

Fluvanna County Public Library

Spice of the Month Club

Sesame Seeds

Flavor Profile: Mild, Sweet, Nutty Flavor

Made into a wine as an offering to the gods, baked into modern day breads and cookies, pressed into nutritious oil: there's no question sesame seed is a diverse crop with a rich and colorful history and a variety of uses.

Sesame seed is an ancient crop that appears in religious texts and fables. Carved drawings depict sesame seeds being thrown into big pots of food. Historic documents tell of a time when sesame seeds were used in cleansing rituals and as a symbol of immortality in funeral ceremonies. During wars, sesame seeds were rationed for soldiers needing strength to survive their strenuous tasks.

Sesame seeds come from the *Sesamum Indicum* plant. Indigenous to the Sunda Islands in Indonesia and the oldest known oilseed plant in history, the plant has been cultivated for over 4,000 years. From Indonesia, sesame seeds made their way to China, Egypt, India, and Japan. Evidence suggests that oil extraction from sesame seed dates back to 900-700 BC in eastern Turkey, and that it has been used in China for at least 2,000 years.

Sesame seeds have a mild, sweet, and nutty flavor and a satisfying crunch when eaten whole. They're often baked or toasted to bring out a stronger almond-like flavor and aroma and make the seeds more evident in dishes. When eating sesame seeds of different colors, you'll notice that the flavor varies slightly between them. Black sesame seeds, for example, have a more earthy flavor than the other colors.

Sesame seeds are found inside the fruit of a sesame plant, which is an oblong pod with ridges that contains small oval seeds that measure about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch long. To remove the seeds from the pod, the sesame fruit is dried which causes it to begin to open, making it easy to shake the seeds free. Sesame seeds are covered in a husk that is a darker shade than the seed itself, and are most often removed from the husk before consuming. When revealed from the husk, sesame seeds can be white, black, red, brown, or tan, depending on the variety of the sesame plant itself. Most of the sesame seeds you'll see in the U.S. are creamy white, while black sesame seeds are most commonly used in Chinese cooking.

Many people like to toast or bake their sesame seeds to bring out the nutty flavor and add them as a decorative garnish to savory dishes. In Chinese cooking, sesame seeds are used to coat foods to give them a crunchy exterior. In the U.S. you are likely to find sesame seeds in crackers, salad dressings, soups, rice dishes, and hamburger buns.

Sesame seeds are a good source of healthy fats, protein, B vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants, and other beneficial plant compounds.

Regularly eating substantial portions of these seeds — not just an occasional sprinkling on a burger bun — may aid blood sugar regulation, combat arthritis pain, and lower cholesterol.

How to Toast Sesame Seeds (Yield ¼ cup)

- 1/4 cup raw sesame seeds (white or black)

Stove Top (Preferred Method): Toast on skillet

Set a small skillet on the stove over medium heat. When the pan is hot, add the sesame seeds. After 30 seconds, swirl the sesame seeds in the pan with a spoon so that they brown evenly for 3 to 4 minutes. Lower the heat if you see smoke or the seeds brown too quickly.

Cool: Immediately transfer the sesame seeds onto a plate to fully cool.

Oven Method: Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Bake the sesame seeds: Spread the sesame seeds in a small baking sheet. Bake until nicely browned, using a spatula to stir them halfway through so that they brown evenly. Start checking at the 4 minute mark since they burn quickly. Bake for 5 to 6 minutes.

Storing Transfer to a container: Transfer the cooled sesame seeds into a jar or lidded other container with a tight seal and store in the pantry for up to 1 week, the fridge for up to 3 months or freezer for up to 6 months.

<https://www.simplyrecipes.com/how-to-toast-sesame-seeds-6748976>



Sesame Chocolate Chip Cookies (36 cookies)

- 1 cup unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 1 cup light or dark brown sugar
- 1 ½ cups granulated sugar
- 3 tbsp. toasted sesame oil
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ tsp. baking powder
- 1 ½ tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- ¼ cup white sesame seeds
- 3 tbsp. black sesame seeds
- Maldon or flaky salt, for topping
- 8 ounces dark chocolate chunks or chips



1. To a large bowl, add the melted butter, brown sugar, white sugar and sesame oil. Mix until combined. Add the eggs, one at a time, until combined. Pour in the vanilla extract and give it a mix.
2. Add the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, sesame seeds and black sesame seeds. Mix the dough just until no flour speckles appear. Add the chocolate chunks or chips and mix once more. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap or a clean kitchen towel and transfer to the fridge to chill for an hour or up to 2 days.
3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. Using a medium cookie scoop, scoop out balls of dough.

