



Pear



Pears are a member of the rose family of plants and have been enjoyed by people for thousands of years. Pears originated in southeastern Europe and were a favorite food of the ancient Greeks and Romans. The ancient Greek author Homer described them as “gifts from the gods” likely due to their sweet, juicy flavor.

Early colonists brought the first pear trees to America’s eastern settlements where they simply could not thrive in the climate and crop diseases proved too severe for widespread cultivation. Fortunately, pear trees were also carried west to Oregon and Washington by pioneers in the 1800’s and they thrived in the unique agricultural conditions found in the Pacific Northwest.

Most of the pears found in our grocery stores today come from Oregon, Washington, and California, but during the winter you may find pears grown in Chile, New Zealand, Australia and Argentina.



Although there are more than 3000 varieties of pears, below are some of the most popular:

Bartlett pears are the most common variety of pear. It is eaten fresh and used for canning. The Bartlett is shaped like a bell and turns from green to yellow when ripe. Look for Bartlett’s in the grocery store from July to December.

Anjou pears are oval-shaped pears with a smooth, thin skin. The skin does not change color as the fruit ripens so they remain a light green color. Anjou pears are most commonly available from October to June.

Bosc pears have a rougher-textured, brownish-green skin color. They are very good for baking and can be found from August through May.