



Storage Information

Store fresh chestnuts in a grocery bag for up to two months. Sweeten fresh chestnuts by leaving them at room temperature for two days (starches will convert to sugar). For longer storage, put in freezer and use immediately after thawing (else they will become mushy).

Wormy Nuts

The worms in chestnuts are larvae of the chestnut weevil. There are two species, the lesser and greater. Very few pesticides are labeled for treatment of chestnut weevil. The best way to control their proliferation is through good sanitary practices. Every fall, be certain to collect all burs, nuts, and leaf matter from under chestnut trees and burn them. Try to collect nuts within 1 or 2 days of falling from bur (if not before).

As soon as possible after harvest, treat nuts by putting them in 120°F water for 20 minutes. This process kills the egg/small larvae but does not affect the ability of the seed to germinate. If the temperature is too low (less than 117°F), the weevil will not be killed. If it's too hot, then you kill the embryo and thus, the seed. The longevity of the seed in storage will then be compromised.

Chestnut Species

The chestnuts that you may be used to eating from the farmers market or grocery store are typically Chinese or European species. While chestnuts cannot be identified by the size of their nuts alone, when you put them together, it's easy to see the differences.



The above image shows variation in chestnut sizes. From left to right: American, Chinese, European, Japanese.

Chestnut Nutrition

One of chestnuts most appealing qualities is its nutritional content. Low in fat and calories, particularly when compared to other popular nuts, the chestnut is much like brown rice in nutritional impact. The table below compares chestnut nutrition with that of other popular nuts.

| Nut | Calories per 100 g* | Fat (g, %) | Carbohydrates (g, %) | Protein (g, %) |
|------------|---------------------|------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Cashews | 553 | 44, 67% | 33, 20% | 18, 12% |
| Hazelnuts | 628 | 61, 86% | 17, 3% | 15, 9% |
| Macadamias | 718 | 76, 93% | 14, 1% | 8, 4% |
| Peanuts | 567 | 49, 76% | 16, 4% | 26, 18% |
| Pistachios | 557 | 44, 72% | 28, 11% | 21, 15% |
| Walnuts | 654 | 65, 87% | 14, 3% | 15, 9% |
| Chestnuts | 213 | 2, 10% | 46, 81% | 2, 4% |

*100g = about 3.5 oz or 2/3 a cup,

Roughly a handful

Info from National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference

Chestnut Recipes

Roasted Chestnuts

Oven: First make a cut through the shell to prevent bursting. Then spread the nuts in a pan and bake at 375 degrees F (or roast them over charcoal) for 30 min or until the nuts are tender.

Microwave: To microwave your chestnuts, cut through the shell of the nuts in an "X" pattern. Cook nuts on High setting for 30 seconds. Cool, peel, eat. Vary cooking time to suit, overcooking will dry the nut and make it rubbery.

Glazed Chestnuts

3/4 lb fresh chestnuts
2 T butter
1 T honey or sugar

1/2 cup stock
salt and pepper

Lightly roast and peel the fresh chestnuts. In a skillet on a low heat melt the butter and stir in the honey or sugar. Add chestnuts and saute until they become light brown. Add stock and salt and pepper.

Serve on bed of winter greens. Serves 4.

Roasted Chestnut Sausage Dressing

Recipe from Tyler Florence, Food Network

1 medium carrot, peeled and rough chopped
1 medium onion, roughly chopped
2 stalks celery, roughly chopped
½ bunch fresh sage
1 ½ lbs. loose sweet Italian sausage
extra-virgin olive oil
kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
5 cups cubed sourdough bread, crusts removed
1 lb. roasted chestnuts
1 cup low-sodium chicken stock
½ cup heavy cream
1 large egg

Preheat oven to 375°F and butter 9x11-inch baking dish.

In a food processor, puree carrot, onion, celery and sage until you have a fine pulp. Set large skillet over medium-high heat and brown sausage in a little olive oil. Once you have a nice brown color and the fat has rendered, about 5 minutes, use a slotted spoon to remove sausage and place in large mixing bowl. Add vegetable pulp to pan and sauté until most of the moisture has evaporated. Season with salt and pepper. Add to mixing bowl with sausage and also add bread crumbs and chestnuts.

Mix together chicken stock, cream and egg. Pour this wet mixture over dressing mix. Season and fold everything together. Pour out into the roasting dish and bake for 30 to 35 minutes until golden brown on top (if it gets too brown before the 30 minutes is up, tent with foil).