5. Transfer 6 to 7 balls of dough onto the prepared baking sheet, spacing them about 4-inches apart because these do spread. Bake for about 7 to 8 minutes. If the dough is super cold, it may need up to 10 minutes to bake. They should be light to medium golden brown. Sprinkle with a few pinches of salt upon exiting the oven. Repeat until you've baked all the cookies.
6. To freeze, add the cookie dough balls to a baking sheet and stick in the freezer until very cold, about 20 minutes and then transfer to a freezer-safe plastic bag. Bake from frozen at 300 degrees F.

<https://www.acozykitchen.com/sesame-chocolate-chip-cookies>

Addicting Baked Seasoned Ritz Crackers (Servings: 4 cups)

- 3 sleeves Ritz crackers
- 1 stick (8 tbsp.) unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. seasoned salt
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. onion powder
- ¼ - ½ tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1 tbsp. sesame seeds



1. Preheat the oven to 300 degrees F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl combine all the ingredients. Toss, gently, making sure the Ritz get evenly coated in the butter and seasonings.
2. Spread the Ritz out in an even layer on the 2 baking sheets. Bake for 15-25 minutes turning them halfway through cooking. You want the Ritz to be golden brown. Allow the Ritz to sit on the baking sheet until cooled and dry, about 20 minutes. Store the Ritz in an air tight container for up to 2 weeks.

https://www.halfbakedharvest.com/addicting-baked-seasoned-ritz-crackers/?utm_source=Half%20Baked%20Harvest&utm_campaign=7150103c04-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_NEW%20DESIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1d725c901c-7150103c04-39423307

Sweet & Salty Sesame Honey Roasted Cashews (10 servings)

- 16 oz. raw cashews
- ¼ cup toasted sesame seeds
- ½ cup coconut sugar
- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 tbsp. honey, agave nectar or maple syrup works
- ½ – 1 tsp. salt

1. Preheat oven to 300F.
2. Spread the cashews out on a lined baking sheet and roast for 15 – 20 minutes until fragrant and just starting to get that toasty golden color.
3. Transfer the cashews to a large bowl and add the toasted sesame seeds.
4. While the cashews are roasting, place the coconut sugar, butter, and agave nectar in a small pot over low heat. Make sure not to set the heat too high because the coconut sugar burns easily.



5. Whisk constantly until the ingredients form a caramel-like consistency, about 5 minutes.
6. Pour the melty caramel into the bowl over the cashews and sesame seeds.
7. Use a rubber spatula to mix until they're combined and coated.
8. Transfer the coated cashews out again on the baking sheet lined with parchment paper and sprinkle with your favorite flakey salt.
9. Allow the cashews to cool completely on the baking sheet before breaking them up and transferring to a jar for storage.

<https://thetoastedpinenut.com/sweet-sesame-roasted-cashews/>

Homemade Hummus without Tahini (Using Sesame Seeds)

- 1 (15 ounce) can chickpeas, (1½ cups cooked) drained, liquid reserved
- 3 tbsp. toasted sesame seeds
- 3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 pinch ground cumin
- salt, to taste
- 1 pinch paprika, for garnish (optional)
- 1 pinch sumac, for garnish (optional)
- 1 drizzle extra virgin olive oil, for garnish (optional)



1. In the bowl of a food processor, place the chickpeas, toasted sesame seeds, olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, and cumin.
2. 3 Tablespoons toasted sesame seeds, 3 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, 2 cloves garlic, 1-15 ounce can chickpeas, 1 Tablespoon lemon juice, 1 pinch ground cumin
3. Process until completely smooth, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary, and adding reserved chickpea liquid a tablespoon at a time to thin out the hummus.
4. Taste and add salt, as needed. Process again.
5. Transfer the hummus to a container and refrigerate in an airtight container until ready to serve.
6. Before serving, add a pinch of paprika and/or sumac and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil, if desired. Enjoy with vegetables and toasted pita.
7. 1 pinch paprika, 1 pinch sumac, 1 drizzle extra virgin olive oil
8. Leftover hummus can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

https://www.veggiesavetheday.com/hummus-without-tahini/?utm_source=Pinterest&utm_medium=pin&utm_campaign=pin_hummus_july_2020

