

EDITORIAL

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Choosing a Cooking Oil.

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ABSTRACT

This abstract explores factors influencing the choice of cooking oil, including processing methods, smoke points, types of fats, and origins of oils.

Cooking oils are commonly available in processed or raw forms. Processed oils undergo heating and filtration, removing impurities. In contrast, raw or cold-pressed oils retain more nutrients and antioxidants as they are extracted without heat or chemicals. The smoking point of cooking oil is pivotal, determining its suitability for different cooking methods. Oils with higher smoking points, such as refined avocado, peanut, and sunflower oil, are preferred for deep-frying and high-temperature cooking. Conversely, oils with lower smoking points, like extra virgin olive oil, are better suited for moderate- heat cooking like sautéing. Single-source oils like olive and palm are imported, while indigenous options include rice bran, sunflower, soy, mustard, sesame, groundnut, and coconut oils. Understanding the types of fats in cooking oils—saturated, monounsaturated, and polyunsaturated—is essential for making healthy choices.

In conclusion, selecting the right cooking oil involves considering factors such as processing, smoking point, fat content, and origin to enhance both health and culinary outcomes in Indian cooking.

Key word: Cooking oil, processed oil, refined oil, Smoking point, Olive oil

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INTRODUCTION:

Cooking oil forms an integral part of Indian dishes. Picking the right type of cooking oil is essential as it causes various health issues. It depends upon the type of preparation, taste, nutritional value, and smoke point of the oil.

TYPES OF OIL

Oils are categorized based on many factors.

Raw or Processed Oil

Most of the oils that we get from the markets are processed. These types of oils are prepared by heating them 70% Celsius then rapidly cooled like milk pasteurization and then filtered. These types of oils considered high glycaemic index and carcinogenic. Bee pollen and wax are removed by this process so allergy to the oil is minimal. Other

Table 1. The melting point of vegetable oils and its use

Oil	Smoke Point (degrees F)	Best Used For
Refined avocado oil, Refined or light olive oil, refined peanut oil, Corn oil, sunflower oil, safflower oil, Refined coconut oil	450-520F	Deep-frying, searing, stir-frying
Refined sesame oil	300- 410F	Stir-frying
Canola oil	400F	Baking, grilling, sautéing
Extra virgin olive oil	375-400F	Baking, salad dressing, sautéing
Unrefined virgin coconut oil, unrefined sesame oil	350F	Sautéing
Unrefined walnut oil, unrefined peanut oil	320F	Drizzle for salads and vegetables
Butter	300F	Baking, searing

side, Raw or cold pressed oil are prepared directly by natural compression methods using wood or metals without the use of heat or chemicals. These types of oils have higher amounts of amino acids, vitamins, antioxidants.¹

Hot oil or Cold oil

As a rule, when frying foods, it is important to choose an oil with a very high smoking point. The amount of oil that is oxidized is also greatly minimized through the usage of these cooking oils. Cooking oil's smoke point refers to the temperature when the oil starts to smoke (melting point). Fats and oils with lower smoking points, like butter and olive oil, are best suited for lower temperature cooking methods such as sautéing. For deep frying, one can use oils which has smoking point higher than 440 degrees Fahrenheit such as soyabean or rice bran oil.²

Imported or indigenous oils:

Single source oils like olive and palm are imported whereas oils like Rice Bran (RBO), sunflower, soy, mustard, sesame, groundnut, coconut are indigenous oils.³

Fat in Cooking oil:

Cooking oils contain three types of fat: saturated, monounsaturated, and polyunsaturated. Usually, we should avoid or restrict saturated fat in our diet.⁴

Saturated fats : Ex. Coconut oil, Palm oil

Monounsaturated fats : Ex. Canola oil, Olive oil, Peanut oil, Safflower oil, Sunflower oil

Polyunsaturated fats : Ex. Soybean oil, Corn oil

Blended oils:

Blended oils are combination two oils in a ratio to gives you the benefits of two oils in one. The ratio of polyunsaturated/ saturated (PUFA/ SFA) of 0.8-1.0, and linoleic/ a-linolenic (n-6/ n-3) of 5-10 should be there. Examples of blending of edible oils: Groundnut or Sesame or Rice bran + Mustard or Canola or Soyabean, Safflower or Sunflower + Palmolein + Mustard, rice bran and safflower oil/sunflower oil.³

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, selecting the right cooking oil involves considering factors such as processing, smoking point, fat content, and origin to enhance

both health and culinary outcomes in Indian cooking.

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