

Understanding "heavy-duty" fry oils

Some restaurants prefer highly stable oils that can withstand deep frying for extended periods. These oils are slow to break down through multiple fryings over a longer period of time.

Partially hydrogenated oils and shortenings (with trans fat), because they have such a long fry life and shelf life, became popular over the last 50 years as the "heavy-duty" fry products of choice. Now that we know how unhealthy artificial trans fat is, chefs are returning to traditional heavy-duty oils and some newer heavy-duty alternatives.

Heavy duty oils cost more per gallon than light/medium duty oils. However, because they last longer in the fryer, you may find that they're cost-neutral.

There are several choices for heavy-duty and extended deep frying:

- **Naturally stable plant oils.** These include **cottonseed, peanut, corn, rice bran,** and **palm.** Cottonseed, corn, and peanut are traditional favorites for heavy-duty frying. Palm oil, a tropical import, while stable, is very high in saturated fat and should be used sparingly.
- **Modified composition oils.** "Low linolenic," "mid oleic," and "high oleic" are terms used to describe newer oils with a fatty acid composition that is very stable, and good for extended deep frying. These oils come from plant sources (mainly soy, canola, and sunflower) that have been bred for this purpose. Under the right conditions (see [Deep Frying tips](#), above), these oils can last a week or longer.
- **Light/medium duty-heavy duty oil blends.** You can increase the stability of low-cost medium duty oils by blending them with small amounts of naturally stable plant oil or modified composition oil. You can also purchase pre-made blends (see our [0 grams trans fat fry oils and shortenings list for examples, listed in the "heavy duty" category](#)). A blend made this way can be used for extended deep frying, but it will not last as long as a 100% naturally stable oil or modified composition oil. Typical blends contain 75-90% percent soy or canola oil with TBHQ mixed with 10-25% peanut, cottonseed, rice bran, or a modified composition oil.