

Cream

Cream was first used by the Romans in the 9th century A.D., but the credit for its modern-day popularity is attributed to the Viennese, who have been using it lavishly for the last 300 years.



What is Cream?

Cream is the high-fat milk product separated from milk. Milk, concentrated milk, dry whole milk, non-fat milk, concentrated non-fat milk or non-fat dry milk may be added. Also included may be emulsifiers, stabilizers, nutritive sweeteners, flavorings and other optional ingredients. Cream must contain at least 18% milk fat. All cream products are pasteurized or ultrapasteurized.

Varieties



- **Half-and-Half** is a mixture of milk and cream containing at least 10.5% but not more than 18% milk fat. This product contains about 20 calories and nearly 2 grams of fat per tablespoon.
- **Light Cream (coffee cream, table cream)** contains at least 18% but less than 30% milk fat. This product provides about 30 calories and 3 grams of fat per tablespoon.

- **Light Whipping Cream (whipping cream)** has at least 30% but not more than 36% milk fat. This product can be used as is (unwhipped) or whipped. Liquid (unwhipped) whipping cream contains about 44 calories and 5 grams of fat per tablespoon.

- **Heavy Cream** must contain at least 36% milk fat. This product is readily whipped and can retain its whipped state longer than light whipping cream. Heavy cream provides about 52 calories and 6 grams of fat per tablespoon.



- **Cream in Aerosol Cans** is whipped cream packaged in cans under pressure. Sugar, flavorings and a stabilizer may be added. One tablespoon contains about 8 calories and less than 1 gram of fat. This product is a convenient alternative to whipping cream.

- **Sour Cream (cultured sour cream)** is the product resulting from adding lactic acid bacteria to pasteurized cream that contains at least 18% milk fat.
- **Reduced-Fat Sour Cream** contains at least 25% less fat per serving than a serving (2 tablespoons) of sour cream.



Nutrition Facts

Cream is often thought to provide only fat, but it also contains vitamin A and some riboflavin (B2) and calcium. One tablespoon of cream contains 10 to 30 milligrams of calcium, depending on the product. The Nutrition Facts panel on the label of cream and cream products provides nutritional information.

Storing and Handling

To store cream, keep it refrigerated in its closed container at 40° F or lower. It should be used within one week. Unopened, ultrapasteurized cream keeps several weeks longer, but once opened, it should be handled like pasteurized cream.

Freezing is not recommended for unwhipped cream, but once whipped, cream may be frozen. Place dollops of whipped cream on waxed paper and freeze. When frozen, wrap individually for use as needed.

Commonly Asked Questions about Cream

How much whipping cream equals whipped cream?

One cup of whipping cream equals 2 cups of whipped cream.

What can I do to make cream whip better?

Both the amount of fat in cream and its temperature influence how well cream whips. Heavy whipping cream increases more in volume than light whipping cream. Light whipping cream whips to a greater volume than light cream. For best whipping results, choose a cream with a high fat content. Because the fat content of cream can vary among different brands, check product labels. Storing cream in the refrigerator for several hours and chilling the whipping bowl and beaters for 30 minutes in the freezer improve cream's whipping quality. If using an electric beater, chill only the detachable metal beaters. For best whipping results, cream should be as fresh as possible.

Can ultrapasteurized cream be used to make whipped cream?

Yes, although it takes slightly longer to whip ultrapasteurized cream than regular (pasteurized) whipping cream.

When is the best time during whipping to add other ingredients?

Other ingredients such as sugar or vanilla should be added near the end of whipping. If ingredients are added too early, the volume of cream whipped is reduced. If ingredients are added too late, or after the volume of whipped cream has reached its peak, the cream may be overwhipped causing some of it to turn into butter.

How can I prevent cream from curdling when added to coffee?

To avoid this situation, use fresh cream. As cream ages, its lactic acid content increases. Acid can curdle cream. The acid in coffee, along with coffee's heat, favor curdling of cream.



A Nutritional Look at Cream

Food: 2 Tablespoons	Calories (Kcal)	Fat (g)	Calcium (mg)	Vitamin A (IU)
Cream, half-and-half	39	3.5	32	106
Cream, light (coffee cream or table cream)	58	6.0	29	197
Cream, light whipping	88	9.0	21	304
Cream, heavy whipping	104	11.0	20	441
Sour cream, cultured	46	5.0	26	138
Sour cream, reduced fat	43	3.5	34	105

Source: USDA Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, 2013.

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