

Carrier Oils



This month in our continuing series of carrier oils, we take a look at the carrier oil

Hazelnut

With thanks to Purple Flame Aromatherapy, St John's Spinney, Gun Hill, New Arley, CV7 8IT

This small, deciduous tree grows well throughout Northern Europe, but excels in the Mediterranean where it is widely cultivated. Hazelnut trees can still be found growing wild in British hedgerows and woodland, bearing long, yellow catkins around March time.

The oil, which accounts for approximately 40% of the nut's weight, is extracted from the kernel by cold pressing. The oil is then left for several days to let the sediment settle before filtering.

The quality and 'grading' of the oil will vary according to its purpose - the cosmetic industry will often refine hazelnut oil before adding to their products, while the food industry tends to roast the nuts prior to extraction in order to enhance the oil's flavour. Similarly, the quality of the oil will depend upon the quality of the nuts from which it is extracted. For the above reasons, it is also commendable to buy carrier oils from reputable suppliers who specialise in aromatherapy products.

Oil Name:	Origin:	Family:	Made From:	Latin Name:
Hazelnut	Greece	Corylaceae	Kernel	Corylus avellana

Main therapeutic uses said to be:

Hazelnut oil is believed to be very nourishing for the skin as it is rich in vitamins (A, B and E), minerals and proteins. As it is easily absorbed and softens the skin, this oil is a favourite ingredient in many beauty products, particularly face, hand and body creams. Hazelnut oil can also be found in many sun protection and after-sun lotions.

Main constituents:

Oleic acid; linoleic acid; palmitic acid; stearic acid; palmitoleic acid.

Other comments:

- ✿ Do not use on clients who have a nut allergy. Carry out a patch test if the client has a history of allergic reactions
- ✿ Good for greasy skin, as it is readily absorbed

- ✿ Hazelnut oil blends well with sweet almond oil, which has the same constituents
- ✿ The oil is amber/ yellow in colour
- ✿ Its Latin name means 'little helmet', which alludes to the shape of the nut.