

## DIP YOUR APPLE IN SOME (RAW) HONEY



Well, it's that time of year again for my fellow Jews....the new year is upon us, or Rosh Hashanah as we like to call it, and nothing says Rosh Hashanah quite like **HONEY**. For those non-Jews out there reading this, since honey symbolizes the hope for a sweet new year, we Jews dip apples and challah (bread) in honey for the 2 days of Rosh Hashanah, and some of us even do it for a few weeks after. We also eat honey cake, have roast meat sweetened with honey and heck we'll even bathe in honey if it will give us a sweet new year! (nah, I'm just kidding....or am

I? /:) )

If you go to your typical supermarket, the only honey you're likely to find is commercial honey. It looks pretty, doesn't it? Nice and clear, liquidy, maybe even in a cute, bear-shaped bottle. Awwww. Well, sorry to burst your bubble, but commercial honey has been excessively heated and filtered to look that way, to pour easily and stay that way on the shelves for possibly until the next millennium. Its enzymes and nutritional value are at least partially (if not completely) destroyed, and frankly, you might as well just suck on a sugar cube. OK, I'm exaggerating, it is better than sugar, but not by much.

RAW honey, on the other hand, is basically honey before it goes through all that processing, and is, in fact, a highly nutritious food. How so? Well, since it comes straight from the extractor and only lightly filtered, it is pure, unheated, (raw honey is anti-bacterial by nature, so it not necessary to heat it!), unpasteurized and unprocessed. This means it has vitamins and minerals, including anti-oxidants, and an enzyme called amylase which helps break down starchy foods. It's also an alkaline-forming food, like (most) fruits and vegetables, which makes it much healthier for your body. And if that wasn't enough for you to make the switch, you should know that because of its chemical structure it does not cause the same insulin rush that sugar does. So, if you don't care about any of that stuff, then by all means continue using your nutrition-less honey, I won't judge you! :-q That being said, if you bake or heat raw honey, it will change its molecular structure in a similar manner to commercial honey, so to get the health benefits you have to eat it raw! I still bake with it though, since it tastes a lot better than commercial honey.

Here are some different forms of raw honey. They can be found at any health food store, or the health-food section of your supermarket, if it has one:

- **RAW** honey will say raw on the bottle and will be solid at room temperature, like the picture shown above.
- **UNPASTEURIZED** honey is a form of liquid, almost-raw honey. This means that it has been heated slightly to make it liquid but not as much as commercial honey so a majority of its benefits are still intact.
- **BUCKWHEAT** honey has a stronger taste and is good for toast or pancakes.
- **CLOVER** or **SUMMER BLOSSOM** honey is a milder, general "all-purpose" sort of honey.

- **WILDFLOWER** honey has a bit more flavor and is very good for tea.
- **CREAMED** honey is spreadable for those of you who like to spread honey for sandwiches.
- **MANUKA** honey has a very unique taste and is a form of honey produced by bees which feed on the flowers of the manuka plant (or tea tree). This harnesses the anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties of the tea tree (by the way, this is where the antiseptic tea tree oil comes from) with the beneficial properties of honey making it effective for use in a wide variety of conditions, from sore throats to digestive complaints and even as a wound dressing. The number on the bottle relates to its active antiseptic compounds (for example, UMF 16+ contains an equivalent of 16% of these compounds) Higher numbers such as UMF 25+ are not found in nature and unfortunately are manipulated by some companies, (partly by exposing the honey to high heat), in order to increase profit – the higher the UMF, the more expensive it is. Its best to purchase organic manuka honey in the 12+ to 16+ range.

Enjoy your nutritious honey and have a sweet, happy and healthy new year! ☐

P.S. For those of you who only eat Kosher, according to star-k.org, raw honey is kosher as long as it is not flavored or contains other ingredients. Read more about this at [Star-K](#).

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