



Oils and Fats

Apricot Kernel Oil - Oil produced from the kernels of the apricot pit. Like bitter almonds, apricot kernels are poisonous until roasted.

Butter - This product is made by churning cream until it reaches a semi-solid state. By U.S. law, butter must be at least 80% butter-fat. The USDA grades butter quality based on flavor, body, texture, color and salt. The grades are AA, A, B, C.

Canola Oil - This is the market name for "rapeseed oil," Canada's most widely used oil. Also called low erucic acid rapeseed oil. Canola oil is lowest in saturated fat of any oil. Canola oil is 6% saturated fat; palm oil is 79%.

Cocoa Butter - The natural, cream-colored vegetable fat extracted during the process of making chocolate and cocoa powder.

Coconut Oil - Coconut oil is made by pressing the coconut meat ("copra"). Used in frying and as an ingredient in many packaged goods. Because this oil is high in saturated fats, many food makers are replacing it with more costly unsaturated oils.

Cod Liver Oil - A valuable, vitamin-rich oil produced from the liver of the saltwater cod fish.

Corn Oil - A nonhydrogenated oil derived from the kernel of corn. The refined product is tasteless and odorless. Used in U.S. for salad dressings, frying, and as a shortening in baking.

Cottonseed Oil - A widely used vegetable oil that is--like olive oil and peanut oil--high in monounsaturated fat. Cottonseed oil is used in some margarines and salad dressings and is often mixed with other oils to create vegetable oil products.

Ghee - Butter that has been melted to separate the milk solids from the liquid on the surface. This liquid is simmered until all the moisture evaporates and the milk solids begin to brown. The result is a clarified butter that keeps well.

Grapeseed Oil - Oil derived from the seeds of grapes. Used in salad dressings and for sautéing.

Hazelnut Oil - This fragrant full-flavored oil is pressed from hazelnuts and takes on the flavor of roasted nuts. The nuts are often toasted for a browner color and better flavor. The nuts are never blanched.

Lard - Rendered and clarified pork fat. The best lard is called "leaf lard," and it comes from around the pig's kidneys.

Linseed Oil, Edible - An oil pressed from flaxseed.

Margarine - A vegetable oil butter substitute. Cream or milk is often added to make it taste more like butter. Regular margarine contains at least 80% fat. Diet margarines contain about 40% fat. Whipped margarine has up to 50% air beaten into it.

Mayonnaise - A thick, creamy emulsion of vegetable oil, egg yolks, and seasonings. This product is called "salad dressing" if no eggs are used. Commercial mayonnaise must contain at least 65% oil by weight. Mayonnaise is of French origin.

Olive Oil - A monounsaturated fat pressed from tree-ripened olives. Olive oils are graded according to their acidity. "Extra virgin" is about 1% acid and is considered the finest. The other grades are "superfine," "fine," and "pure" or "virgin."

Palm Oil - The reddish-orange oil derived from the pulp of the fruit of the African palm tree. Contains a very high percentage of saturated fat.

Palm Kernel Oil - This oil comes from the nut or kernel of the fruit of the African palm tree. Like palm oil, it too is very high in saturated fat. It is used in the making of margarine. Often listed in the ingredients as "palm oil."

Peanut Oil - A clear oil derived from peanuts. It has a high smoke point which makes it useful for frying. The fat in peanut oil is approximately 50% monounsaturated and 30% polyunsaturated.

Pork Lard - Rendered and clarified pork fat. The best lard is "leaf lard" which comes from the fat around the pig's kidneys. Unprocessed lard has a very strong flavor and a soft texture. Processed lard is firmer and milder.

Rapeseed Oil - An oil expressed from rapeseeds. Contains more monounsaturated fat than any other oil except for olive oil. Marketed in the US as "Canola Oil."

Rice Bran Oil - An oil pressed from the outer hull (the "bran") of the rice grain.

Safflower Oil - A light, odorless, flavorless and colorless cold-pressed oil made from white seeds of the safflower plant. It contains more polyunsaturates than any other vegetable oil, and it has a high smoke point.

Salt Pork - The salt-cured layer of fat taken from the pig's belly and sides. Salt pork is

sometimes confused with fatback, which is unsalted. It is similar to bacon except that it is much fattier and has not been smoked.

Sesame Oil - This oil is high in polyunsaturated fat (4th behind safflower, soybean, and corn). There are two basic forms: light and dark. The light form is lighter in color and flavor and has a hint of nuttiness. The dark form is much stronger.

Sheanut Oil - Oil from the seed of the shea tree, an African tree from the sapodilla family. "Shea butter" (also called "Galam Butter") is the solid green, yellow, or white fat derived from the seeds of the Shea tree.

Shortening - Any fat, liquid, or solid used in pastry, dough, or batter for making the resulting product flakier, richer, or more tender. In common use are hydrogenated shortenings like butter, lard, margarine, and the edible oils.

Soybean Oil - An inexpensive oil that is nutritious and has a high smoke point. Soybean oil is approximately 58% polyunsaturated fat, 23% monounsaturated, and 15% saturated fat. Used extensively in making margarine and shortening.

Sunflower Oil - The pale yellow mild-flavored oil derived from sunflower seeds. This oil is high in polyunsaturated fat and low in saturated fat. Used in cooking and in salad dressings. Not well suited for frying because of its low smoke point.

Tallow - The harder and less fusible fat in animals and vegetables.

Teaseed Oil - The oil pressed from the seed of a small Chinese tree of the Camellia family (*C. oleifera*). This commercial tea oil is said to equal olive oil in quality and is used in a similar manner.

Vegetable Oil - Any of a wide variety of non-animal oils. Most vegetable oils--with the exception of coconut and palm oils--are lower in saturated fats than are animal-derived oils.

Walnut Oil - This expensive oil is pressed from walnuts and has a distinctive nutty flavor and fragrance. Used in salad dressings, sauces, baked goods, and for sautéing.

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