

DESHI MIX
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Date(i)licious

Now that Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr is over, we are done with using regular iftar ingredients, but typically, most of our fridges and pantries are still stocked up with these ingredients. While we can reuse most of them by incorporating them into our regular meals, there are few that are foreign to our traditional meal plans. A prime example of that are the dates. So, let us make good use of the dark fruit, and generate dishes to simply wow our guests.



There are at least 30 kinds of dates around the world, and they fall pretty much under three broad types — soft, semi-dry, and dry. The differentiation is made according to the glucose, sucrose and fructose content.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF DATES

Ajwa dates: Popularly known as the “king of dates,” these were known to be the Prophet’s favourite. Much softer and drier in texture, they have myriad health benefits, one of them being increasing immunity.

Medjool dates: This date is grown in hot-dry climates like that of the Middle East, Africa and California. They are sugar-free dates, which are good for diabetes patients, and they also provide vitamins, minerals, and energy for overall health.

Kalmi dates: The rich dry fruit is a variety from Oman. It’s a variant of the black dates, and is typically small and cylindrical in shape. These dates are high in potassium and helps prevent diseases like diarrhoea.

Mabroom: These are very sweet and chewy as well. They fall under the category of premium dates, naturally rich in mineral and antioxidants.

Ambera: These are considered to be the finest quality dates from Medina, Saudi Arabia. It is the largest of the Medina dates and is renowned for its size. They are known for accelerating the natural healing process.

Khudri: They are cylindrical in shape and are often found in medium or big sizes.

These brownish-red dates have the hidden quality of boosting energy instantly, making them perfectly suitable for Ramadan.

Zahidi: These are the most exquisite variety of dates grown in Iran. The most widely-consumed dates in Iran are available here only during month of Ramadan. They are light yellow in colour and round in size. They contain high amounts of vitamin A, B and C, and also improve blood circulation.

Safawi: These Saudi Arabian dates are chewy and have a sweet texture. They are pretty big in terms of size, with a dark colour. These are best known for treating anaemia and intoxication.

Sukarri: This variety from Saudi Arabia is very sweet and moist, and provide an instant dose of energy.

NUTRITION VALUES OF DATES

The fruits of date palms pack quite the nutritional punch. At the same time, they contain an insignificant amount of fat and have no cholesterol. Dates boost your energy while pacifying your hunger, and your body benefits from their health-promoting nutrients. Dates are a good source of various vitamins and minerals. It’s also a good source of energy, sugar, and fibre. Essential minerals such as calcium, iron, phosphorus, sodium, potassium, magnesium, and zinc can be found in them. They also contain vitamins such as thiamine,

riboflavin, niacin, folate, vitamin A, and vitamin K.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Here are just some of the reasons why you should be eating dates regularly:

- Did you know that dates are free from cholesterol, and contain very little fat? Including them, in small quantities, in your daily diet can help you keep a check on cholesterol level, and even assist in weight loss.

- Dates are a strong source of proteins that help us in staying fit, and keep our muscles strong.

- If you have a few dates every day, you won’t have to take vitamin supplements. Not only will it keep you healthy, but there will be a noticeable change in your energy level. So, it works really well as quick snacks.

- Dates are rich in selenium, manganese, copper, and magnesium, and all of these are required when it comes to keeping our bones healthy, and preventing conditions such as osteoporosis.

- Dates are loaded with potassium and sodium, which goes a long way to keeping your nervous system in order. Potassium helps to reduce cholesterol, and keeps the risk of a stroke in check.

- Apart from the fluorine that keeps your teeth healthy, dates also contain iron, which is highly recommended.

