



# Cheaper and More Nutritious Local Alternatives to Superfoods

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## What is superfood?



Superfood can be defined as food that is considered particularly nutritious and energy dense. Foods which fall into this category include, among others, chia seeds, acai berries, blueberries, beetroot, soy, pomegranates, green tea, goji berries, coconut oil, salmon, dark chocolate, cocoa, and kale (1). However, superfood is neither a registered trademark nor a legally protected term. All definitions have in common that they describe a superfood as a food that has a high nutrient density. This means a comparatively high amount of proteins, vitamins, minerals, polyunsaturated fatty acids, phytochemicals, and/or antioxidants (1). A healthy diet with a lot of fruits and vegetables has not only positive effects on your physical health; it also has a significant influence on your psychological well-being. Therefore it is not only worthwhile for your body but also for the mind to significantly increase your personal fruit and vegetable consumption. It is crucial that your diet includes essential vitamins and nutrients which can help in relieving symptoms of depression, mood disorders, and other mental illnesses (8). If you want to read more about superfood go and check the blogpost about it here:

<https://newbrainnutrition.com/superfoods/>

## Issues with Superfood

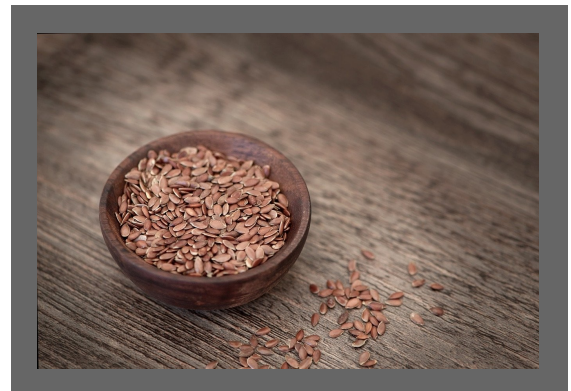
The problem is, however, that many of these products are extremely damaged by pollutants that can have even negative effects on our health. Also, they usually have long transport routes behind them, which is not only bad for the climate but can also decrease the nutrient density. Agriculture in Germany and Europe also has many local "superfoods" to offer (2).

## Alternatives outside your door

While goji berries, papayas, and pomegranates travel around the globe, you can find local fruits and wild plants full of vital substances almost all around the year close to your doorstep – without plastic waste and pollution. So, here are some healthy local alternatives for superfood:

## Flax Seeds instead of Chia Seeds

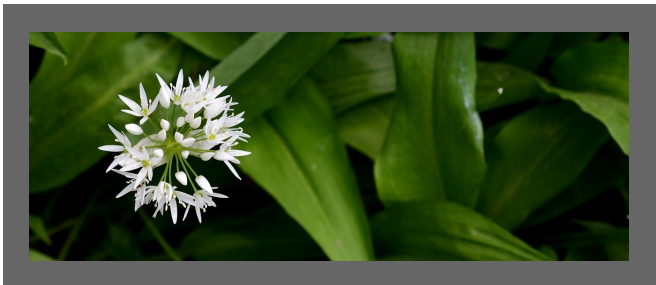
Flax seeds are a real good alternative to chia seeds because they have similar "slime forming" properties. Chia seeds are considered superfood because they are packed with omega-3 fatty acids, fiber, and calcium. But the concentration of omega-3 fatty acids in domestic flax seeds is even higher than in chia seeds. The fibre content of flax seeds is also comparable to chia seeds and excellent for a healthy digestive cure (4).



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## Wood Garlic instead of Spinach

Wood garlic contains five times more calcium than kale, more than three times more potassium and four times more iron than spinach. Wood garlic helps with skin problems, hypertension, arteriosclerosis, loss of appetite and has anti-inflammatory and antibacterial effects. (7)



## Alternatives to Pomegranate

The pomegranate is known for its high content of antioxidants. It also provides a lot of potassium, calcium and iron. Here are a few selected local alternatives of these important substances: High concentrations of potassium and antioxidants can also be found in raspberries, currants, cauliflower, broccoli, mushrooms, chestnuts and rhubarb (4). Carrots and broccoli have a high iron content in particular. In addition to milk and dairy products, green vegetables such as broccoli can also contribute to your calcium supply.



## Alternatives to Matcha

Matcha tea is said to lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol levels, reduce stress, improve metabolism, and enhance performance. You can also achieve these effects with many local products, some of which are even available free of charge if you pick them yourself:

- Camomile and lavender tea have a calming effect
- Dandelion tea, rose hip tea and lime blossom tea support digestion
- Garlic and hawthorn, among other things, help against high blood pressure
- Antioxidants such as carotenes and catechins contained in Matcha can also be found in high concentrations in carrots, gooseberries, sour cherries, pumpkin and dandelion (4).



## Millet instead of Quinoa

With a protein content of 12% millet can easily replace quinoa, which has about 14%. It provides a little less magnesium and half as much iron, which you can balance with local vegetables (4).