Japanese Cucumber Salad (Sunomono Style) (2 servings)

- 2 Persian cucumbers, thinly sliced
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1½ tbsp. rice vinegar
- 1 tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- ½ tsp. sesame oil
- ½ tsp. fresh ginger root, grated (optional)
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper
- 1 tsp. toasted sesame seeds



1. Wash and dry the Persian cucumbers. Slice them very thinly, ideally using a mandoline for uniform thickness. Place slices in a mixing bowl.
2. Sprinkle the cucumber slices with ½ teaspoon salt and toss well. Let them sit for 10 minutes to draw out excess moisture. Afterward, gently squeeze the cucumbers with your hands or a clean kitchen towel to remove the liquid, ensuring a crisp texture.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together rice vinegar, sugar, soy sauce, sesame oil, and (if using) grated fresh ginger until the sugar is dissolved and the mixture is smooth.
4. Add the well-drained cucumbers to the dressing and toss gently but thoroughly to coat all the slices. Sprinkle in the crushed red pepper flakes and toasted sesame seeds, mixing gently to distribute evenly.
5. For optimal flavor, let the salad chill in the refrigerator for at least 10–15 minutes before serving, allowing the cucumbers to absorb the brilliant dressing. Serve cold as a refreshing side or appetizer.

<https://marcellosplace.com/recipes/japanese-cucumber-salad/>

Sesame Noodles (4 servings)

- 1 tbsp. neutral oil
- 2 tbsp. sesame oil
- 1 onion peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic peeled and minced
- 1 (14.5 oz) pack fresh medium egg noodles (or 180 g. dried)
- 1 tbsp. tahini
- 2 tbsp. dark soy sauce
- 2 tbsp. kecap manis (sweet soy sauce)
- 3 tbsp. water
- ¼ tsp. white pepper
- 1 tbsp. sesame seeds
- ¼ tsp chili flakes

To Serve:

- 2 green onions. chopped
 - 1 tsp. sesame seeds
1. Heat the two oils in a wok over a medium heat.
 2. Add the sliced onion and cook for 2 minutes to slightly soften.



3. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly.
4. Add in the drained noodles, tahini, soy sauce, kecap manis, water, white pepper, sesame seeds and chilli flakes.
5. Turn the heat up to high and fry, moving the noodles around the wok constantly, with a spatula until hot – about 3 minutes.
6. Turn off the heat and serve topped with onions and sesame seeds.

https://www.kitchensanctuary.com/sesame-noodles/?utm_source=pinterest&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=social-pug

Asian-Inspired Teriyaki Brussels Sprouts (4 servings)

- 1 pound Brussels sprouts halved
- 2 tbsp. sesame oil
- 3 tbsp. teriyaki sauce
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ½ tsp. Thai chili garlic sauce
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tbsp. sesame seeds – divided

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Clean and cut off the stem of each Brussels sprout. Then cut each one in half from the bottom to the top.
3. In a large mixing bowl add the cut Brussels sprouts.
4. Drizzle on the oil and teriyaki sauce. Toss to coat.
5. Sprinkle on the garlic powder & ½ of the sesame seeds. Add the brown sugar and Thai chili garlic sauce.
6. Spread out the seasoned Brussels sprouts in an even single layer on your baking sheet.
7. Bake for 25-35 minutes in the preheated oven. At about the 15-minute mark, stir so that other sides of the sprouts can brown. They should be fork-tender in the middle and crispy brown on the edges.
8. Carefully remove the baking sheet from the oven. Spoon the Brussels sprouts onto a serving platter.
9. Sprinkle on the remaining sesame seeds. Serve & enjoy.



