

FACT SHEET

Oils of Aloha® HAWAIIAN MACADAMIA COOKING & SALAD OIL

Macadamias --- unexpected source for new, exceptionally healthful cooking and salad oil.

Though we've known for years that macadamias are delicious to eat, recent scientific evidence reveals that oil pressed from them, used in cooking and salads, offers a bounty of special benefits for our physical health. What follows is a summary of some of the impressive new findings and health benefit data on macadamia cooking oil.

The fat in macadamia oil is 80% monounsaturated – the highest percentage (and most beneficial for our health) among popular cooking oils. At 80% monounsaturated macadamia oil has a higher concentration than any other commercially available cooking oil, including olive oil, which is 74% monounsaturated. Olive oil is regularly recommended by physicians and nutritionist for its highly monounsaturated content and its beneficial effect on our HDL/LDL ratio (“good” cholesterol vs. “bad” cholesterol). Primary because of this recognition of its beneficial cardiovascular effect, olive oil consumption in the United States has tripled in the past decade. Studies of the “Mediterranean diet”, in which olive oil plays a major role, were prompted by the observation that heart disease, high blood pressure, colon cancer and arthritis are almost unknown in those areas of the world in which olives are widely grown and consumed, and a dietary reason was suspected. By comparison, red meat eating countries such as the U.S. have a high incidence of those diseases. Though olive oil has now been recognized as a beneficial component in our diet because of its relatively high monounsaturated character, the even better nutrition findings of the oil cold pressed from macadamias are just now becoming known and that oil promises to be even more beneficial to our health.

Macadamia oil is the lowest of all culinary oils in Omega 6 fat.

Olive oil, which cardiovascular physicians agree is beneficial to our health, is low in Omega 6 fatty acids (8%). Macadamia oil is even lower (3%), while most of the other common vegetable oils such as corn, soy and safflower have a much higher level—20% to over 50%. Even canola oil (which is second best to olive oil at 58% monounsaturated), with a high Omega 6 content of 26%, has only a 1 to 2.6 ratio of Omega 3 to Omega 6. High levels of Omega 6 fatty acids counteract the beneficial effect of Omega 4 fatty acids such as those found in fish. Olive oil has a 1 to 8 ratio of Omega 3 to Omega 6 fatty acids. For those concerned about heart disease and high blood pressure, as most of us living a Western lifestyle should be, countering the difficult-to avoid Omega 6 fats in our “standard” diets by adding or replacing them with healthy amounts of Omega 3 fats may dramatically improve our chances of avoiding the dietary reasons for heart disease, colon cancer and arthritis.

Macadamia oil has a very high smoke point of 389° F.

Macadamia oil has a smoke point that is considerably higher than extra-virgin olive oil and the subtle, nutty flavor is also retained at those high cooking temperatures. Extra-virgin olive oil, the commonly known “healthy oil”, has a smoke point that’s really too low to be recommended for use in sautéing or stir frying, for once any cooking oil reaches the temperature at which it starts to smoke, it changes chemically, deteriorates and becomes indigestible—possibly even carcinogenic. Cooling won’t reverse that chemical reaction. Cooking experts say the ideal temperature range for stir-frying or sautéing is approximately 365°F. With extra-virgin olive oil, sesame oil and most other oils in which the flavor has not already been refined out, the flavor and aroma almost disappear as the temperature reaches sautéing levels. For extra-virgin olive oil, that loss-of-flavor temperature is only 170°F — the reason savvy cooks use flavorful, extra virgin olive oil only at the end of cooking, when temperature declines. Macadamia oil, by contrast, retains its wonderful, light nutty flavor and bouquet all the way to the smoke point; and its coating properties and texture make it ideal for sautéing and stir-frying. Its high smoke point provides an extra margin of safety and stability for the full range of common cooking temperatures.

Using macadamia oil requires no special recipe adjustments.

Macadamia oil is very easy to use in cooking. Cooks can simply use it as they would their regular cooking oil, in the same or even less quantity. We’ve found that because of its excellent coating properties, one can often reduce the amount of oil used in many cooking applications. So a little can go a long way. Also, because the oil’s subtle and pleasant nutty flavor enhances most food combinations, it provides an excellent background flavor for vegetables, fish, poultry and most baked goods. We even replaced the butter in brownies with macadamia oil for a fine result! The subtle nutty flavor opens up possibilities for a wide range of new dishes, too, and our food consultants have developed many interesting and innovative recipes based on it. As a salad oil, its very agreeable texture, or “mouth feel”, is a standout characteristic, and the nutty background flavor is a natural with lettuce, tomatoes and other garden vegetables (an easy and delightful way to replace Omega 6s in most salad oil with the better-for-us Omega 3s, too). One question often asked regarding macadamia oil, based on the perception that the kernels are high in fat is, “how does this oil compare, in calories, with other oils?” The answer is that all cooking oils have the same number of calories – 120 per tablespoon. So, at least in this instance, the better tasting product is no higher in calories than the mediocre tasting product.

Macadamia oil is very stable in use and also provides long shelf-life because of its high level of monounsaturation. Macadamia oil contains natural antioxidants, and because it’s highly monounsaturated, the oil tends to not be degraded by free radicals which cause rancidity. Monounsaturated fats are basically more stable than polyunsaturated fats (corn, safflower, soy, peanut, etc.) to begin with. While many cooking and salad oils made from polyunsaturated fat need to be protected from oxidizing by refrigeration after the container is opened, we find that macadamia oil is stable and healthful for months after opening,

even at room temperature. And, with the addition of Vitamin E as another powerful antioxidant, the oil's extra stability is really worry-free.

In a recent dietary study conducted by the University of Hawaii, there's an indication that the palmitoleic acid content of macadamia nuts may aid in fat metabolism, possibly reducing stored body fat. Although we must be wary about jumping to over-optimistic conclusions regarding the absolute accuracy of these early findings, the Hawaii state legislature was sufficiently impressed with the UH study that it has committed funds for the first year of a two-year follow up study. With the approval of federal matching funds for future studies at a cost of \$750,000, some of us in the industry find a basis for keen optimism. Subjects in the initial dietary study who lost the most body fat and weight were those eating the most macadamia nuts daily. There's still uncertainty, of course, about just how the final validating data will pan out, but, palmitoleic acid is thought to be the component responsible for the metabolic advantage, and macadamias are its best plant source. The only other oil we know containing high amounts of palmitoleic acid is mink oil, which is an animal-derived fat. Palmitoleate and oleate are the body's natural antioxidants. We'll be watching closely for results of the future study's findings, for weight reduction, or even lipid reduction in the area of the heart, would be icing on the cake an additional bonus to the other remarkable health benefits provided by macadamia oil.

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