

The content of 'Composting 101: What to compost and how to do it' was prepared by [Nature and Garden](#) and has been revised and republished by FreshFruitPortal.com.

Lemons are the fruits of lemon trees (*Citrus limonium*), small evergreen trees in the Rutaceae (Rue family, native to India and South-East Asia. Introduced in Europe by the Arabs at the beginning of the Christian era, cultivation of this citrus slowly crept upwards and reached France in the XVIIth century. It has long been recognized for its numerous health benefits and medicinal properties.

Health benefits of lemon

Lemons have very high water content, and provide very little proteins and fats. **Carbohydrates** and **fiber** are the most important of this fruit's components. Lemons have strong **assets** that help us sustain good health and should definitely be part of our daily diet. However, in order to benefit from all of their therapeutic benefits, lemons must have been grown **untreated**. Scrupulously check where and how they were grown.

- With very high **vitamin C** contents (lemons are the citrus fruits with the highest vitamin C levels), lemons are good **antioxidants** that are involved in fighting **free radicals**, defend us from **foreign bodies**, help us deal with **allergies**, reinforce our **immune system** and prevent formation and development of various **cancers**. Lemons are also excellent allies against **exhaustion**.
- Since they have high **vitamin and mineral** contents and have **low calorie intake**, lemons are perfectly suited to **hypocaloric (low-calorie) diets**.
- Lemons are very refreshing in case of **flu, fever**, or simply **hot weather**. Their **juice** can be drunk directly, or **lemonade** can be made (macerate two sliced lemons with their peels with a little sugar in 1 quart (1 liter) water).
- **Flavonoid-rich** lemons have **anti-inflammatory** properties and prevent **cardiovascular diseases**.
- **Purgative and antiseptic**, lemons can be used to treat **infectious diseases**. Drink warm lemon juice with a spoonful of honey as a natural remedy for **colds, flu** and **bronchitis**, and to generally help our **immune system** fight off winter **microbes**.

- Thanks to their **diuretic effect**, lemons help soothe **pain due to rheumatism and arthritis**.
- Early morning **liver tonic**: mix lemon juice with warm water and drink it **before breakfast**. This will also **ease digestion**. Lemons can help reduce many **digestive disorders** (nausea, heartburn, bloating).
- **Fresh or dried lemon peels** also boast **tonic properties**. They are used in to prepare certain **appetite-enhancing drinks**.
- Lemons work like dentists, too: they **whiten teeth**, fight **plaque formation**, soothe **canker sores** and **inflamed gums**.
- Lemons are excellent **back-up antiseptic agents when used externally**. Lemon juice stops **bleeding** and speeds **wound-healing**.
- Rinse your hair with **lemon juice added to water** for your last rinse after having used shampoo, and your hair will grow **shiny and soft**.
- Finally, lemon **peels** are great against **acne**, and **astringent** lemon juice works wonders against **black spots** and **dilated pores** for persons with oily skin. Use pure or thin with mineral water.

Growing lemon trees to take advantage of lemon health benefits

- Lemon trees require **warm, sunny exposure** with gradual temperature changes, and must be **protected from wind**.
- Choose **rich, fertile, light and well-drained soil**.
- **Since they are vulnerable to cold**, lemon trees appreciate dry and mild climates, like around the Mediterranean or along warm climate lines. In colder regions, it is best to **plant them in pots** that can be **brought indoors** during winter. Take care, though, that **surrounding temperatures** never rise higher than 60 to 68°F (15 to 20°C): if lemon trees are too hot, their leaves and flowers turn yellow and fall off.
- Lemon trees **bloom several times a year** (they are indeterminate) and thus produce **fruits all year long**.

- **Scale insects** colonize young shoots, and **citrus blossom moth caterpillars** chew on flowers and inhibit fruit formation. Watch out for **whiteflies** when keeping your tree in a sheltered place.

Cooking with lemons to reap their benefits

- Lemon juice can be savored **cold or hot**, pure or thinned with water, with sugar or honey. It **flavors** cakes, mousses, pies and jams, and also many **main courses**.
- In **salad dressing** it can serve as an alternative to vinegar.
- **Candied lemons** are unavoidable in lamb or chicken **tajine**.

Nutritional content of lemon

34 kcal / 3.5 oz (100 g). Lemons are **diuretic**, and have high **vitamin C** and **mineral** contents. Their leaves are **antispasmodic**, **astringent** and **relaxing**.

*Credits for images shared to **Nature & Garden** (all edits by Gaspard Lorthiois):*
[Lemon for juice and more](#) by [Marcin Kolacz](#) under [Pixabay license](#)