

Cardamom Seed Oil: The Warming Spice Oil

Popularly used as an aromatic spice in Indian and European cuisine, cardamom is famously added to baked breads, mixed in coffee and tea, and even used to season biryani and rice dishes. It is one of the most expensive spices in the world (only saffron and vanilla are sold at a higher price¹).

But aside from its pungent aroma and enticing flavor, cardamom, particularly its seeds, are also known for producing a potent medicinal oil with plenty of uses. Discover the uses and benefits of cardamom seed oil in this article.

What Is Cardamom Seed Oil?

Cardamom seed oil is made from two genera of cardamom plants: *Ellataria* and *Amomum*. *Ellataria*, which mostly grows in India, is commonly known as green or true cardamom, while *Amomum*, found in certain parts of Asia, is known as Java cardamom, Bengal cardamom, white cardamom, brown cardamom, red cardamom, and Siamese cardamom. Both of these cardamom species are part of the ginger family (*Zingiberaceae*).

A perennial herb, cardamom can be identified by its large leaves and seeds, green and white flowers, and slightly bitter but edible fruits. It is farmed only in a few places around the world, such as Sri Lanka, Laos, China, Nepal, Guatemala, and India.

Cardamom seeds are loaded with important minerals, such as sulfur, calcium, and phosphorus. They also have volatile oils, which make up about five percent of the seed's mass, composed of beneficial formic and acetic acids – this is what makes cardamom seed oil so aromatic and beneficial.²

Cardamom seed oil has a sweet, spicy fragrance that is reminiscent of balsamic vinegar. It has a clear to pale yellow color and a slightly watery viscosity.

Uses of Cardamom Seed Oil

Before becoming a popular spice, cardamom was actually used during the ancient times. The Romans used it to soothe their stomachs whenever they overindulged, while the Egyptians added it to perfumes and incense. Meanwhile, the Arabs loved mixing it into their coffee for added flavor.

Today, cardamom seed oil is widely used for curing muscular and respiratory spasms, providing relief for pulled muscles and cramps, and even alleviating the symptoms of [whooping cough](#) and asthma.

Cardamom seed oil can also be used to promote healthy skin, working as a natural cleanser to disinfect skin and give it a natural radiance. It also works as a skin toner that helps [fight the signs of aging](#).

Cardamom seed oil can also be used to promote [healthy hair](#), such as treating scalp infections and dandruff.³

Composition of Cardamom Seed Oil

Cardamom seed oil's main chemical components include a-pinene, b-pinene, sabinene, myrcene, limonene, a-phellandrene, y-terpinene, 1,8-cineole, p-cymene, linalool, p-cymene, linalyl acetate, a-terpineol, terpinen-4-oil, a-terpineol acetate, citronellol, geraniol, nerol, methyl eugenol, and trans-nerolidol.⁴

Benefits of Cardamom Seed Oil

The healing properties of cardamom seed oil can be attributed to its qualities as an antimicrobial, antiseptic, diuretic, aphrodisiac, digestive, stomachic, and stimulant. If used properly and in appropriate doses, it can be an effective way to help maintain your health. This essential oil can:⁵

- **Promote oral health** – Adding a few drops of cardamom seed oil in water and using it as a mouthwash can disinfect the oral cavity, killing germs and eliminating [bad breath](#).
- **Stimulate the entire digestive system** – It helps maintain proper secretion of gastric juices, bile, and acids in the stomach so that it will function properly.
- **Help dispel toxins from your body** – It stimulates urination, which also helps promote weight loss, [lowers blood pressure](#), and extracts calcium and urea deposits from the kidney.

Cardamom seed oil also has a warming effect that helps heat the body, clears congestion and coughs, promotes sweating, and even helps [relieve symptoms of the common cold](#).

How to Make Cardamom Seed Oil

Cardamom seed oil is extracted through steam distillation. The seeds of the fruit are harvested just before they ripen. This produces a one to five percent yield.

Cardamom seed oil can be quite expensive, though. An alternative would be to extract your own cardamom seed oil at home. Here's how you do it:⁶

What You'll Need:

- Half a cup of cardamom seeds
- Mortar and pestle
- Cheesecloth
- String or twine
- Distilled water

- Saucepan
- Cotton balls
- Small dark glass jar with lid

Procedure:

1. Use the mortar and pestle to grind the cardamom until it's coarsely ground.
2. Fold the cheesecloth into three layers, putting the cardamom in the middle. Tie the top portion using the string or twine, sealing it, creating a pouch.
3. Place a pot filled with distilled water on a stove over medium high heat. Put the sachet in the water, and let it come into a boil.
4. Let the water simmer for at least 24 hours, or until the water is only about a half-inch layer in the saucepan.
5. During the boiling process, skim any oil that rises to the top, swiping a cotton ball over it. Squeeze the moisture into the small glass bottle.
6. Cover the pot with a cheesecloth and put it on a sunny windowsill. Allow the water to evaporate completely.
7. At this point, the only remaining liquid in the pot should be the oil. Pour it into the small jar.

How Does Cardamom Seed Oil Work?

Even if it has a strong and pungent aroma, cardamom oil is actually a gentle and non-toxic oil. It is said to have an effect on neurotransmitters, making it effective against vomiting and nausea (especially those caused by chemotherapy or pregnancy). It also has relaxant effects that make it useful for managing strong intestinal cramps, bronchial ailments, and the common cold.⁷

Cardamom oil is best used when diffused in a safe carrier oil, such as coconut oil or olive oil. It blends well with orange, rose, cinnamon, clove, [caraway](#), and cedarwood oil.

Is Cardamom Seed Oil Safe?

Cardamom seed oil is generally safe and non-toxic, and can be inhaled or used topically, diluted with a safe oil. However, I advise you to do a skin patch test first to determine your sensitivity to this oil. Simply apply a diluted drop on your arm and see if any reactions occur.

I do not advise pregnant women and nursing mothers to use cardamom seed oil without the advice of their physician, as this oil can cause irritation, and its warming effect may harm the baby.

Side Effects of Cardamom Seed Oil

Use cardamom seed oil wisely. I do not advise using it in excessive amounts, as it can lead to overdose. Symptoms of excessive cardamom seed oil use include unrest and extra heating up of the body and the digestive system, which causes [loose bowels](#) and irritation.