

The Mustard Seed

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History

The name mustard comes from **mustum** (the must), or newly fermented grape juice and **ardens** (burning). It was originally eaten whole or slightly crushed. The black and white mustards are both wild herbs growing in waste places.

Mustards have been around for a long time. Some stories reference the Chinese growing mustard for more than 3,000 years. Some say it originated in the Mediterranean, where it was cultivated for over 2,000 years by the Greeks and Romans. The Greeks and Romans used mustard not only as a condiment, but also medicinally, applying it externally for the relief of a variety of aches and pains. Mustard was used to relieve congestion by drawing the blood to the surface. Mustard flour was used for an antiseptic, sterilizer and a deodorizer. They put hot water on bruised black mustard seeds to make a stimulating footbath, help to stop a cold or to help ease a headache. Mustard flour in some boiling water was supposed to stop hiccups. These are just some of the things that the Greek physicians used for medicinal purposes but are not necessarily recommended for these uses today, because of the harm that they might cause. Possible harm can be burning of the skin or allergic reactions. Like anything else, you have to use caution. Some people still use mustard plasters to help relieve chest congestion.

Another version that goes back to the Romans was that they mixed the sweet “must” (unfermented grape juice) of new wine and crushed seeds which they called “sinapis” an earlier word which meant “mustard seed”. They called the resulting paste “Mustum Ardens”, or “burning must”. This in turn became “mustard” and the name stuck.

The Egyptians were using mustards in cooking long before they were entombing their kings with bags of it for the afterlife. The people of this society chewed the seeds with their meals to make their spoiled food more palatable.

According to some, in 1382 a grateful Duke of Burgundy, in recognition of its military achievements, awarded the city of Dijon a coat of arms with the motto “Moult Me Tarde” which means “I ardently desire”. In the course of carving the motto on the city gates, the middle word was omitted so the motto read “moult tarde”. This translated to “burn much” and as stories go, the travelers and visiting tradesmen were so amused by the coat of arms; they began to call mustard seed coming from Dijon “multard”.

In the 13th century Tudor households used seven to ten gallons of mustard monthly.

In the 14th century, Pope John XII of Avignon became so devoted to mustard that he put it in every dish and even created a title “Mustard Maker to the Pope” when trying to figure out what to do with a good-for-nothing nephew from Dijon.

In 1336, when the Duke of Burgundy invited his cousin, Philip the Fair of Valois, King of France, to a festival, 70 gallons of mustard were consumed at a single dinner.

The domestic use and garden cultivation of mustard started in the 16th century. In 1623 Geraid said ‘the seeds of Mustard pounded with vinegar is an excellent sauce, good to be eaten with any grosse meats, either fish or flesh, because it doth help digestion, warmeth the stomache and provoketh appetite’.

In 1657 the herbalist Coles wrote ‘In Glostershire about Tewkesbury they grind mustard seed and make it up into balls which are brought to London and other remote places as being the best that the world affords’. In fact, mustard was made and sold in balls starting around the early 1500’s. These mustard balls were made in Tewkesbury, in Gloucestershire, the mustard making

capital of England. This mustard was made with fresh horseradish, honey or vinegar and a little cinnamon. With this unique shape it was easy to transport and could be kept in the kitchen for an indefinite period of time. They would break off a chunk of the ball and reconstitute it by stirring in a liquid, such as a vinegar, wine, or fruit juice.

In England in 1720, Mrs. Clements developed a commercially useful method for separating the tough, fibrous outer coating of the seeds from the powder. This made for a more fine textured mustard, instead of the balls called Durham Mustard. In 1814, Jeremiah Coleman started milling mustard with a simple windmill. In 1866 Queen Victoria appointed Jeremiah "Manufacturer of Mustard to Her Majesty" and his business exploded. In 1869 it took a train with four boxcars to transport a one day production from the factory. Because his mustard was so good it was known worldwide and was easy to identify by its' yellow can with a red bull on it.

In 1853 Maurice Grey invented a machine that could crush, grind and sieve the seeds in one speedy operation. This helped mustard manufacturers to speed up production. Until then they could not produce any more than 35 pounds of the condiment per day. Because of Mr. Grey's invention, his mustard labels had "By Royal Appointment" on them. In 1866 Maurice Grey joined forces with another mustard maker by the name of Auguste Poupon resulting in Grey-Poupon.

Americans were slow to accept mustards. In 1904 Francis French thought that he could get Americans to like mustard. He asked his plant superintendent, George Dunn, to make mustard that was light, creamy and milder in flavor. The golden yellow condiment was called French's Cream Salad Brand and was introduced at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. As a result of the popularity of this mustard, this New Jersey based company topped a million dollars in 1906.

Mustard can be grown almost anywhere with a cold climate. Most of what we buy today, including most French imports, comes from the prairie provinces of Canada. California's Napa Valley is famous as a mustard center because of the annual Napa Valley Mustard Festival.

