



# Peanuts! An American Favorite Goes Mediterranean

The Mediterranean diet emphasizes a higher intake of vegetables, legumes, fruits, nuts, whole grains, cheese or yogurt, fish, and monounsaturated fat. As a powerful plant protein that is full of heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, peanuts and peanut butter are a perfect fit for this style of eating as it recommends higher intakes of healthy fats and protein sources like nuts and peanuts.

## A Mediterranean Diet High in Peanuts Can Reduce the Risk of Disease

Nuts have been a part of the Mediterranean lifestyle since pre-historic times and have been used in the past by different civilizations as medicine to prevent or treat certain diseases.<sup>1</sup> Modern research backs up what our ancestors believed:

- A meta-analysis of 600 studies showed that the Mediterranean-style diet is **one of the most beneficial diets in improving the risk of heart disease.**<sup>2</sup>
- A major study using the Mediterranean diet and nuts/peanuts showed a **decrease in blood pressure, cholesterol, and insulin resistance** among participants, as well as an **inverse relationship with metabolic syndrome.**<sup>3</sup>
- One study showed Mediterranean diets, including nuts and peanuts, **may improve cognition.**<sup>4</sup>
- A Mediterranean diet **including frequent nut and peanut consumption significantly reduced the risk of mortality** in populations at high cardiovascular risk.<sup>5</sup>

## Peanuts Contain the Same Healthy Compound Found in Red Wine

Peanuts contain the same powerful antioxidant found in red wine called resveratrol, which has been shown to benefit heart function, weight loss, decreased risk of cancer and diabetes, and reduced mortality risk.<sup>6,7</sup> Most of the resveratrol in peanuts is found in the skins. In fact, southern-style boiled peanuts contain more resveratrol than red wine and peanut butter is not too far behind.<sup>6</sup>

## Here are some great ways to incorporate peanuts into your favorite Mediterranean dishes:



### POWERFUL PEANUT PESTO

#### Ingredients

1 cup Basil, packed	1/4 tsp. Sea Salt	3 Tbsp. Parmesan Cheese
1/2 cup Peanuts, toasted	1/8 tsp. Black Pepper	3/4 cup Peanut Oil
1 ea. zest of Lemon	1 ea. Garlic Clove, sliced	

#### Directions

Pulse all the ingredients in a blender until mostly smooth. Transfer to a covered container; will keep for 3 to 4 days in the refrigerator. Try it on toast topped with mozzarella cheese and roasted peanuts.

Recipe developed by The Culinary Institute of America as an industry service to The Peanut Institute.

#### Nutritional Information

12 servings, 1 serving contains:

- Calories (kcal) 160
- Carbohydrates (g) 1
- Fat (g) 17
- Protein (g) 2
- Sodium (mg) 90
- Dietary Fiber (g) 1



## HIGH PROTEIN PEANUT BUTTER HUMMUS

### Ingredients

1 15-ounce cans Garbanzo Beans, drained  
1/4 cup Lemon Juice  
1 Tbsp. Peanut Oil + extra for desired consistency  
1/4 tsp. Salt  
1/4 tsp. Pepper  
1/4 cup Water as needed  
1/3 cup Creamy Peanut Butter

### Directions

In food processor, place all the garbanzos and process with the lemon juice, 1 Tbsp. peanut oil, 1/4 tsp. salt, 1/4 tsp. pepper, and 1/4 cup water. Process until smooth. Scoop the mixture into a bowl. Add peanut butter. Stir well and adjust with peanut oil and water for texture, and additional salt and pepper for taste.

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### Nutritional Information

16 servings, 1 serving contains:

- Calories (kcal) 87
- Carbohydrates (g) 8
- Fat (g) 5
- Protein (g) 3
- Sodium (mg) 130
- Dietary Fiber (g) 3

## AVOCADO & PEANUT CROSTINI

### Ingredients

1 small Whole Grain Baguette, sliced 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick  
2 ripe Avocados, thinly sliced  
Peanut Oil  
Oil Roasted Salted Peanuts, coarsely chopped  
Sea Salt

### Directions

Brush baguette slices with peanut oil and toast or broil until browned. Top each bread piece with layers of avocado. Then sprinkle with chopped peanuts and sea salt and drizzle with peanut oil. Serve at room temperature.

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### Nutritional Information

Per piece:

- Calories (kcal) 80
- Carbohydrates (g) 8
- Fat (g) 6
- Protein (g) 2
- Sodium (mg) 120
- Dietary Fiber (g) 2

## REFERENCES

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