

guide to: cooking fats

Choose fats and oils based on: 1. How they're made—choose naturally occurring, minimally processed options first; 2. Their fatty acid composition—the more saturated they are, the more stable/less likely to be damaged or oxidized; 3. Smoke point—this tells you how hot is too hot before you will damage the fats, though it should be considered a secondary factor to fatty acid profile.

culinary whizzes, listen up: COOK WITH GOOD FATS!

ITEM NAME

% SFA

% MUFA

% PUFA

SMOKE POINT UNREFINED/REFINED

best bets - recommended for high-heat cooking THE MOST STABLE FATS

Coconut oil

86

6

2

350/450

Butter/ghee

63

26

.03

300/480

Cocoa butter

60

35

5

370

Tallow/suet (beef fat)

55

34

.03

400

Palm oil

54

42

.10

455

Lard/bacon fat (pork fat)

39

45

11

375

Duck fat

37

50

13

375

okay - for very low-heat cooking MODERATELY STABLE FATS

Avocado oil*

20

70

10

520

Macadamia nut oil*

16

80

4

410

Olive oil*

14

73

11

375

Peanut oil**

17

46

32

320/450

Rice Bran Oil**

25

38

37

415

not recommended for cooking VERY UNSTABLE FATS

Safflower oil**

8

76

13

225/510

Sesame seed oil*

14

40

46

450

Canola oil**

8

64

28

400

Sunflower oil**

10

45

40

225/440

Vegetable shortening**

34

11

52

330

Corn oil

15

30

55

445

Soybean oil

16

23

58

495

Walnut oil*

14

19

67

400

Grapeseed oil

12

17

71

420

SFA - saturated fatty acid

MUFA - monounsaturated fatty acid

PUFA - polyunsaturated fatty acid

* While not recommended for cooking, cold-pressed nut and seed oils that are stored in the refrigerator may be used to finish recipes or after cooking is completed—for flavor purposes.

** While the fatty acid profile of these oils may seem appropriate at first glance, the processing method by which they are made negates their healthfulness—they are not recommended for consumption, neither hot nor cold.

