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ELS = Eat, Learn, Sell – Eating by Example – 10.09.15

PEARS

Related to the apple, pears are also *Pome* fruit and have a distinct seeded core; both pears and apples are members of the *Rosacea* (rose) family. Today, there are more than 1,000 varieties of pears and they are divided into two specific types: a hard granular 'winter' pear that is best for poaching and a soft buttery pear that's great for eating. Pears do not ripen well on the tree and they are generally harvested fully mature but unripe. As they continue to ripen, their natural starches convert to sugar and their juice and sweetness increases.

Pears are high in both pectin and lignin, two soluble fibers that have been shown to lower cholesterol. A medium pear has less than 100 calories and no fat, cholesterol or sodium.

Anjou – The most abundant (and generally least expensive) variety of winter pear. The Anjou is oval, almost egg shaped, somewhat stubby and has smooth yellow-green skin. Relatively hardy, sweet and juicy with a mellow flavor; they DO NOT change color as they ripen. The original and proper name for d'Anjou pears is Beurré d'Anjou, which translates to, "buttery pears of Anjou". Anjous can be used for both cooking and eating out of hand. Available Fall, Winter and Spring.

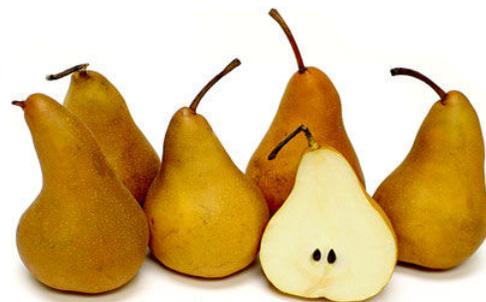


Asian – There are more than 100 varieties of Asian pears available; they are also called apple pears or Chinese pears. Ranging in color from golden brown to pale yellow, Asian pears have a crisp, sweet texture and are shaped more like an apple.



Bartlett – a summer pear and one of the most popular varieties, the Bartlett accounts for almost 75% of the commercial market. Bartletts are the principle pear sold for canning and the only pear variety sold dried. They have a smooth texture, juicy flesh and a green skin that ripens to a bright yellow. Available Fall and Winter.

Bosc – This is a delicious firm, almost crunchy pear that is considered a winter pear. This variety is the classic vision of a pear with a long, tapering neck and a fat bottom. The skin of the Bosc is a russeted yellow-brown and inside is a creamy white flesh that tastes both sweet and spicy. Highly aromatic, the Bosc has a dense flesh that is ideal for baking. The Boscs do not change color as they ripen. Available Fall, Winter and Spring.



Comice – Is generally considered the best eating pear available. Comice is shortened from *Doyenne du Comice* and it's a fat, blunt yellowish green French variety with a russet or red blush. This 'Queen of Pears' has a classic buttery smooth and sweet flesh with a fruity fragrance. Available Fall and Winter.

Forelle – Originated in Saxony in the early 18th Century. The size and shape of a small Bartlett with beautiful speckled skin that richens as it ripens. Consistently sweet and delicious flesh. Classic Forelles are a small variety of pear, the newer versions of this variety from South America are generally much larger fruit. Forelle translates to 'Trout' in German.

Available Fall and Winter from the northern hemisphere.



Packham – Originally bred in Australia in 1897, this pear is a late season choice with a bumpy green skin. When fully ripe, this fruit is juicy and delicious for out of hand eating. When cooking Packhams, chose some that are slightly under-ripe.

Seckel – The smallest of all commercially grown pears have a brownish skin with a red blush, they are a firm pear. The Seckel has a sweet, slightly spicy flesh which is well used for cooking or canning. The texture of the Seckel is a bit grainy.



Starkrimson – This is a sweet, mild red pear variety that is also just called a 'red' pear. Excellent as handfruit, they add a vibrant amount of color to salads.

Pears should be ripened in a cool place, resting on their bases. 'New' Pears should be shiny with bright taut skin. As Pears mature, the skin will become matte. Pears can be forced to ripen by placing in a paper bag with an apple or banana. Much like melon or stonefruit, pears are fragrant when ripe and the flesh at the stem will yield to the touch. Do not measure the ripeness of a pear by it's color, most varieties do not vary in color after they are picked and as they ripen.

Like apples and others in the rose family, pear flesh will oxidize or turn brown when exposed to the air. To prevent this, when cut, the fruit can be put into acidulated water (with lemon juice or apple juice – 3 Tbs. lemon added to 1 quart of water).