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“Read More, Grow More”



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MONOFLORAL HONEY: HONEY OF WELLNESS

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Sarmistha Tosh

INTRODUCTION

Honey is one of the most appreciated and valued natural products introduced to humankind since ancient times, nearly 5500 years ago. It is reviewed as a balanced diet and equally popular for male and female in all ages. It is a sweet, viscous, food substance made by honey bees from the sugary secretions of floral nectars by regurgitation, enzymatic activity and water evaporation. The nectar honey used in our daily life is divided into two types i.e. polyfloral and monofloral. Monofloral honey is primarily made from a single source or the nectar of one type of plant for instance; acacia, pine, orange blossom, lime, rosemary, thyme, sunflower, clover, leatherwood, eucalyptus, buck wheat, lavender etc. Some studies reveal that monofloral honey contains the highest level of minerals at 4069 mg/kg. Raw honey is often monofloral and is widely considered to provide greater health benefits than multifloral honey. Though it takes longer to produce monofloral honey, it retains all the vitamins and minerals from the flowers.

But in practice, monofloral honey can be difficult to achieve. The bees can't be trained to go to a particular type of plant. Monofloral honey is the result of two conditions. Firstly, the target plant must predominate so the bees have a narrow range of choice of plants. Secondly, the beekeeper must time the introduction of the hive and the actual harvesting of the comb to coincide with the blooming period. This is achieved by carefully observing the blooming period of the chosen plant as well as possible overlapping blooming periods of other nectar-producing plants as well. Honey has ultrasounds of different varieties. Each type of single flower honey is a natural reduction of the nectar of its corresponding flower/plant.



Monofloral Moringa Honey

The differences are sometimes subtle and complex and sometimes obvious & surprising which makes monofloral honey unique and equal. Trying different monofloral honeys is a revelation of aromas and taste of them. Some are dark and rich; others almost clear & light. Some are very aromatic, reminiscent of their flower. Their taste is spicy, bitter, astringent, thick, smooth and creamy; hundreds of variations.

Bees foraging on white clover



softened in warm water. It is with a lingering aftertaste.

Spearmint honey is a medium strong aroma with a strong aftertaste.

Pennyroyal honey (*Mentha pulegium*) is strongly flavoured and works well with savoury dishes. Clover honey is light coloured with delicate sweet and flowery aroma and tastes mild and very sweet. The black locust or false acacia tree honey flavours sweet, lightly acidic with hints of vanilla & no aftertaste, with floral, fruity aroma. Lavender honey is light white to extra light amber colour with flowery, pleasant aroma and persistent medium sweet tastes (slightly sour in some cases). Jamun (Indian Blackberry) floral honey is obtained when the dominant nectar source is from the flowers of the Jamun. It is a mild and sweet flavour and is rich in vitamins and minerals. Orange blossom honey is often made from mixed citrus nectars (*Citrus* spp.) including oranges, grape fruit, lemons, mandarins, tangerines, limes and many others. The honey has a sweet and mild flavour and a light citrus fruity taste.

Mint honey is a rare treat having strong flavour and distinctive aroma.

Peppermint honey which is an amber coloured liquid crystallizes into a dense, fine buttery consistency, easily

medium sweet



Bee collecting nectar from lavender

Thyme honey is light amber to amber when liquid; beige to brown when it is crystallized. It is a very strong, intensely aromatic honey with resinous, herbal, savoury flavours; fresh and reminiscent of tropical fruits, dates & white pepper. Dandelion honey colour ranges from an intense golden yellow to a darker hue as it crystallizes. The taste is strong with medium sweetness and a slightly astringent lingering aftertaste with a creamy leathery texture.

Different monofloral varieties have remarkable and unique properties that make them stand out in their medicinal & therapeutic potential. Some of the health benefits of the monofloral honey are as follows:

- Helps in faster wound healing.
- Great for boosting the immune system
- Helps in fighting fatigue & induces sleep
- Keeps hypoglycaemia at bay
- Aids in improving digestive health (prebiotic benefits) and treating gastritis
- Has anti-allergic, anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, antifungal and antibiotic properties

- Boosts overall immunity
- Acts as an energy booster
- Good natural remedy for respiratory ailments



Peppermint blossom



- Helps against cough and cold
- Anti-acne action, reduces excess sebum
- Great for dry, dull skin and sensitive skin
- Improves appetite

Monofloral honey should be avoided when pregnant or if you are allergic to pollen or suffering from diabetes. Honey is likely safe when taken by mouth in children of one year age and above but should be avoided by infants.

There are many market players which sell different types of monofloral honey. Some of them are Lune De miel, Healthy Alternatives, QNET'S Nutriplus™ Busy Bee and Fabindia Organic. Nevertheless, honey with the characteristics of one plant type can be achieved as long as the proportion of nectar from this plant is high enough to produce the characteristic flavour, texture and aroma. To keep the honey relatively pure, beekeepers must be very careful to place fresh hives near the target plant when it starts to produce nectar, then remove the hives & extract the honey before the next set of plants blossom. Other times the predominance of a single species makes the production of almost pure single flower honey possible.



Besides the health benefits, monofloral honey also have some side effects which should be considered while consuming the honey.

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QNET's Nutriplus Busy Bee monofloral honey (Indian laurel, Jamun, eucalyptus)