

Figs

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Most likely, you've enjoyed a Fig Newton at least once in your lifetime, but how many times have you had the pleasure of eating a fresh fig? Fresh figs are so delicate, they perish after just one week from harvest, which is why 90% of all figs are dried upon harvest, making fresh figs rare and costly. Sticky sweet, filled with hundreds of crunchy, edible seeds, fresh figs are truly an experience to be had. What is it about figs that make this fruit so unique? Perhaps it's the unique way in which they grow...

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Figs 101

Unlike anything you'll ever eat, the *Ficus carica* is truly a unique fruit not only in flavor and texture, but also in form. Figs, from the Moraceae family, are not truly a fruit, but actually a flower that has folded up into itself. This inverted blossom encapsulates thousands of tiny, crunchy seeds, which are actually the unfertilized ovaries of the undeveloped fruit. The unusual product of this "fruit" is a soft, gelatinous pulp dotted with these tiny, edible seeds, that is both sweet, sticky, and wonderfully unlike anything else.

While there are literally hundreds of different varieties of figs, ranging in shape, color and size, the insides of all figs are the same. The most popular figs are the light green-skinned Adriatic, used principally for making fig paste and fig bars, the purple-brown Smyrna, the Magnolia, Brunswick, Kadota, Celeste and Mission. There is also another popular variety called the Calimyrna, which is the California version of the Turkish Smyrna fig.

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