



Get Saucy
with Healthier Condiments

When it comes to adding flavor to your food, condiments are often the perfect way to enhance a healthy meal or snack. But, too often, condiments are laden with unhealthy or over-processed ingredients that can quickly ruin what was once a healthy meal. Often filled with unnecessary sweeteners, harmful preservatives, additives, dyes, or flavor enhancers, the condiments many of us grew up with are not the healthiest choices. Whether it's ketchup or mustard you crave, or mayonnaise or ranch you can't live without, the good news is there are healthy ways to enjoy everyone's favorite condiments. Carefully checking ingredients, buying better brands, or making your own are all great ways to get the most out of your meal's perfect accoutrement.

Ingredients to Avoid

When you're standing in the condiment aisle overwhelmed by choices, there are certain ingredients that should always be avoided, which is likely to eliminate well over half the options commercially available. Keep an eye on the label and be on the lookout for these unhealthy (and unnecessary) fillers.

Sugar or high fructose corn syrup – These sticky sweeteners can be found in nearly every condiment on the shelves. While added sugar is hard to avoid, there are plenty of ways to get great flavor without the detriments that come with it.

Artificial sweeteners – If you don't see sugar or high fructose corn syrup on the label, dig a little deeper into the ingredient list to be sure there are no artificial sweeteners, which can be trickier to pick up on since they go by numerous names. If you see the words "sugar-free" or "no added sugar," it's well worth an extra careful look. Common artificial sweeteners include sucralose, aspartame, saccharin, and acesulfame potassium.

Soybean oil and/or hydrogenated fats – These unhealthy oils and fats are prevalent in condiments like mayonnaise and ranch dressing, and they've been linked to more weight gain and an increased risk of cardiovascular disease when compared to other fats. Plus, soybean oil is typically genetically engineered and has been linked to numerous health concerns. Look for options made with olive oil or avocado oil for a healthier choice.

Preservatives such as Butylated Hydroxyanisole (BHA), Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) – These additives are found in hundreds of processed foods and condiments to increase their shelf life. MSG has been linked to bizarre health concerns such as headaches, irritability, palpitations, skin rashes, and gastrointestinal problems. While the evidence on BHA is still conflicting, some experts believe it's likely to be a carcinogen based on animal studies. The Center for Science

in the Public Interest has cited BHA as an additive to avoid, so it's probably best to steer clear.

Artificial colors – Plenty of condiments have artificial colors, and one that's likely to fool you with its "natural" sounding name is caramel color. Featuring absolutely no caramel whatsoever, it's added to some over-processed condiments to change the color and make them look more appealing. According to Consumer Reports, some types of artificial colorings contain a chemical called 4-methylimidazole (4-Mel) which has been dubbed potentially carcinogenic.

Healthier Options on the Shelf

While making your own is typically the best option, not everyone has the time or interest to make it at home and that's A-OK. Here are a few healthier options you can likely find at your local health food store or even online.

Ketchup – Tessemae's Organic Ketchup, Primal Kitchen Organic Unsweetened Ketchup

Mustard – Eden Foods (brown), 365 Everyday Value from Whole Foods (yellow)

Mayonnaise – Primal Kitchen Avocado Oil Mayonnaise

Ranch – Primal Kitchen Ranch Dressing with Avocado Oil

Honey Mustard – Foods Alive Superfood Dressing Sweet Mustard

Tasty Condiments, DIY Style

While it may sound old-fashioned, making homemade condiments is not only the healthiest way to enjoy them, it allows you to modify the flavor profile to suit your preferences – not to mention giving you the ability to get creative. Here are a few simple recipes for creating the most popular condiments.



Homemade Ranch Dressing

The uses for ranch dressing are limitless, and when you make it at home, you can rest assured that it's significantly healthier than any you'd find at the store or a restaurant. You can modify the spice profile to reflect your personal tastes and it tastes great on salad, as a dip, or on top of a baked potato or chicken dish.

- ¾ cup Greek yogurt**
- ½ cup whole milk**
- 1 tsp fresh chopped parsley**
- ½ tsp fresh chopped dill (more or less to taste)**
- ½ tsp fresh chopped chives**
- ½ tsp sea salt**
- ½ tsp black pepper**
- 2 tsp fresh-squeezed lemon juice**
- ½ tsp onion powder**
- ⅛ tsp garlic powder**

Add ingredients to a bowl, whisk together until smooth and creamy.



Homemade Mayonnaise

Creamy mayonnaise is a great way to add flavor to salads, sandwiches and countless other dishes. Making it at home allows you to use healthy fats and organic, cage-free eggs for a guilt-free treat.

- 1 egg**
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice**
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard**
- Sea salt and pepper, to taste**
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil**

In a blender or food processor, process the raw egg, lemon juice, mustard, sea salt, and pepper until well combined.

While the motor is running, pour the oil in a slow, thin, steady stream and process until the mixture is thick and creamy.

**Take your time with this recipe. If you try and rush it, it won't come out right.*

Homemade Honey Mustard

- ½ cup mayonnaise (homemade if you have it)**
- ¼ cup mustard (homemade if you have it)**
- ½ tsp sea salt**
- ¼ tsp black pepper**
- 2 Tbsp raw honey**

Place all ingredients in a bowl and whisk together until smooth. It's that easy!



Homemade Ketchup

While most store-bought brands of ketchup are packed with sugar, when you make your own, you can use fresh-picked tomatoes and your favorite blend of spices to get the flavor you want. Here's a basic recipe that can easily be modified to include your top spice picks.

- 1 (15 oz) can fire-roasted tomatoes (or roast fresh, organic tomatoes)**
- 1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar**
- ⅓ tsp onion powder**
- ⅓ tsp garlic powder**
- ⅓ tsp paprika**
- ⅓ tsp celery salt**
- ¼ tsp sea salt**
- Dash of black pepper (optional)**
- 1-2 drops stevia (optional)**

Completely drain your tomatoes. (If you're using fresh tomatoes, be sure to remove seeds and core prior to roasting.) Place all ingredients in a blender (Magic Bullet is perfect for this job if you have one!) and blend until smooth. For an extra kick, add some red pepper flakes or cayenne pepper, along with any additional spices you might like. A few favorites to try: allspice, mustard seed, cinnamon, or even smoked paprika.



Honey mustard is the perfect indulgent condiment that pairs well with chicken, potatoes, and even tastes great on salad, too.