drink!

Graviola helps us fight free radical damage. This is due to its incredibly high content of antioxidants, which we find in this tree's wood. For those of us with damaged or aging cells, it can be helpful to supplement with graviola.

Graviola helps our energy levels. This tree contains Vitamins B1 and B2, and also Magnesium. This can contribute to increasing or maintaining energy levels and can reduce tiredness and fatigue.

What does Graviola taste like? Graviola has a thicker, creamy texture and is a mix between citrus, sour, and sweet!

FIVE OF OUR FAVORITE RECIPES WITH THESE PERUVIAN SUPERFOODS!

MAGGIE'S LUCUMA LEMON
BERRY MOUSSE PIE

GREEN MACA BOWL

KATEY'S CAULIFLOWER RED
CABBAGE "TERIYAKI"

DELICIOUS HOMEMADE
WAFFLES!

HEALTHY BOWL



MAGGIE'S LUCUMA LEMON BERRY MOUSSE PIE

Ingredients:

Crust:

- 1 cup pecans (can substitute any portion with walnuts)
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- Sweetener, if desired

Mousse:

- 150g tahini
- 1/4 cup Karen Berrios Lucuma Powder
- 1 cup mixed frozen berries (strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries and/ or blackcurrants)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1/4 teaspoon pink salt
- 3/4 cup purified water, more as needed

Instructions:

Crust:

Combine crust ingredients in a mini food processor and process until almost nut butter consistency. Press into the bottom of a 6" round dish and place in the fridge while you prepare the filling.

Mousse:

Combine all filling ingredients in a high speed blender and blend until smooth and well combined. Add more water or tahini as needed to achieve a texture like a thick milkshake. The mousse will firm as it cools. Pour mousse over prepared crust and refrigerate 2-3 hours until firm. Run a knife around the edge to loosen from the dish and turn out onto a clean towel then place crust-down on a serving dish. Garnish with lemon zest or powdered lucuma, as desired.

Courtesy of Maggie Jones @mostlyveganketo



GREEN MACA BOWL

Ingredients:

- 1 cup natural frozen yogurt
- 4 fresh kale leaves
- 1 tablespoon Karen Berrios Maca Powder
- 1/2 cup fresh baby spinach
- 1/2 cup chopped pineapple
- 1/2 avocado
- 1-2 tablespoons honey or yacon syrup (optional)

Toppings:

- Mango
- Banana
- Strawberries
- Granola
- Grated coconut
- Karen Berrios Chia Seeds

Instructions:

Pour all ingredients into the blender. Blend until mixture has a smooth and creamy texture.

Pour in a bowl and serve with mango, banana, strawberries, granola, coconut, chia... and enjoy!

Properties:

- Rich in magnesium
- Powerful antioxidant
- Boost your immune system
- Makes strong bones
- Boost your mood



KATEY'S CAULIFLOWER RED CABBAGE "TERIYAKI"

Ingredients:

- 7oz Cauliflower (cut up into stalks)
- 3.5oz of red cabbage (shredded)
- 1-2 tablespoons of coconut aminos
- 1 teaspoon of Karen Berrios Maca Powder
- ½ teaspoons of salt (optional)
- 1 sprinkle of hemp seeds

Instructions:

In a pan, stir fry the veggies in the coconut aminos. You can add a bit of avocado oil if you like. Let them simmer (flip every few minutes) for a good 7-10 minutes. Then add in the maca and salt and stir. Put it in a bowl and let it cool off a bit before serving. Top with hemp seeds. That's it!

Courtesy of Katey Yurko @theviolettog



DELICIOUS HOMEMADE WAFFLES!

Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 cups almond milk
- 1 tablespoon Karen Berrios Chia Seeds
- 1 1/2 tablespoon Karen Berrios Maca Powder
- 3/4 cup gluten free flour
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 tablespoon honey
- Pinch of salt

Instructions:

Pour all ingredients in a food processor. Blend until obtaining a homogenous paste.

Meanwhile, you can preheat the waffle maker. When the waffle maker is hot, pour the mixture in slowly. Make sure to cook them with care!

Once cooked, place them carefully on a plate, add some fruit and cinnamon on top, and, if you like, drizzle honey or yacon syrup to taste. Enjoy!



HEALTHY BOWL

Ingredients:

- 1 frozen and sliced banana
- 1 cup blueberries
- 3/4 cup coconut milk
- 1 tablespoon Karen Berrios Chia Seeds
- 1/2 cup plain yogurt
- 1 cup frozen acai puree

Toppings:

- 1 tablespoon Karen Berrios Cacao Nibs
- Fruit to your choice

Instructions:

Pour all ingredients into the blender. Blend until mixture has a smooth and creamy texture.

Pour into a bowls with cacao nibs and chopped fruit.

Properties:

- Source of potent antioxidants
- Source of Potassium, Magnesium, fiber & protein
- Source of healthy fatty-acids: Omega-3
- Immune booster
- Satiety effect

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

KAREN BERRIOS- Thyroid Cancer thriver.

I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer six years ago; that led me to decide to live differently, to change my lifestyle; share my knowledge, journey and experiences with others.

I am a Certified Natural Health Professional with studies in Naturopathic Medicine, CEO of Kareliz Wellness, LLC; and owner of a blog that bears my name, where I share articles focused on comprehensive health. In addition, my work is shared on social networks, such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube; and publications on health pages such as “Medium” and “Natural News Blogs”.

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To learn more about my cancer healing journey, therapies I follow, tips, recipes, wellness resources and encouragement visit karenberrios.com.

To chat with me online, follow me on [Instagram](#) and like my [Facebook Page](#).