

# Oldways Guide to Asian Cooking Oils

## Traditional Asian Oils

**Peanut oil** has a neutral taste and high smoke point, making it suitable for high-heat cooking like stir-frying and deep-frying.

**Sesame oil** can either be light or dark. Dark sesame oil (made from toasted sesame seeds) tends to have a stronger aroma and distinct flavor and is typically enjoyed as a condiment, while light sesame oil is more often used in cooking.

**Palm oil** is mostly sourced from the rainforests of Southeast Asia, and is used in many processed foods. Experts recommend avoiding palm oil because of its health and environmental consequences.

**Coconut oil** has a rich history in the cuisines of Southeast Asia, especially in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, and India. Until scientists understand more about the effects of its high levels of saturated fat, use coconut oil sparingly for flavor.

**Soybean oil** has been used for centuries throughout



Asia, as its high smoke point makes it suitable for wok cooking and deep frying.

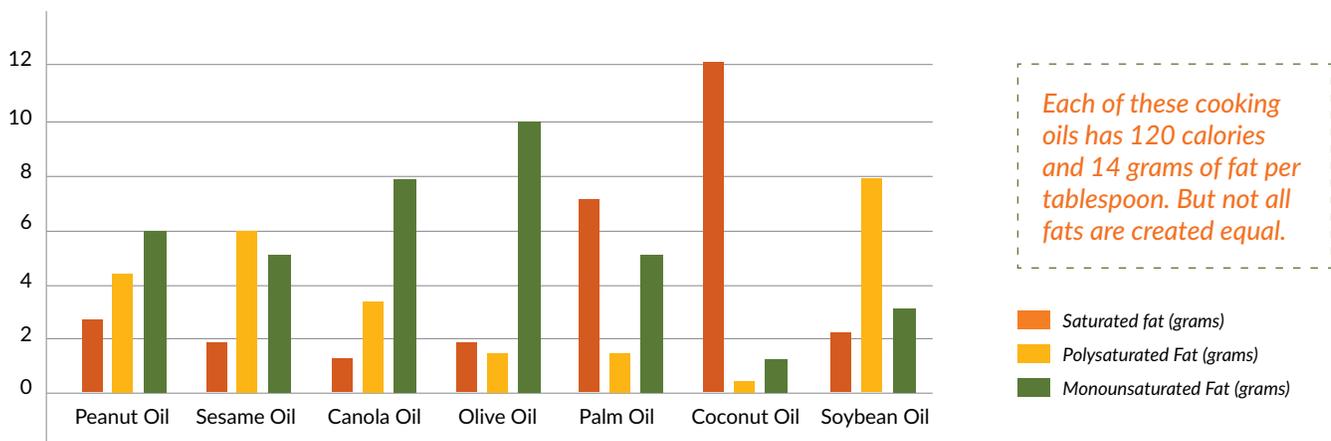
## Other Cooking Oils

While these oils aren't traditional in Asian cooking, they can also work well with many common Asian ingredients.

**Canola oil**, which is extracted from the rapeseed plant, has a light flavor and high smoke point. This means it's well-suited to frying or sautéing many foods.

**Olive oil** has its roots in the Mediterranean, but is becoming more widely used in cuisines around the world because of its favorable health benefits.

## Types of Fat in Different Cooking Oils



- According to Harvard research published in *JAMA Internal Medicine*<sup>1</sup>, replacing just 5% of calories from **saturated fat** with the same amount of **polyunsaturated fat** or **monounsaturated fat** was associated with a **27%** and **13%** lower risk of death from all causes, respectively.
- In the 2017 Presidential Advisory on Dietary Fats and Cardiovascular Disease<sup>2</sup>, the authors note that **replacing saturated fat** with **polyunsaturated fat** can lower the risk of heart disease by **30%**, which is on par with what cholesterol-lowering medications can achieve.
- The Advisory also found<sup>2</sup> that eating more **monounsaturated fat**, **more polyunsaturated fat**, and **less saturated fat** is linked with lower rates of heart disease.

<sup>1</sup> *JAMA Internal Medicine*. 2016 Aug 1;176(8):1134-45. (Wang DD et al.)

<sup>2</sup> *Circulation*. 2017 Jul 18;136(3):e1-e23. (Saks FM et al.)