

Arrowroot Powder

COMMON NAME

BOTANICAL NAME

Arrowroot powder

Maranta arundinacea Araruta,
Maranta Starch, *Maranta Indica*,
Maranta Ramosissima

Note: This plant should not be confused with arrowhead (Sagittaria spp.) or Japanese arrowroot (Pueraria montana).

Characteristics:

Arrowroot powder is the dried root of the arrowroot plant. It is valued chiefly for its thickening properties, and is often used in thickening clear sauces and glazes and jellies. It is also used as a primary ingredient in infant cookies, where its digestibility makes it an excellent alternative to flour.

It is said to help soothe the pain of conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome, and is considered a nutritious and easily digested food starch for infants and elderly patients. Arrowroot powder is also often used as a substitute for talcum in baby powder and body powder.

Arrowroot has several advantages over cornstarch. It has a more neutral flavor and is more effective at a lower temperature. It tolerates acidic ingredients allowing for prolonged cooking. Sauces thickened with cornstarch turn into spongy if they're frozen, those made with arrowroot can be frozen and thawed with impunity. Arrowroot's downside is that it is pricier than cornstarch, and it's not a good thickener for dairy-based sauces, since it turns them slimy.

Parts Used: Rhizome

Processing Notes: Arrowroot starch is made by washing the harvested roots, grinding them into a pulp, and mixing the pulp with water. The resulting mixture is strained (to remove the fibrous material), allowed to settle, and air dried. It is then ground into a fine powder.

Features/Benefits:

Arrowroot powder is an odorless, gluten-free, low-protein, white colored starch; primarily used as a thickening agent. This natural, unmodified starch can replace powdered corn syrup in pan-coatings for candy and gives a superior surface gloss when used as a thickener. Arrowroot is easier to digest than wheat flour and helps to relieve digestive ailments. It is often used as an easy-to-digest form of nutrition for infants and people recovering from illness. Arrowroot also has anti-inflammatory and antiseptic properties and may be applied as an ointment or poultice.



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