Mustard Seeds

The **White Mustard** is a native of Europe but it originated in the Mediterranean. It is also common in our fields and by the roadsides. These plants are hard to get rid of once they have started. The White Mustard seeds form a pungent powder when grounded. It is inferior in strength to that prepared from black seed species. In the standard mustards the white or yellow seeds are used, because of its milder flavor with little heat. Yellow mustard is known as the hot dog mustard.

The **Black Mustard** grows throughout most of Europe. It originated in the Middle East and in Asia Minor, where it is still popular. It is largely cultivated in England, Holland, Italy and Germany for the sake of the seeds and its oil. This mustard is stronger than the white. Black Mustard greens can also be used. The seeds are used to flavor pickles and salads and were the key ingredient in soaps and medicines.

The **Brown or Oriental Mustard** comes from the Himalayas and is known as the Chinese Restaurant Mustard. It is used in the hot to very hot mustards, like Dijon, because of its strong flavor. Research is being done to develop a canola like variety which will grow in semi-arid regions of Western Canada.

Edible Mustard Greens are a different species of mustard. The history of cultivation of mustard centers on the seeds, not the greens, which have been credited with originating both in China and Japan.

Mustard Varieties

Dijon: This variety was the first to be regulated. It originates in Dijon, France and is made with brown and/or black seeds, seasoning and verjuice (juice of unripened grapes), white wine, wine vinegar or a combination of all three. Pale tan to yellow in color and usually smooth in texture. If it is labeled Dijon-style, it is most likely made in the same manner but it is not from Dijon, France.

Bordeaux: Made with grape must (unfermented wine grape juice), usually pale yellow in color.

Beaujolais: Similar to Bordeaux, but made with different grapes lending a deep burgundy color.

Creole: Brown mustard seeds are marinated in vinegar, ground and mixed with a hint of horseradish into a hot spicy mustard.

Meaux: Also called whole-grain mustard. Roughly crushed, multi-colored mustard seeds mixed with vinegar and spices.

German: Mild to hot, spicy and mildly sweet. It can range from smooth to coarse-ground, pale yellow to brown in color.

English: Made from white and brown or black seeds, flour, and turmeric. Usually bright yellow in color with an extremely hot spiciness to the tongue.

Sweet: Includes a variety of honey mustards. These are mustards sweetened with honey syrup, or sugar and can begin with a base of hot or mild mustard seeds depending on personal tastes.

American: Also called ballpark mustard or yellow mustard due to its bright color, this mildest-flavored mustard is popular at ball parks as a favored condiment for hot dogs. It is made with white mustard seeds mixed with salt, spices and vinegar, the standard for yellow mustard in America.

Flavored: The addition of various individual herbs, spices, vegetables and fruits result in mustards such as horseradish, chili, lemon, raspberry and even blueberry flavored mustards. There are literally hundreds of flavors to choose from and is limited only by your imagination.

Interesting Facts

1. Mustard is a cousin to horseradish and wasabi and is part of the cabbage family.
2. Mustard is low in calories and cholesterol and is high in protein and minerals including calcium, magnesium, potassium and niacin.
3. Mustard is one of the most popular and widely used spices and condiments in the world.
4. The mustard seed is a prominent reference for those of the Christian faith, exemplifying something that is small and insignificant, which when planted, grows in strength and power.
5. Losers and quitters can't cut the mustard is a saying that means that they can't live up to a challenge.
6. Total consumption by Americans is approximately \$203 million a year.
7. In the Netherlands and Northern Belgium it is common for them to make a mustard soup, which includes mustard, cream, parsley, garlic and pieces of salted bacon.
8. As a cream or as individual seeds, mustard is used as a condiment in the cuisine of India, Bangladesh, the Mediterranean, Northern & Southeastern Europe, America and Africa.
9. Many Indian recipes call for a quick frying of mustard seeds. When toasted or fried until they pop the seeds have a nutty taste rather than a fiery taste.