<https://theshortordercook.com/asian-inspired-teriyaki-brussels-sprouts/>

Sesame Noodle Salad (4-6 servings)

- Sesame Vinaigrette (see next recipe)
- 8 ounces udon brown rice noodles or pad thai noodles, spaghetti, angel hair pasta
- 2 cups cooked and shredded chicken
- 1 red bell pepper julienned
- 1 cup sugar snap peas halved
- 1 large carrot julienned or shredded
- 2 Persian cucumbers or ½ of an English cucumber, julienned
- 2 green onions sliced thin
- ½ cup cilantro leaves chopped



- 2 tsp. sesame seeds

1. Make the sesame vinaigrette.
2. Cook the rice noodles according to package instructions. Rinse them under cold water and drain.
3. While the noodles are cooking prep the vegetables.
4. Add the noodles, shredded chicken, vegetables, cilantro, and sesame seeds to a large bowl. Pour your desired amount of the vinaigrette over the salad and toss everything together.
5. Taste for seasoning and add salt and pepper if needed. Serve immediately or cover and chill in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

https://reciperunner.com/sesame-noodle-salad/?utm_source=pinterest&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=grow-social-pro

Sesame Vinaigrette Recipe (6 servings)

- 1/3 cup rice vinegar
 - 2 tbsp. honey
 - 2 tbsp. avocado oil
 - 1 tbsp. toasted sesame oil
 - 2 tsp. low sodium soy sauce or tamari
 - 1 tsp. grated fresh ginger
 - 1 tsp. toasted sesame seeds
 - Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1. Add all of the ingredients to a jar with a lid. Shake until well combined.
 2. Taste for seasoning and adjust if needed. Store in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.



<https://reciperunner.com/sesame-vinaigrette/>

Delicious Sesame Chicken Recipe (4 servings)

- 1.5 lbs chicken breast cut into bite-sized pieces
 - 1 cup all-purpose flour for coating
 - 2 tbsp. sesame oil
 - 1 cup soy sauce
 - 2 tbsp. sesame seeds toasted
1. Coat chicken pieces in flour.
 2. Heat sesame oil in a pan over medium-high heat.
 3. Add chicken to the pan and cook until golden brown.
 4. Stir in soy sauce and sprinkle with sesame seeds.
 5. Serve hot and enjoy your meal.



<https://mychillirecipes.com/delicious-sesame-chicken-recipe/>

Sesame Roasted Green Beans

- 1 pound of green beans washed and trimmed
- 1-2 tbsp. Olive Oil
- 1 - 2 tsp. Minced garlic
- ½ tsp. Kosher salt
- Fresh ground pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp. sesame seeds

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
2. Place the green beans on a baking sheet (line with foil for easy clean up.) Drizzle 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil over the vegetables. Sprinkle with garlic, salt, and pepper. Toss to coat.
3. Bake for about 15 minutes, or until tender. Sometimes I will also preheat the broiler and cook them that way. Same amount of time.
4. Place beans in serving bowl and sprinkle sesame seeds over them, toss to coat.



<https://blogghetti.com/sesame-roasted-green-beans/>

Everything Bagel Seasoning (Yield: ½ cup)

- 2 tbsp. poppy seeds
- 1 tbsp. white sesame seeds
- 1 tbsp. black sesame seeds
- 1 tbsp. plus 1 tsp. dried minced garlic
- 1 tbsp. plus 1 tsp. dried minced onion
- 2 tsp. flaked sea salt or coarse salt

In a small bowl, combine the poppy seeds, sesame seeds, dried garlic, dried onion, and salt. Stir until well combined. Store in a sealed jar or container.

<https://www.twopeasandtheirpod.com/everything-bagel-seasoning/>



Library Resources

Asian Pickles by Karen Solomon – 641.4 SOL

Bismillah, Let's Eat by Zehra Allibhai – 641.5954 ALL

Essentials of Asian Cuisine by Corinne Trang – 641.595 TRA

The Gluten-Free Asian Kitchen by Laura B. Russell – 641.5638 RUS

India Express by Rukmini Iyer – 641.5636 IYE

Milk Street: The World in a Skillet by Christopher Kimball – 641.5918 KIM

Modern Asian Kitchen by Kat Lieu – 641.595 LIE

Moosewood Restaurant Favorites – 641.5636 MOO