

CANOLA OIL: IDEAL FOR ANY TYPE OF COOKING

Canola is an oilseed crop and a genetically-altered and improved version of rapeseed. Rapeseed had been successfully cultivated for several thousand years in the cooler areas of the world's agricultural regions; in later centuries, it was used as a cooking and lighting oil, as well as an excellent lubricant for steam engines until the 1950s, when it was replaced by petroleum products.

Edible vegetable oils are made up of components called fatty acids, some of which are considered essential in human diets while others are not: in particular rapeseed oils have a large amount of a long-chain fatty acid called erucic acid, considered unsafe for human consumption since the 1960s.

Concern about health prompted Canadian researchers to look for new rapeseed varieties with a low erucic acid content. Finally, in the early 1970s, Canadian plant breeders developed canola (which means “**C**anadian **o**il, **l**ow **a**cid”) plants, removing from rapeseed plants some anti-nutritional components, namely erucic acid and glucosinolates, which may be toxic and responsible for raising liver and heart lipids.

Canola seeds are used to produce edible oil suitable for consumption by humans and livestock. The oil is also suitable for use as biodiesel.

Each canola plant grows from 3 to 6 feet (1 m – 2 m) tall and produces beautiful yellow flowers. Following pollination, an elongated pod is formed with two chambers, each one housing a single row of seeds.


Once harvested, canola seeds are crushed and the oil contained within the seed is extracted. This oil is then further refined and bottled as canola oil, which is characterized by a pale golden color, light texture, neutral taste and high heat tolerance. The average canola seed is 45% oil. The remainder of the seed, which is very high in protein, is processed into canola meal and used as a high quality animal feed.

Canola oil is high in healthy unsaturated fats (93%), free of cholesterol and trans fat, and the lowest in saturated fats (7%) of any common edible oil; as the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) claims, it can reduce the risk of heart disease, when used in place of saturated fat.


This oil is also ideal for any type of cooking, thanks to its neutral taste, light and smooth texture.

Furthermore, its high heat tolerance means you can use canola oil for anything from baking to stir-frying to deep-frying or grilling.



1  Say if the following statements are true (T) or false (F). Correct the false ones.

- | | T | F |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Rapeseed was cultivated in tropical regions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Canola is a lubricant for steam engines. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Not all fatty acids are unsafe for human consumption. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. The erucic acid is unhealthy. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Canola oil is heart-healthy. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Canola was firstly developed in Canada. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Canola oil is edible for livestock only. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Canola oil has a low smoking point. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Canola oil is rich in saturated fats. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. Canola oil is a good all-purpose oil. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2  Fill in the gaps with the following terms: confusion, contraction, cooking, crop, crossbreeding, developed, eating, harvested, plants, pressing, properties, rapeseed, rich, seeds.

- a. Concerns about the safety of (1) canola oil arise from the belief that it is produced from the (2) plant.
- b. Canola oil is produced by (3) the seeds from canola (4)
- c. The word "canola" is a (5) of "Canadian" and "ola".
- d. Canola plant was (6) in Canada by natural (7) of the rapeseed plant in the early 1970s.
- e. Canola oil is (8) in unsaturated fats.
- f. There is often (9) between the use of the terms "rapeseed" and "canola".
- g. Canola is a (10) with plants from three to five feet tall that produce pods from which seeds are (11) and crushed to create canola oil.
- h. Canola (12) contain about 44% oil.
- i. Canola oil is prized for its heart-healthy (13) with the least saturated fat of all (14) oils.

