Cashew Nuts

With a history dating back to the mid 16th Century, these nuts have maintained their status as a hugely popular and highly cultivated commodity for over 450 years.

With origins in the Brazilian tropics, the Portuguese Empire brought with them quantities of the nut on their eastward colonisation of Africa, India and Southeast Asia. These locations are still very much relevant today as locations such as Vietnam, Nigeria, the Ivory Coast and India experience the highest volumes of cashew cultivation across the globe.

The scientific term *anacardium,* literally meaning ‘above the heart’, provides an insight into the unique location and position of the nut during its growing process. It grows beneath the fruit within a hard shell that provides protection for the fragile kernel up until its extraction. Within this shell, the cashew kernel is coated in a corrosive, potent substance known as anacardic acid. This solution is an irritant, and harmful to touch, and thus explains why removing the shell is imperative before selling to consumers.

Perhaps the main reason for the cashew’s high cultivation rate and demand across the globe is the variety of health benefits that are associated with its consumption, in other words, these nuts are a nutritional powerhouse. Providing a good source of protein, soluble dietary fibre and heart-friendly monounsaturated fatty acids, these nuts possess an excellent macronutrient profile. Furthermore, these nuts provide an abundance of essential nutrients, vitamins and minerals, contributing to a healthy immune system as well as heart and blood health.

Aside from their nutritional profile, their popularity also stems from their use as a simple snack, ingredient and as a central component of many culinary dishes. From increasingly popular cashew nut butters, to their inclusion in a variety of ethnic cuisines, or simply enjoyed in their roasted form, these nuts are a perfect example of taste and versatility.

| **Nutrient** | **Unit** | **Value per 100 g** | **oz 28.35 g** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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|  |  |  |  |
| Energy | kcal | 553 | 157 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Protein | g | 18.22 | 5.17 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total lipid (fat) | g | 43.85 | 12.43 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Carbohydrate, by difference | g | 30.19 | 8.56 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Fiber, total dietary | g | 3.3 | 0.9 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sugars, total | g | 5.91 | 1.68 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Nutritional Information (USDA)

