



Different types of lime and how to use them

Ingredients

Method

Limes are one of life's little pleasures! Whether using the whole fruit or only the juice, peel or zest, you'll have endless opportunities to integrate limes into your meals this winter. In Australia, we're lucky enough to grow many different varieties of lime – all with unique flavours for different uses. Some are best for marmalades, jams and chutneys while others lend themselves nicely to dressings, sauces and even punches or cocktails!

Types of lime

Tahitian or Persian Limes

These limes are the most common variety found in supermarkets across Australia. They can be used as a mixer for drinks, in dressings and as a garnish due to their seedless flesh and because they're very juicy but not intensely fragrant. Tip: Before using Tahitian or Persian limes, place them in hot water for a few minutes to assist in the release of oil from the skin making them more fragrant. Try using limes in our delicious [coconut and lime tea cake](#). Serve with a dollop of cream and enjoy the mix of sweet and sour.

Kaffir Limes

Kaffir limes are easily recognisable by their heavy wrinkled appearance. While the fruit itself has very little juice, the zest and leaves are commonly used in Asian cooking due to their intense fragrance. Kaffir lime leaves come in pairs and can be used fresh or dried however fresh is best as the oils tend to lose their fragrance when dried or frozen. Simply add the leaves to your favourite soup or curry by throwing them in whole and leaving them to infuse flavour into the dish as it cooks. Don't forget to remove the leaves after the cooking process as they're far too tough to chew. Kaffir lime leaves are also a great addition to rice! When cooking your rice, simply throw in a few leaves and the oils will infuse into the rice as it cooks. Test their taste by making our [steamed trout recipe with kaffir lime leaves](#).

Kaffir lime zest is perfect for making red and green curry pastes or using as a marinade for chicken, pork or lamb dishes. To make a curry paste, start by grinding sliced lemongrass and galangal using a mortar and pestle. Next,

add salt, garlic, kaffir lime zest, cilantro roots and shrimp paste followed by chilli peppers (fresh green for green curry paste or dried chilli peppers for a red curry paste). Pound the mixture until it turns into a fine paste, then simply cook your curry and enjoy!

Australian Finger Limes

Known as 'the caviar of citrus', Australian finger limes have gained in popularity over the last few years due to its unusual caviar like texture. Native to the rainforests of South East Queensland and NSW, the fruit boasts a lemon lime flavour with herbaceous undertones making it the perfect accompaniment for a variety of sweet or savoury dishes. Finger limes are perfect as a garnish for oysters, seared scallops or sushi, sprinkled over cooked seafood and chicken, added to desserts like pavlova or cheesecake or as a mixer for cocktails and spirits, especially the classic gin and tonic.

Australian Desert Limes

These limes, also native to Australia originated from the outback and are tolerant to heat, frost, drought and salinity. The fruit itself is smaller than your average lime but certainly packs a punch! Australia desert limes are great for making cordials, sauces, marmalades, pickles, and chutneys.

West Indian Lime (aka Mexican, Bartender's or Key lime)

West Indian limes are small and round with a strong and complex sour-acidic flavour. They are very juicy (producing up to 40% juice) so are great for dressings, marinades or using as a curing agent for a seafood ceviche. They do however contain seeds, so make sure you pass the juice through a sieve before serving.

To make a ceviche, squeeze the lime juice over diced raw fish such as kingfish or scallops and stand for 5 minutes to cure lightly or up to 30 minutes in the refrigerator if you prefer your fish cooked more thoroughly. Add some finely chopped onion, jalapeño chilli, tomato, salt and pepper and stir through. Finish with chopped avocado, tomato juice and garnish with coriander. Ceviche is great served with tostados or corn chips.

Regardless of which lime you choose, select limes that are firm, plump and heavy for their size. Avoid dull-coloured, overly soft or dried-out fruit with shrivelled skin as this means they're old and their moisture content is low. Limes can be kept at room temperature for about a week or refrigerated in a plastic bag for around 10 days.

Try using them in NEFF's recipe for [chilli and lime grilled prawns with potatoes and asparagus](#) – a tasty twist on the Australian classic.

Are lime leaves edible?

In short, yes. Lime leaves can be used to infuse flavour into your cooking, including in dishes like curries, or sliced thinly and added to salads.

Did you know?

Limes start green and ripen to orange and then yellow if left on the tree. The taste doesn't actually change between these stages, however they're primarily harvested green so consumers don't confuse them with lemons!

Notes
