

Remarkable Raisins

Raisins are just dried-up old grapes, right? The short answer is yes, but the long answer is no. Raisins are not just old grapes! They are a sweet treat with a rich history and several health benefits. Also, there are more than just black and green raisins.

Raisins have been around for centuries and have made their way across many countries, cultures, and culinary changes. Raisins were special in the ancient world due to their sweet flavor and ability to not spoil for long periods. George Washington was a fan of raisins and they were found on his dinner table frequently at his Mount Vernon home. The first California raisins were produced in the late 1800s, with the Central Valley and the San Joaquin Valley ideal for growing grapes. California is still one of the world leaders in the production of raisins.

Raisins are made from a range of grape varieties. The size, taste, and color depend on the type of grape used. There are six main types of raisins: Black, Sultanas (Golden), Red, Currents, Munakka, and Green.

Black

Black raisins are the most common types used in households due to their popularity. The drier they are, the darker the color. They are fleshy, chewy, and can be 1.5 cm to 2.5 cm in size.

Sultanas (Golden)

Sultana raisins are named after the green grape from Turkey, specifically the Thompson seedless grapes. Sultanas are also called golden raisins. As the name suggests, golden raisins have a golden color. They are smaller and a lighter color than other raisins.

Red Raisins

Red raisins are made from red grapes and make the most delectable raisins. Red raisins are dark in color, large, and chubby.

Currants

Black currants are not very sweet and have a sour flavor. They are relatively small and are also known as Zante currants. Black currants are made from Corinth grapes. They are seedless and have a dark black color.

Munakka

Munakka are dried grapes that are bigger than other types of raisins. There is a seed inside. Munakka raisins are brown and have a pulpy texture.

Green Raisins

Green raisins are usually a dark green color, thin, and longer in shape. They are soft, juicy, and loaded with minerals and fiber!

Raisins are full of insoluble dietary fiber, which helps with digestion. They help with all kinds of gastrointestinal problems, from abdominal pain and irritable bowel syndrome to gas and bloating. Raisins can also help with weight gain. Since not everyone wants to lose weight, raisins are a good way to gain weight healthily. Raisins are loaded with glucose and fructose, giving you a lot of energy.

Raisins contain anticarcinogenic catechins, which means they can help prevent cancer! Raisins are also high in potassium to help keep blood pressure in check by being a natural vasodilator. This helps with blood vessels and blood circulation. Raisins are also immunity boosters as they contain antioxidants and polyphenols, which can also help with arthritis and gout. Raisins contain iron that helps produce hemoglobin, improves metabolism, carries oxygen, and helps you get better sleep.

Whatever color of raisins you eat, their health benefits are amazing. These little powerhouses have a rich, long history and are something everyone can enjoy in moderation. To answer whether raisins are just dried-up grapes, they are not - they are much more!

(Sources: www.britannica.com; www.healthshot.com; www.mashed.com;
www.slurp.com; www.thekitchn.com)