

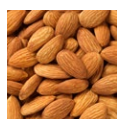
ALMONDS

THE MOST VERSATILE NUT AROUND



Sliced, diced, ground, made into butter, milk, flour or meal, almonds are the most versatile nut around. Why not try all the delicious ways to use almonds, on their own or in recipes? With near endless possibilities to choose from, we selected a few of our favorites to start your next culinary masterpiece.

SNACK WITH ALMONDS



WHOLE ALMONDS

Whole almonds are the ultimate classic for all-around use and are especially perfect for snacking. Unroasted, dry roasted or oil roasted, seasoned savory or sweet, unsalted, salted or with 50% less salt—there's a snacking option for everyone.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

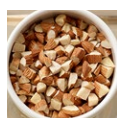
A one-ounce serving of whole, unroasted almonds—about 23 almonds—is 160 calories. Blanching, chopping, grinding, roasting and seasoning almonds may alter the nutritional profile, so check the Nutrition Facts panel for complete nutrition information. For example, dry-roasted whole almonds are slightly higher in calories, with 170 calories per serving compared to unroasted almonds, and salted almonds contain 115 mg of sodium per serving compared to 0 mg of sodium for the unsalted variety.



ALMOND BUTTER

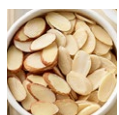
Adding almond butter is a flavorful way to boost the nutritional benefits of your between-meal snacking. Almond butter is an easy replacement for any nut butter and, in addition to its good taste, there are a number of nutritional reasons to make the swap. Almond butter is the best source of vitamin E among nut butters and surpasses most with its amount of heart-healthy fats, fiber, calcium, iron, potassium and zinc per serving. Use it as a spread on whole-grain toast or smear on fruits and veggies, like apples, bananas and celery. Besides snacking, almond butter can be used in recipes. Whirl it into smoothies, whisk almond butter into an Asian-style salad dressing or stir it into oatmeal.

COOK AND BAKE WITH ALMONDS



WHOLE VS. CHOPPED

There's more to whole almonds than snacking. Toss them into grain dishes or green salads for flavor and crunch, sprinkle on a cheese platter, add to a trail mix or use them to decorate desserts. Chopped almonds can be used in many of the same ways as whole, but their small size is better for certain dishes. For example, fold chopped almonds into stuffing or use them as a crunchy, nutty coating for chicken, meat or fish. Buy almonds that are already chopped in the package, or throw whole almonds into a food processor to chop them yourself.



SLICED VS. SLIVERED

Sliced almonds typically have the skin on and, along with their sweet, nutty taste, add a colorful appeal. They make an excellent topping for foods like salads, desserts, oatmeal or other cereals, and yogurt, or sprinkle them into grain dishes, like rice or quinoa. The thicker tiny-stick shape of slivered almonds adds crunch and texture to dishes. Slivered almonds are blanched, which means the skin has been removed, so they add a creamy white color. Toss slivered almonds into stir-fries and grain sides, such as quinoa salad or a dried-fruit-studded couscous, or add them as a topping to baked goods or veggies.

SAFETY FIRST!

With the thin shape and small size of whole almonds, it becomes dangerous to try to slice or cut them into slivers. When a dish calls for sliced or slivered almonds, it's best to buy these forms pre-cut and packaged.



GROUND/MEAL VS. FLOUR

Almond flour is made from skinless, blanched almonds that are ground very fine. Depending on the recipe, it can be used as a full or partial substitute for other flours to make baked goods like cookies, muffins and quick breads, pancakes or a vegan pizza crust. Almond flour may just be appearing in mainstream grocery aisles, but it's actually been a staple for classic baked goods for a long time, like French macarons and Mexican wedding cookies.

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT ALMOND FLOUR?

Almond flour is a perfect gluten-free alternative to traditional all-purpose or wheat flour, with a few added bonuses. Almond flour has more protein, dietary fiber and healthy fats, and fewer total carbohydrates than white all-purpose flour. While almond flour calories are higher than other flour options (160 calories per quarter-cup serving compared to 100 calories for white flour), take into account the nutritional bang you get for your calorie buck!

Ground almonds are the same as almond meal and are a terrific replacement for those avoiding gluten. Compared to almond flour, ground almonds/meal has a coarser grind and is made from almonds that have their skins on, so you'll see brown flecks throughout. You can use ground almonds/meal instead of chopped almonds if you want a finer consistency in recipes. Try ground almonds/meal as a binder ingredient in veggie burgers or use it in baking to make a dense, moist cake.



ALMOND OIL

Rather than a standard all-around cooking oil, almond oil is a specialty oil that adds a delicate, nutty flavor to your foods. Almond oil has a low smoke point, so it's not well suited for cooking at high temperatures. Instead, try almond oil in salad dressings or drizzled over dishes. Almond oil is in line with the calories of other oils at 120 calories per one tablespoon serving.

DAIRY ALTERNATIVES

Whether you're a vegan eating only dairy-free or are in need of a soy-free, lactose-free alternative to traditional milk-based dairy products, almond milk, cheese and yogurt can be great alternatives.

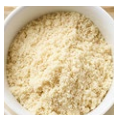


ALMOND MILK

Serving up as few as 35 calories per 8 ounces, plain unsweetened almond milk is a waist-watcher's dream. For those who want a little more sweetness and flavor, try vanilla or chocolate almond milk. Thanks to its creamy taste and texture, you can use almond milk in place of most other types of milk, and most brands of almond milk are fortified with calcium and vitamin D. Stir almond milk into coffee, blend it into a smoothie or pour it over cereal or oatmeal. Use almond milk in recipes for french toast or pancakes, mashed potatoes, cream soups and curries.

If you make your own almond milk and want a heartier beverage, add some of the squeezed pulp to the milk for chunky, chewable sips. Whatever you do, don't let the pulp go to waste: dry it out and then pulverize it in the food processor to make either almond meal or flour to use in recipes.

To learn how to make almond milk, visit <http://ow.ly/qAoT306LGPY>

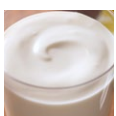


ALMOND CHEESE

Soaked almonds can be made into a spreadable cheese, reminiscent of feta, that's a delicious spread on crackers or as an accompaniment to vegetables and fruit. Commercial varieties of almond cheese, including soft, spreadable and ricotta-like options, can be found in some supermarkets. Almond cheese tends to be slightly lower in calories and fat than traditional cheese, while often providing comparable amounts of protein and calcium per serving.

WATCH OUT:

Not all almond cheeses are vegan, as many contain the ingredient casein, a milk protein. If you prefer to choose vegan, make sure you read the ingredient label.



ALMOND YOGURT

Almond yogurt is typically vegan-friendly and is a viable substitute for those avoiding dairy, lactose and soy. However, read the label to make sure that you're buying what you need for your specific dietary needs. Almond yogurt's texture is silky and its thickness is about the same as most dairy-based yogurts, and it also comes in the same plain and fruity flavors. If you decide to make your own almond yogurt at home, make it using homemade almond milk versus store-bought almond milk for best results.