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Everything You Need to Know About Molasses

Ingredient Intelligence

When it's time for fall and winter baking, dark, sticky molasses gets pulled out from the back of my cabinet. There's no replacement for the sweet, almost smoky flavors it adds to cookies and cakes, plus it plays oh-so-nicely with winter spices like cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg.

Molasses labeling can be a bit confusing, so here's a guide to the three most common varieties so you pick the right one!

How Molasses Is Made

The most common forms of molasses are made from either sugar cane or sugar beet juice which is boiled down to a syrup. Sugar crystals are extracted from the syrup, and the remaining dark liquid is molasses.

Molasses can also be made from sorghum, pomegranate

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[<http://www.thekitchn.com/ingredient-spotlight-pomegrana-67573>], carob, and dates.

Unsulphured vs. Sulphured Molasses

Sulphured molasses is molasses that has been treated with sulphur dioxide as a preservative. However, since the sulphuring process can leave the molasses with a strong pronounced chemical flavor and is less sweet, most commercial molasses is unsulphured.

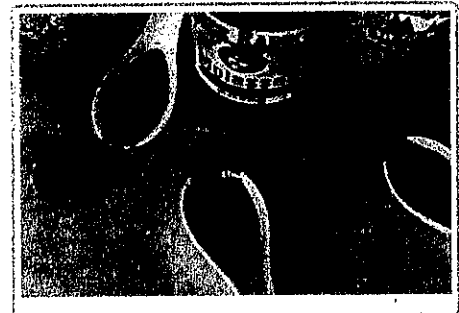
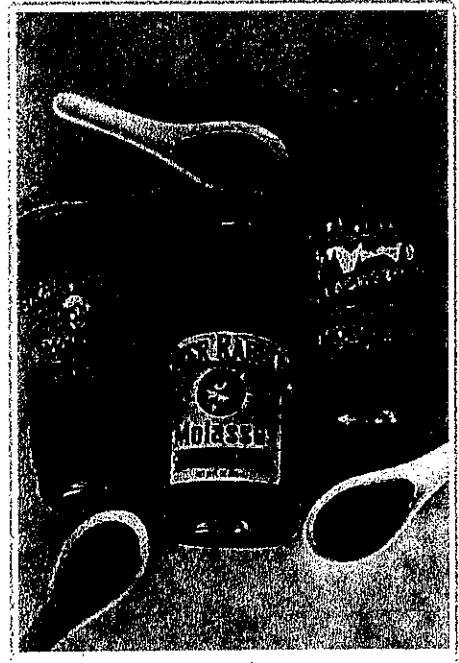
Light Molasses

- **Other names:** Barbados, first, mild, sweet
- **How it's made:** Light molasses is made from the first boiling of the cane or beet juice.
- **How it tastes:** It is the lightest in color, sweetest, and mildest in flavor.
- **How to use it:** This is the most commonly sold molasses, mostly used in baking. Light molasses helps to make cookies softer and bread crustier, and it can also be used in marinades and sauces.

Dark Molasses

- **Other names:** full, robust, second
- **How it's made:** Dark molasses comes from the second boiling of the cane or beet juice.
- **How it tastes:** Thicker, less sweet, darker, and stronger in flavor than light molasses.
- **How to use it:** It can generally be used in place of light molasses and is what gives gingerbread cookies their distinct color and flavor.

Blackstrap Molasses



of the molasses. It is considered the healthiest of all molasses since it retains the most vitamins and minerals.

- **How it tastes:** It is the thickest and darkest in color, and also the least sweet with a pronounced bitter flavor.
- **How to use it:** Since it is bitter, only use blackstrap molasses if a recipe specifically calls for it. Do not substitute it in recipes that call for light or dark molasses. Blackstrap molasses is great in savory dishes liked baked beans and pulled pork.

→ **Read more: What's the Deal with Blackstrap Molasses?**

[<http://www.thekitchn.com/whats-the-deal-with-blackstrap-70853>]

Recipes with Molasses

- **Drunken Molasses Cookies with Ginger**
[<http://www.thekitchn.com/recipe-drunken-160363>]
- **Chewy Molasses Cookies with Crunchy Lemon Glaze**
[<http://www.thekitchn.com/recipe-chewy-molasses-cookies-130827>]
- **Dark Molasses Gingerbread Cake** [<http://www.thekitchn.com/recipe-dark-and-damp-molasses-155934>]
- **Mini Molasses Cookies with Lemon Filling**
[<http://www.thekitchn.com/recipe-mini-mol-17251>]
- **Molasses Spice Cookies with Orange Sugar**
[<http://www.thekitchn.com/recipe-molasses-spice-cookies-131694>]
- **Cocoa Molasses Toffee** [<http://www.thekitchn.com/recipe-cocoa-molasses-toffees-38614>]

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