

## Liquid Courage: 3 Bod-Benefitting Plant Waters (Besides Coconut Water)

By Samantha Durbin

When baby coconuts took over bottled water's world, it left simple water looking...plain. A flavorful alternative to simple water and a healthier option to sugary fruit juices and sports drinks, coconut water paved the way for other hydrating plant waters. Soon enough, more popped up in markets water aisles, each a fresh flavor promising various health benefits. Here are three to consider, and before you chug away, mind the natural sugar servings, which you always want to monitor for optimum health.

### Aloe Vera Water

My earliest memories of aloe vera are those blue after-sun gels I cooled a sunburn with growing up. It is still a topical anti-inflammatory remedy, but in water form it can repair from the inside out. I prefer it after a workout that could potentially dehydrate my skin, like swimming in a chlorinated pool or hiking in a dry climate. According to *Vegetarian Times*, it also aids digestion, type 2 diabetes, and may help lower cholesterol and boost the immune system. Sometimes a tough spin class can upset my stomach, so it's my new go-to water for cycling. Keep in mind that aloe vera is a natural laxative—mix it up with other waters to avoid drinking it daily.

*Active ingredient short list:* 75 active ingredients including antioxidants, B vitamins, digestive enzymes, and salicylic acid

*Taste:* A tart green grass taste you can naturally sweeten with honey. The pulp has a gelatinous texture.

*Suggested activities:* Any outside activity (running, swimming, hiking), indoor cycling

*Try:* alo Real Aloe Vera Juice

### Cactus Water

Succulents can survive weeks without water because they store it up, naturally hydrating themselves. Most cactus water comes from the red flowers of the prickly pear cactus. The flower juice is puréed and combined with filtered water and lemon to make an alt-water that has half the sugar and calories of many coconut waters. *ELLE.com* explains a couple standout ingredients: taurine, an amino acid already in our bodies that wards off free radicals and reverses muscle tissue damage, and betalains—antioxidants with beauty benefits, such as reducing under-eye puffiness.

*Active ingredient short list:* Antioxidants, carotenoids, electrolytes, magnesium, and vitamin C

*Taste:* A refreshing earthy berry

*Suggested activities:* Boxing, pilates, early morning workouts (drink away those under-eye puffs!)

*Try:* True Nopal Cactus Water

### Melon Water

Did you ever try to ease a hangover by eating watermelon? Me too. And did it help? According to the USDA, watermelon is 91.5% water, it's no wonder people are cold pressing it to make plant water. Here are a few key ingredients that convinced me to jump on this one. It contains potassium (which helps keep blood pressure balanced), and dietary fiber (you know what that does).

Citrulline, an amino acid that could lessen muscle soreness because it improves artery function; the rind has a higher concentration of citrulline so feel free to keep chopping on that slice. Lastly, melon

delivers lycopene, an antioxidant that stops free radicals from damaging cells and thwarting your immune system.

*Active ingredient short list:* Citrulline, lycopene, potassium, and Vitamin A and C

*Taste:* Sweet watermelon with a twist of lemon (I like to water mine down with filtered tap so it's not so sweet)

*Suggested activities:* Yoga, barre, any workout when you're getting back into exercise after a hiatus

*Try:* WtrMln Wtr Cold Pressed Juiced Watermelon