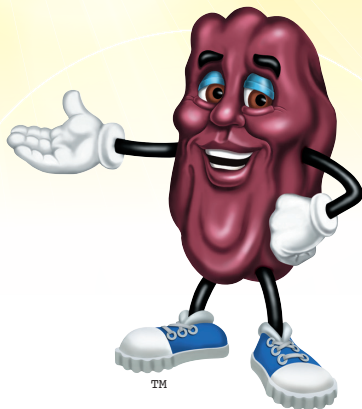




For more information on California Raisins,
visit www.californiaraisins.ca





The California Raisins Story

Spanning 200,000 acres across the central San Joaquin Valley in sunny California, you'll find 2,000 California Raisin growers who produce 100% of U.S. raisins. This gorgeous, lush region produces 300,000 tons of raisins annually, two-thirds of which are consumed by Americans and Canadians.

So, what are raisins exactly, and how are they are made?

Raisins are essentially dried grapes of the "Vitis vinifera" Natural Seedless varietal type; they are typically dried by the sun, whether it is on paper trays or on the vine. Natural (Sun-Dried) seedless raisins include the Thompson seedless and other newer cultivars such as Selma Pete, Fiesta and DOVine. California Golden Seedless and California Dipped Seedless raisins are mechanically dried and processed. Other raisin varietal types include Zante Currant, Muscat, Monnuka, Sultana, and other Seedless.

Once dried, the raisins are brought from the vineyards, stored in wooden bins, and processed as needed by having their stems and capstems removed. They are sorted by size, cleaned and washed in water to assure a wholesome and safe final product.



High food safety standards

California Raisins are one of the safest and cleanest foods. Every year, the raisin industry is subject to a comprehensive survey, which consistently shows that Raisins delivered to packers do not contain pesticides or chemicals beyond the levels generally recognized as safe by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). There are numerous restrictions and reporting systems that all farmers and growers must observe when they use pesticides and other chemicals on food crops. As California Raisins are processed, they are washed numerous times. This insures a very clean food product. California raisin packers are approved by:

- British Retail Consortium
- Codex Alimentarius
- World Health Organization
- American Institute of Baking

Baking and cooking with California Raisins

California Raisins are a very traditional ingredient found in professional kitchens; chefs and bakers have discovered that California Raisins help achieve a spectrum of subtle and balanced flavors from the deep and earthy to the highly aromatic. This ingredient has the power to enhance existing dishes without adding another SKU to inventory and without increasing costs. California Raisins are the most economical, all-natural dried fruit available.





Before you start: how to prep your California Raisins

California Raisins are shelf stable and require no preparation. They are ready to go, right out of the package. For some preparations, however, better results may be obtained by reconstituting or “plumping” them. This process allows moisture to enter through the skin to soften the texture and add juiciness to the raisin. There are several ways to do this.

1. Soak them in the liquid part of the batter in which they are to be cooked, such as the liquid called for in cakes or breads, for 10 to 15 minutes. Drain and add liquid as directed in the recipe and then stir in raisins as indicated.
2. Pour hot tap water over the raisins just to cover plus just a little extra and let stand up to 5 minutes or until the fruit is plump and juicy. If any excess water is to be discarded, do not soak more than 5 minutes to prevent loss of flavor and nutrients.
3. Rinse and quickly drain the raisins and spread in a single layer onto a baking sheet. Then, cover tightly with foil and heat in a 350°F oven until they puff up and are no longer wrinkled.
4. Raisins may also be covered with water; heated and simmered until all the liquid is absorbed or evaporated. Cool these before adding to batters or dough.
5. Sometimes, raisins are infused with flavors by soaking in fruit juices, liqueurs or flavored syrups. Most recipes will specify that these be soaked for several hours or overnight and excess liquid is added to the preparation along with the plumped raisins to enhance the desired flavor as well as to preserve nutrients.
6. To chop raisins, use a lightly oiled knife or blade to prevent sticking.
7. When preparing batters and dough, dredging the raisins in a small amount of flour will keep them from sinking to the bottom of the pan. Do not condition raisins in excessively hot water. For best results, raisins should be about 75°F at the end of the process.





Unexpected meets delicious!

- Raisins in sauces, glazes, stir-frys, chutneys, and salsas bring uniqueness and appeal to your dish
- Raisins have a great emulsifying quality when added to vinaigrettes
- Raisins exhibit a rich earthiness that adds surprising character and depth to dishes that might include ancho or guajillo chile peppers
- Raisins are compatible with sweet and savory flavors; blend well with mild or spicy flavors, vanilla, cinnamon and citrus flavors; provide excellent flavor background for savory dishes and ethnic foods; and are compatible with all sweet foods





CALIFORNIA Sweet, Naturally, are always a great addition
RAISINS: in whatever way they are used in the kitchen.

The fully-functional California raisin

Texture / Fat Replacement: California Raisins are plump, fresh tasting and have a soft “chew” that mimics fat and richness. Raisins act as a fat-replacer in baked goods without the addition of significant amounts of water and offer pleasant chewiness in a wide range of products. They are not gritty and typically free from large sugar crystals. California Raisins function well in fat-free baked goods, cookies and cakes.

Texture and Skin Integrity: The skin of the California Raisin is not easily damaged by processing aids or by other processes. Therefore, raisins retain their shape and integrity during preparation. In fact, raisins plump during microwaving and baking, building volume and mouthfeel.

Binding: California Raisin sugars create a firm texture that can help bind dry ingredients in foods such as bars, snacks, cookies, desserts and other dishes.

Water Activity: At the same moisture content, California Raisins generally have a lower water activity than other dried vine fruits because of their intact skin and fructose-glucose content. This prevents migration of moisture to or from ingredients in preparations and allows them to be added to recipes without concern for adding unneeded moisture. California Raisins' moisture content is 15% to 18% and water activity level is 0.51 to 0.56.

Nutrition Facts

California Raisins are dried in the warm California sunshine, and come by their sweetness naturally. This versatile little fruit has many benefits that help to maintain a healthy lifestyle. A serving size of raisins is 40g or a ¼ cup and are fat- and cholesterol-free, and a source of potassium, fibre and iron.





Frequently Asked Questions

What do you do when raisins break or mash during the mixing process?

Normally, this is caused by excessive soaking of the raisins. You need to keep the structure of the raisin intact so properly conditioned raisins are essential for quality baked goods.

What do you do about irregular fermentation of dough containing raisins?

Excess free sugar and acid in the dough resulting from crushed fruit or broken skins during the mixing is frequently the cause. Mix the raisins in gently to maintain the integrity and wholeness of the raisin. Excessive amounts of cinnamon in bread may also be a cause of uneven fermentation.

How do you prevent raisins on the outside or crust from charring while baking?

Excessive oven temperature is the most common cause. Raisin dough products are best when baked at lower temperatures than conventional breads. A reduction of 25 degrees or more seems to work best. Low pressure steam in the oven will also help eliminate charred raisins.

When should you add raisins into the dough during the mixing process?

Add the raisins at the very last step, during the last minute or two of the mixing process to ensure that the fruit remains intact.

