

breath love nourish



oil... oil... boil & toil

I have seriously toiled away a year of my life trying to decipher what cooking oil is best to use. I now reach for avocado oil more than anything else when going for a quick sauté, but when I'm dancing in the kitchen, my "go to" is an equal mix of coconut oil and avocado oil. I cook almost everything with that combo, and add toasted sesame oil when I want an Asian slant or simply "scrumptious veggies". Extra-virgin olive oil is my choice for salad dressings. I mostly use ghee instead of butter.

As a general rule, COLD-PRESSED oils are your best choice; EXPPELLER PRESSED oils are good for adding a tasty (sometimes nutty) flavor, as with my toasted sesame oil mentioned above. The difference between these two pressings is with the heat reached by expeller pressing, sometimes upwards of 200°F. This does not destroy most oils, but it definitely reduces the nutrients available from that point forward.

I stay away from refined (or processed) oils; this involves chemicals (usually Hexane) that our bodies do not need to absorb. The other big issue with refining is the destruction of the good nutrients naturally occurring in the oils; the 400°F temperatures used in the process leave nothing good for our bodies to absorb. Then the companies regularly treat the burnt oil with additional chemicals to rid it of odors and discolorations.

SAD OUR CORPORATIONS MISTREAT AND OVER-PROCESS EVERYTHING...

THEN OVER-CORRECT WITH CUTE ADS ABOUT THEIR NATURAL FLAVORS AND FLYING FAIRIES!!

I created a spreadsheet to share some basic facts, and nutritional values of twenty-one different cooking oils. This list could have been twice as long; once you start listing oils, it's a very slippery road down grease lane:-) I compiled the information from at least ten different websites, and averaged numbers when needed. As with everything, once you look a little deeper, you can usually find a solid debate for both sides. When this happens, I tend to use my instinct; and mostly, I listen to my body, and align my choices with how my body responds. This has become easy for me, having had to consciously gauge my food and beverage intake for about ten years now (for one reason or another).

Choosing the proper cooking oil is a subject that has ever-changing rules; that said, I do have my preferences, and quite frankly, COCONUT OIL wins in every category. You may have your favorite, and I am not here to make you feel any remorse over your choices... this is simply my criteria:

- **SMOKE TEMPERATURE**... important to choose the oil that can handle the heat needed to prepare your meal (i.e. warm/sauté under 200°F, caramelize at 300°F plus, fry at 350°F, and roast at 400°F plus).
- It is suggested we ingest a **2 to 1 ratio of OMEGA 6 to OMEGA 3** fatty acids in our foods. Our nations' current imbalance weighs in at 15 to 1, and some pin this to the root cause of cancer, heart disease, asthma, diabetes and more.
- **LINOLEIC ACID** is the Omega 6 fatty acid, and sourcing an oil with 20% or less is highly recommended.
- **SATURATED FATS**... percent of saturated fats found in the oil directly correlates to the amount of heat that oil can withstand without smoking. Once an oil reaches its' smoke point, it starts to oxidize and very quickly goes rancid.

While the above four items help to better explain the facts on the attached spreadsheet, I must also mention my unshakable foundation that I try never to compromise (when shopping):

- **GO ORGANIC!** Reducing pesticide consumption is obviously important, but cooking with unwanted chemicals is an additional layer of concern for an informed consumer. Just as an oil turns rancid from too much heat; so can a chemical change its' composition from sitting in a frying pan, sending even worse toxins into your food.
- **"UNREFINED all the time!"** This is my new motto:-) Hexane is the chemical most used in refining oils, it helps to pull the oils out of the nut or seed. Hexane is also used in the formulation of glues for shoes, leather products, and roofing; good for degreasing a variety of items, and in textile manufacturing. Present as a contaminant in all soy food product extraction techniques (one of those items that people think are healthy, but processing destroys all the good nutrients, while gladly adding the bad chemicals to mask flavor, or elongate shelf-life).

I left a lot of blanks under the "uses" category of the spreadsheet; I just couldn't suggest a method of use for something I do not like to actually use. The "bad" oils are (mostly) highly refined, GMO, and/or simply not good for cooking. As with everything I write... PLEASE READ GENTLY, and don't assume I know more than anyone else in the room. You and your body are the best markers of good living... ;-)

breathe

Some believe that the increase in lung cancer for women (non-smokers) can be attributed to cleaning products; the chemical fumes aggravate the lungs, and after enough years, the cancer grows. Chemicals are not providing the answers we need to best survive, and it really won't hurt to turn away from our old products. Choosing instead, to trust in essential oils for their anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, and anti-viral properties is the wise move going forward. Time to start thinking about our world as "one cosmic inhale and exhale" – and what do you want to breathe in?

love

I blend my own fantastic body and face oil... avocado, jojoba, shea, carrot seed, red raspberry, and sea buckthorn oils; they have a natural SPF of 15 (averaging the varying oils). I use my coconut oil to tame and condition my hair, but also to brush my gums (a whole new topic to be shared another time:-). I also helped my hubby give up tobacco, by giving him head and shoulder massages with lavender oil, every night for his first month. Nature can heal us, better than the pharmaceutical companies!

nourish

Cooking with oils isn't a new skill, but learning the proper techniques and smoke temperatures of your favorite oils is important. Take an earnest look at the cooking oil facts, and I'm thinking everyone will benefit from these pointers. I also wanted to share an article about cooking techniques, it is informative on a few levels, but caramelizing and proper cooking temperatures are made very simple to understand:

<http://www.reluctantgourmet.com/how-hot-should-you-heat-your-pan-when-sauteing/>

MY CURRENT ALL-PURPOSE CLEANER RECIPE

½ cup white vinegar

2 Tbsp baking soda

1 Tbsp Castile soap with eucalyptus

5 drops tea tree oil & 2 drops each lavender, rosemary and oregano

fill (remainder of spray bottle to 32 ounces) with water