

Cooking in style with.....*Grapeseed oil*

Nowadays with the variety of oils available, it's hard to know what to choose! Some things that can make it confusing, is knowing whether it is a **saturated, polyunsaturated** or **monounsaturated oil**. Which of these are healthier? And what does it all mean? Also, what's all the fuss with smoke points?

Here's the spill on Grapeseed oil...

Grapeseed oil: a healthy polyunsaturated fat



Grapeseed oil is a vegetable oil extracted from the seeds of grapes. Most oils consist of a mixture of fatty acids. Grapeseed oil has approximately **11% saturated, 24% monounsaturated** and the main constituent is **65% polyunsaturated fatty acids**. It has a similar nutritional profile to sunflower oil, so is a good substitute if you're looking for variety. When considering health and types of fat, these are the things to keep in mind when choosing cooking oil:

- Saturated fats come mainly from animals or tropical oils such as palm or coconut oil. They raise LDL (bad) cholesterol levels so **should be avoided**. Grapeseed oil has a low saturated fat content (11%)
- Unsaturated (including monounsaturated and polyunsaturated) fats mainly come from plants. They help to **improve cholesterol levels, protect against the build-up of plaque in your arteries and lower the risk of heart disease and stroke**. Grapeseed oil is approximately 89% unsaturated
- Monounsaturated fats include olive, canola, macadamia, peanut and avocado oils. These help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol levels so should be included in your diet
- Polyunsaturated fats are found in sunflower, grapeseed, corn and soyabean oils. They are also beneficial for lowering LDL (bad) cholesterol levels

In a nutshell, oils are made up of both healthy (unsaturated) and unhealthy (saturated) fats so when selecting an oil look for those that are **rich in the healthy fats**.

Smoke point of *Grapeseed oil*:

The smoke point of oil, is the temperature at which it begins to smoke, break down and lose some of its nutritional benefits. The more refined an oil, the higher the smoke point. As Grapeseed oil has a high smoke point, it is ideal for cooking at high temperatures. Unhealthy trans fats are not formed during normal home cooking, so should not be a concern. (Rather focus on eliminating trans fats from your diet by cutting down on partially hydrogenated oils/fats in foods such as hard margarines, commercial cookies or fast foods.)

Cooking with *Grapeseed oil*:

Grapeseed oil has a light, sweet, nutty flavour so it is very versatile compared to oils like extra virgin olive oil, which could overpower delicate flavours. It can be used in the preparation of fish, meat, pork, chicken and vegetable dishes. With its high smoke point, it is perfect for stir frying, pan-searing, sautéing, grilling and baking. It is also excellent for marinating fish, meat or venison. Its light taste complements all salads, so can be used to make healthier homemade salad dressings and mayonnaise.

Storing *Grapeseed oil*:

Grapeseed oil should be stored in a cool, dark place. If you use it rarely – rather store it in the fridge.

***Grapeseed oil* health facts at a glance:**

- It has a high amount of "good" fats (approximately 89%)
- It contains a low "bad" fat content (approximately 11%)
- Can be used in cooking at high temperatures and in 'cold' foods (dressings and marinades)
- Is approved by the Heart and Stroke Foundation SA (look for the Heart Mark)



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What does the HSFSA recommend?

- Always choose oils with a low saturated fat content – the **Heart Mark** is a good guideline if you don't like reading labels. So look out for the Heart Mark logo on Grapeseed oils when you go shopping. The Heart Mark brand can be found *at the heart of every healthy meal!*



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- Remember to use a variety of mono-and polyunsaturated oils in your diet as each oil has its individual contribution to make to a healthy diet (this includes sunflower, canola, olive, nut and soyabean oils).
- Healthier cooking methods are better than deep-frying - rather steam, stir-fry, grill or bake foods. Enjoy experimenting by trying new recipes and substituting your usual oil with grapeseed oil – here is an example of a tasty salad dressing:



Ingredients:

1/2 cup grapeseed oil
1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
3 tablespoons dried basil
Juice of one lemon, salt and pepper to taste
Mix the contents together and place in the fridge to cool.
This should easily serve 12 people so remember to use only a little dressing at a time.

Happy cooking with Grapeseed oil!

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