Sugar Substitutes and Artificial Sweeteners

Who doesn't enjoy a sweet treat? Most consumers enjoy the taste of sugar however, many also want to reduce sugar and lower their caloric intake. If you are someone who wants to reduce the sugar and calories, then you might be thinking of adding artificial sweeteners or sugar substitutes into your baked goods.

Most sugar substitutes are many times sweeter than sugar. Some sugar substitutes are produced by nature, while others are synthetically produced. Sugar substitutes are highly consumed in America. Some of the most commonly foods with sugar substitutes are cereals, diet sodas, ice cream and other sugar free desserts. You may have heard of "artificial sweeteners" or "non-caloric sweeteners." Artificial sweeteners are regulated by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) as food additives. These are food additives that provide a sweet taste, such as the taste that we get from sugar.

Natural sweeteners are sugar substitutes that are often seen as healthier options than processed table sugar, but even these "natural sugars" can go through a series of processing and refining. Some of the more common natural sugars include: agave nectar, fruit juices and nectar, honey, maple syrup and molasses.

When selecting a sweetener or sugar substitute, it pays to be a savy consumer. There are many different substitutes and sweeteners available in today's market; Aspartame (Nutrasweet), Cyclamate, Saccharin (sugar twin or sweet'N Low), Stevia, Sucralose (Splenda), Acesulfame Potassium, Mogrosides, Neotame (Isomalt), and Advantame are just a few. The topic of sugar substitutes and sweeteners can be confusing, especially when it comes to the terminology and interpretation. Regardless of how they are classified, they still require a deeper look; therefore we still suggest checking the labels on artificial sweeteners for appropriate use or asking a doctor or dietician if you have any concerns. Below we have listed some of the more popular sweeteners found in today's foods, as well as a new sugar substitute for baking.

Aspartame is one of the most rigorously tested food ingredients, it is also currently the most popular artificial sweetener used in the United States food industry, due to its price point. It is about 200 times sweeter than sugar and found in a large variety of foods and drinks. However, when it comes to being cooked or stored at room temperature, aspartame breaks down back into amino acids; therefore it isn't desirable for baking.

Sucralose is a chlorinated sugar that is about 600 times sweeter than sugar. It is also widely used in beverages, desserts, gum, and baking foods. It is also another substitute that is stable when heated and therefore can be used in baked goods. However, it may not produce similar results as compared to sugar.

Stevia is also a widely used natural sweetener, which is derived from the stevia plant. It has become increasingly popular due to the fact that it virtually contains zero calories and appears to be a zero on the glycemic index.

Sweeteners are particularly appealing to people who suffer from diabetes. The total population with diabetes is estimated to be 2.7 million people (7.6%) in 2010, and is projected to rise to 4.2 million people (10.8%) by 2020. While the number of Canadians diagnosed with diabetes is already high, an additional almost one million are estimated to have the disease but do not know it. Sweeteners have also been suggested to help people with diabetes control their blood sugar levels. Unlike artificial sweeteners, sugar alcohols can raise blood sugar levels because they're carbohydrates. But because your body doesn't completely absorb sugar alcohols, their effect on blood sugar is less than that of other sugars.

It has been suggested that sugar substitutes can help people trying to lose weight, since they provide sweetness to food and drinks but do not add as many calories as sugar.

Studies have also shown that using artificial sweeteners in foods can prevent dental decay. Sugars and carbohydrates adhere to the tooth's enamel, allowing bacteria to feed and multiply. Unlike sugar, substitutes do not erode teeth as they are not fermented by dental plaque. Many substitutes such as xylitol actually prevent bacteria from adhering to the tooth's surface. Since the sweetener cannot be fermented by the bacteria, it therefore helps to prevent plaque formation and diminishes the possibility of tooth decay.

About Natusweet Sweet n'fine:

According to the latest studies devolved through University of Vienna, and the recommendations of WHO (World Health Organization) we should only consume about 25g of sucrose a day, however the fact is that we are consuming about 4 times that amount.

Introducing Natusweet Sweet n'fine low caloric, sugar free sugar substitute delivers lower calories in foods, that bakes like sugar and tastes like sugar. It has been created to limit the sucrose consumption across North America.

Natusweet's sweet n'fine has taken on the task to produce a product to meet the demands for "sugar-free" or at least sugar-reduced foods, without compromising on the taste. Most sugar replacements or artificial sweeteners to date have been known to leave a typical aftertaste, this is the first of its kind to produce the same characteristics of taste and use like sugar. Because of its same texture as conventional sugar, both home bakers and bakeries can now substitute this sugar and reduce their typical recipes by about 30%-50% of the normal calories.

This non cariogenic, GMO-free, caloric reduced sugar is also suitable for diabetics. Due to the 3 main ingredients found in this sugar replacement, Natusweet is easily digestible and contains fibre. It has also shown to be tooth friendly.

Erythrit a natural sugar alcohol, can be found in fermented products like wine and cheese, as well in fruits like melons and grapes. The big advantage of Erythrit in comparison to Xylit is the better digestibility. More than 90% of Erythrit is excreted in the urine.

Isomalt Some of the technical benefits of sugar come along with Isomalt. So you can even produce fondants, etc.

Inulin a fiber, prebiotic active and aids digestion

sweetener: Erythritol, Isomalt, Inulin,
flavour

Nutritional values	**per 100 g**
Caloric value	475 kJ / 115 kcal
Total Fat	0 g
Saturated Fat	0 g
Total Carbohydrate	89,75 g
Polyols	88,75 g
Sugars	1,3 g
Dietary Fiber	9,7 g
Protein	0 g
salt	0 g