

# Carrier Oils

## Coconut

With thanks to Purple Flame Aromatherapy, St John's Spinney, Gun Hill, New Arley, CV7 8IT

The origin of the coconut is unknown, but it is believed to have spread from the Indian Ocean to Malaysia and Polynesia. Fruits growing along the water's edge dropped into the sea and were taken by currents and tides throughout the South Sea very easily as the outer husk of the coconut is completely impervious to sea water. Now, because of its

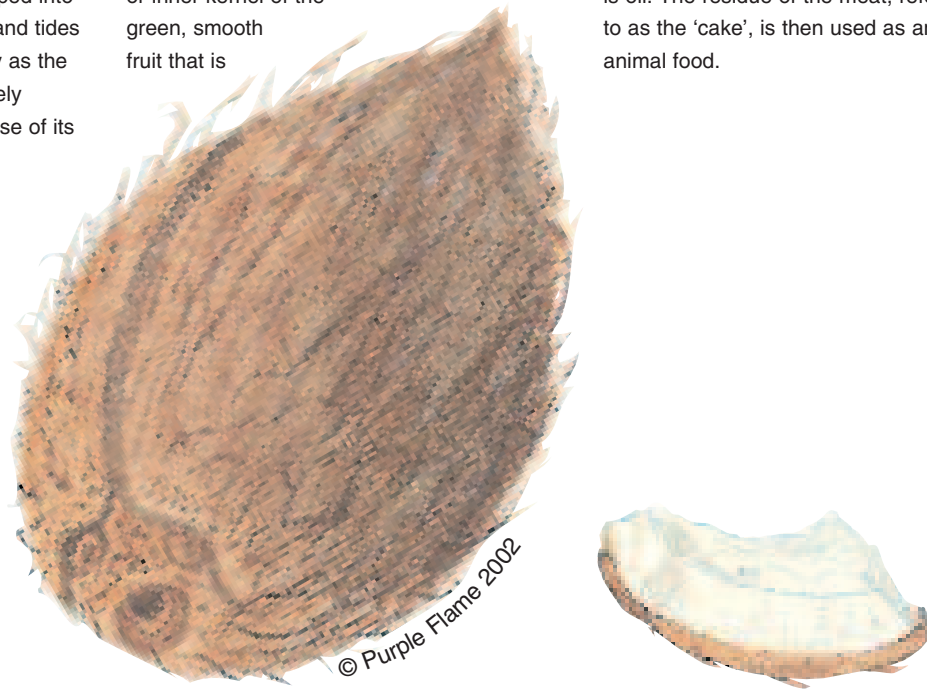
economic importance, the coconut is cultivated in many tropical areas, especially Africa and South East Asia.

The palm tree grows to about 25 metres (80 feet) and when fully mature at the age of 30, can yield 80 a year. Incredibly, it will start bearing fruit at just 6 years old.

The 'coconut' that we know is only the seed or inner kernel of the green, smooth fruit that is

the size of a rugby ball.

Every part of the coconut is put to good use. The several inches that make up the outer husk make a variety of products, including rope and doormats. The hard outer kernel is sold as an environmentally-friendly replacement to peat. The coconut oil used by therapists is made from the dried white 'meat' - two thirds of which is oil. The residue of the meat, referred to as the 'cake', is then used as an animal food.



**Oil Name:**  
Coconut

**Origin:**  
Tropical Regions

**Family:**  
Palmae

**Made From:**  
Kernels

**Latin Name:**  
Cocos nucifera

Main properties said to be:  
Emollient

Main therapeutic uses:  
Ideal for coarse skin, dark complexions and greasy skin conditions. The oil is frequently used in massage because of its emollient properties. It is light and fine in consistency and easily absorbed, leaving both the client and the therapist's skin feeling smooth and silky. Ideal for use in facial blends and use in

hotter climates. Also suitable as a suntan base for skin types that tan easily. Excellent for all skin types. Many hair products contain coconut oil because it softens the hair and conditions the scalp.

Main constituents:  
Glycerides of: Caproic Acid; Capric Acid, Caprylic Acid; Lauric Acid; Linoleic Acid; Linolenic Acid; Myristic Acid; Oleic Acid; Palmitic Acid; and Stearic Acid

Triglycerides of: Decanoic Acid and Octanoic Acid.

Other comments:

- ✿ Almost odourless
- ✿ Light coconut oil is preferred in aromatherapy
- ✿ The word cocos is Portuguese for monkey, as it is thought that the nut resembled a monkey's face.