10. Mustard seeds can be soaked before being crushed or liquid can be added after grinding. Cold liquid needs to be used to activate the chemicals inside the seeds. Heat damages this reaction. So to make hot mustard you should use cold water and warm water for mellower mustard. There is no pungency to mustard until the seed cells are broken & liquid is added.
11. Mustard flour is made from the seed with the bran removed. It is similar to wheat flour and about 70% of white mustard is made from seed rather than flour. Mustard flour from the yellow seed is generally used in mayonnaise.
12. The present consumption of mustard in the U.S. is greater than every other spice except pepper. Mustard was popular long before pepper.
13. Mustard was known to have been an ingredient in Indian curry thousands of years ago.
14. The word "moutard" may be used on French mustard labels only if the mustard is made with black mustard seeds.
15. The Dijon Mustard is aged in wooden casks for 8 days.
16. In France in 1812 there were 93 different kinds of mustards available.
17. Mustard is an emulsifier. Add enough mustard to a salad dressing and it will help hold the oil and vinegar together. It can also minimize the possibility of curdling when used in a Hollandaise sauce.
18. When making your favorite quiche, spread a thin layer of flavored Dijon style mustard on the crust before filling. It will help prevent a soggy crust and add zip to the flavor.
19. A different "French Dip" sandwich is to dip it into mustard vinaigrette.
20. When cooking with mustard, if you want the pungency of mustard, add it at the end of the cooking period. Keep the heat low and do not boil. When the flavor of the mustard is important, and not its pungency, then higher temperatures and longer cooking or baking times are not a problem.
21. When cooking with dry mustard it is similar to curry in hotness.
22. Mustard was popular in Europe before the time of the Asian spice trade.
23. There are more than 200 wild and 40 cultivated species of mustard plants.

Recipes

Chinese Style Mustard

½ cup water

3 oz. yellow mustard seeds

1/8 cup white vinegar

1 tsp. sesame seed oil

Put the seeds in the blender and blend until it is a very fine powder. Add ½ cup cold water. Mix well. Cover and put in the refrigerator for 15 minutes. While waiting, put the Mason jar and top into a pot, cover with water, and bring to a boil to sanitize. Remove with tongs and cool.

Remove mustard from refrigerator; add oil and vinegar and mix. If you like add more water until it is the consistency you like. Use a spatula to transfer mustard into sanitized Mason jar. Put lid on and refrigerate for 24 hours. The mustard seeds have a bitter component that fades away after a day.

Create your own flavored mustard

Lemon Mustard – Stir 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind and 1 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice into ½ cup Dijon Mustard. Good with chicken.

Green Peppercorn Mustard – Mix 1 Tablespoon freshly ground green peppercorns and 1 minced shallot into ½ cup Dijon Mustard. Good with beef.

Honey Mustard – Combine equal parts honey and mustard and whisk until smooth. Good for ham and pork.

Horseradish Mustard – Combine 1 Tablespoon grated horseradish, a dash of Tabasco and 2 Tablespoons nonfat Mayo with ½ cup Dijon Mustard.

Brown-Sugar Mustard

1 cup dry mustard

½ cup light brown sugar

½ teaspoon Marjoram, dried

1 teaspoon salt

Dash Cayenne Pepper

½ cup white vinegar

¼ cup olive oil

Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor fitted with a steel blade. Process for 1 minute. Scrape down sides with rubber spatula and process 30 seconds longer. Keep in a well-sealed container and allow to stand overnight before using.

Makes 1 cup

From the Mustard Cookbook

Teriyaki Mustard

8 oz. prepared Dijon Mustard
1 Tablespoon low-sodium soy sauce
1 Tablespoon sugar
1 Tablespoon cider vinegar
1 clove garlic, minced
1 Tablespoon minced fresh ginger
2 minced scallions

In a small bowl, combine all ingredients, mixing well to combine. Use as a marinade or basing sauce for grilled poultry, seafood or vegetables. Note: Mustard may be covered and refrigerated for up to one week. Yield: 1 ¼ cups

Moroccan Mustard

8 oz. prepared yellow mustard
1 Tablespoon ground cumin
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tablespoon lemon juice
2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

In a small bowl, combine all ingredients, mixing well until smooth. Cover and let stand for 30 minutes for flavors to combine. Good for hot dogs, grilled chicken or vegetables. Note: Mustard may be covered and refrigerated for up to two weeks. Yield: 1 ¼ cups

Miami Mustard

1 Tablespoon dry mustard
2 Tablespoons dry white wine
1 cup mayonnaise
¼ cup heavy cream
Dash of hot sauce

In a small bowl, combine dry mustard and white wine. Let stand for 30 minutes. Add remaining ingredients. Whisk until smooth. Cover and refrigerate until used. Serve as a sauce for crab claws, shrimp, or lobster. Note: Mustard may be covered and refrigerated for up to one week. Yield: 1 ¼ cups

Hawaiian Luau Mustard

8 oz. prepared Dijon Mustard
¼ cup unsweetened canned pineapple drained
¼ cup whipped cream cheese
1 Tablespoon honey

In a food processor, combine all ingredients until smooth. Use as a condiment for hot dogs, ham or cold cuts. Note: Mustard may be covered and refrigerated for up to two weeks. Yield: 1 ¼ cups.

Resources

<https://www.thespruceeats.com/mustard-varieties-1808087>

<https://www.thespruceeats.com/history-of-mustard-as-food-1807631>

<https://www.beerbrew.com/mustard-the-seed-the-condiment-and-the-chemistry/>

The Association For Dressings & Sauces

Recipes from Karen Denham & Ida D'Inzillo

Recipe from The Mustard Cookbook

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