

Himalania Goji Berries (Vegan, Gluten-Free, Soy-Free)

Some time ago I had my first sampling of goji berries from The Raw Bakery. Otherwise known as wolfberries, those little gems had a slight licorice bite combined with a nice dried raspberry-like backdrop. They weren't overpowering by any means, but the flavor was intriguing. Though I definitely enjoyed this dried fruit variation, the price tag kept me from returning for more. But, when these goji berries from Himalania came across my radar, I was very curious to know if all goji berries are created equal.

It has been a while since I tasted the gojis from The Raw Bakery, so my taste buds could be quite off … after all, for all I know both companies could source their berries from exactly the same location … but these did taste different from the ones I remembered and made note of. Perhaps it was the different brand, or maybe just the time of year they were harvested, but the Goji Berries from Himalania leaned more toward the raisin side in size, texture, and flavor. As I got further into the bag of these addicting little snacks, I can say that I began to notice a more unique flavor that could be likened to a minor licorice influence. Overall, they are tasty little berries with a unique flavor that isn't too far off from the dried fruit I am already quite accustomed to.

When you consider that goji berries easily sell for eight times the price of your average raisin, I will say that the slightly unique taste isn't enough for me to pull out my wallet. Nonetheless, goji berries are not so much sold for their flavor, but rather for their nutritional profile.

Goji berries are well entrenched in traditional Chinese medicine, and rightfully so. They are relatively low in calories and fat, yet rich in Vitamins A (beta-carotene) and C. Considering their size, they also boast an impressive protein profile, and an array of minerals and trace minerals. Iron, potassium, and selenium are just a few of the 11 essential and 22 trace dietary minerals these little guys are reportedly packing, according to Wikipedia.

Nonetheless, reports of the goji berry nutritional profile and health benefits seem to vary widely, so use caution when reading their health claims. For example, Wikipedia reports that 100g of wolfberries / goji berries contain 112mg of calcium, but my package listed 0g on the nutrition facts. Also, while I must admit that these berries do seem to be worthy of a superfood spot, the many anti-aging claims I seem to be stumbling across when googling the goji, sound a bit like folklore.

Interestingly enough, the ingredients of each pouch are simply goji berries, yet the Himalania label states “Allergies: May contain peanuts, egg, milk, soy, wheat, and other tree nuts.” This one threw me for a bit of a loop, but it seems they must use some seriously shared equipment for sorting those berries. If you have a food allergy or intolerance, definitely contact the company before purchasing this particular goji brand.

Himalania Goji Berries are sold in stores like Whole Foods, and may be tracked down via a search online. The Himalania website does not have a store locator, but it does have recipes, some information on the product, and a contact us page. Just be sure to watch the volume on your computer, as their ongoing music is a bit boisterous.