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## Green Vegetables such as Broccoli and Kale instead of Wheatgrass

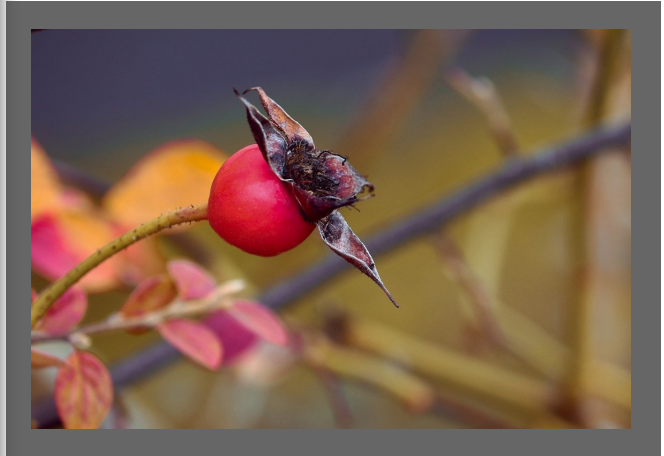
Wheatgrass is particularly rich in chlorophyll – the colour pigment that gives plants their green colour. This should contribute to the detoxification of carcinogenic substances, promote wound healing and be good for digestion. But chlorophyll is also found in local superfoods like broccoli and kale (6).



## Sea Buckthorn and Blackcurrant instead of Goji Berries

Goji berries are famous as an excellent source of plant protein, providing high doses of vitamins, especially vitamin C (up to 500 times more than oranges) and 21 minerals and trace elements. However, this does not make goji berries irreplaceable, a regional alternative is, for example, sea buckthorn (4). Blackcurrants or sea buckthorn berries not only contain more vitamin C, they are also much cheaper than goji berries. In addition, the local alternatives are offered as fresh goods or juice. Goji berries on the other hand are usually only available dried (5).

## And Last but not Least two Tips: Rowan and Rose Hip



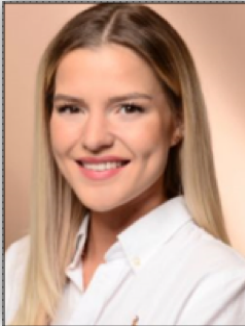
Rowan is characterised by a high vitamin C content. Although it is widespread throughout Europe, it is not particularly well known. In its raw state, the rowan is not particularly tasty, slightly bitter and sour. But when heated, sorbic acid transforms into a natural preservative with an antimicrobial effect. Rose hips are among the fruits with the highest vitamin content in the world and unlike expensive and exotic superfoods, can be found free of charge right in front of our doorstep. They contain about twenty-five times more vitamin C than oranges and are also rich in vitamin A. (7)

**Enjoy the recipes below!**



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## About the Author



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## Recipes with serving suggestions

### Wood Garlic Pesto

For 400g:

200g wood garlic

25g pine nuts

25g parmesan

1 tsp salt

150-250 ml vegetable oil

Wash the wood garlic, spin dry and cut into strips. Fry the pine nuts without fat in a pan until they are light brown. Finely grate Parmesan cheese. Now pour the pine nuts into the food processor and chop finely. Add the remaining ingredients and mix to a creamy mixture. If the pesto is too thick, add some more oil and add some salt if necessary (11).

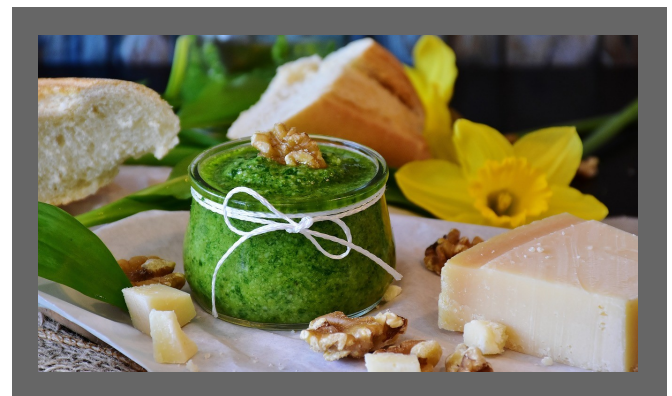
### Candied Rowan

1 kg rowan

1 kg cane sugar

500 ml water powdered sugar

Wash Rowan thoroughly and remove stems and leaves. Heat sugar and water in a pot while stirring until the sugar has completely dissolved. Add the berries to the boiling sugar solution and cook it for a few minutes. Remove the pot from the cooking site, cover and leave to stand overnight. Remove the berries from the syrup the following day with a skimmer or sieve and bring to boil again. Now put the fruits back into the hot brew and let it rest until the next day. The process of sifting, boiling and reinserting should be repeated at least five, preferably seven times. After you have scooped the berries one last time from the syrup, spread them out after draining on a tray or board and let them dry well. Patience is also required here, as drying can take longer than 24 hours. - Enjoy as a snack, with desserts or with good and solid dishes (10).



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## Sea Buckthorn & Carrot Soup

200g sea buckthorn berries  
600g carrots  
½ stick leek  
1 apple  
2 tbsp vegetable oil  
750ml water salt and pepper

Put the sea buckthorn berries in a pot with some water so that they are barely covered. Bring to boil and let simmer on a small flame for about ten minutes. Pass through a sieve and collect the mush. Cut the leek into slices and the apple and carrot into small pieces. Fry leek with apple and carrot pieces with some oil in a pan and add water. Season with salt and pepper and boil for about five minutes. Puree and add the sea buckthorn before serving (12).

## Fruity Rose Hip Pasta Sauce

500g whole rose hips  
500ml water  
1 onion  
100ml cream  
Spices like marjoram, oregano, paprika, savory or thyme

Put rosehips and water in a pot. Boil for 15 Minutes and then puree finely with a blender. Pass through a sieve and additionally press the mixture through a muslin nappy to remove seeds and hairs. Chop the onion finely, fry in a pan with oil and add the rosehip puree and spices. Refine with cream at the end (13).

**...enjoy your meal and have fun while cooking the recipes!**

## References

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