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> durrants

GIVEN that blueberries are held in such high esteem by dieticians and nutritionists it should come as no surprise that they have been surging up the popularity charts.

No wonder that more and more British farmers are planting blueberries in the hope of a bonanza; the bushes only take two years to reach maturity and will then crop for a further 20 years.

The irony lies in the fact that while British farmers are busily planting American stock, the moorlands in the South-West and Northern England are covered in scrubby bushes whose berries are called variously whortleberries (Devon), whinberries (the North) and blaeberrries (Scotland) — all different names for our native blueberry which is part of the same genus *vaccinium* as the American blueberry.

Both types of blueberries are packed with antioxidants and share Superfood status but the wild ones are smaller and sharper with a more intense flavour. Picking wild blueberries is also painstaking and back-breaking work so it's

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## BRITISH BLUEBERRIES

hard to oppose popping into Marks & Spencer for a punnet of the larger, softer, juicier cultivated fruit.

At **Saf** — the recently opened vegan raw-food restaurant in Shoreditch — they make good use of blueberries to create a magnificent, dark blue cocktail called a “Julian”.

Other blueberry highlights include the pancakes on the weekend breakfast menu at Tom's Kitchen, but for maximum health benefits we should all be adding a punnet of blueberries to our fruit order. Fresh blueberries are a delicious addition to a bowl of breakfast cereal, as well as being an easy

way to add dramatic colour to any juice or smoothie.

**M&S** British blueberries, 400g for £2.49.

**Waitrose** Organic Polish blueberries, 150g for £1.99.

**Saf** 152 Curtain Road, EC2 (020 7613 0007). Julian cocktail, £8.

**Abel & Cole** ([www.abelandcole.co.uk](http://www.abelandcole.co.uk), 08452 626262). British blueberries, 125g for £2.99.

**Harvey Nichols Foodmarket** Sloane Street, SW1 (020 7235 5000). Belgian blueberries, 125g for £3.95, moving to British as the season develops.

**Tom's Kitchen** 27 Cale Street, SW3 (020 7349 0202). Pancakes with blueberries, £6.50 (on the weekend breakfast menu).

