

The History and Health Benefits of Kefir Notes

History

- Originated from the Caucasian mountains in Russia
- For many centuries – it was not known outside of this area
- Marco Polo did mention it in his travels
- Eventually, it spread across Europe and then to the United Kingdom, Australia and Chile
- It is now becoming popular in North America

History

- The legend among the Islamic people is that kefir grains were given to the Orthodox Christians by the prophet Mohamed
- They guarded the secret of making kefir for many generations, as they believed the grains would lose their potency if the secret got out
- The secret is out now...
- In 1908, kefir grains were taken to a Moscow dairy where the first bottles were produced for sale

Magical Kefir Grains

- Despite attempts to duplicate them, only kefir grains can make traditional kefir
- It is one of the simplest fermented foods to make
- Just add the grains to milk and let it ferment
- This is one reason it was so popular – it could be made anywhere in just about anything

Kefir Grains

- Kefir grains are a symbiotic combination of 32 strains of good bacteria (both lactic acid and acetic acid strains) and yeasts
- The kefir bacteria and yeasts do not survive when separated as pure cultures – which is unusual
- The yeast provide vitamins, amino acids and help the kefir bacteria grow

Health Benefits of Kefir

- Stimulates the function of the immune system
- Polysaccharides found in kefir have been shown to inhibit tumour growth
- Anti-microbial properties – can inhibit food borne pathogens
- Lower serum triglycerides and cholesterol
- Beneficial for skin conditions like acne and eczema

Health Benefits of Kefir

- Kefir has anti-inflammatory properties including shows an ability to reduce histamine
- Studies with mice show kefir has anti-tumour properties
- May aid those who are lactose intolerant
- In a human study: 15 people were fed kefir, and saw a reduction in symptoms by 54 -71 %

Is Kefir Number 1?

- Kefir aids digestion both during a meal that it is consumed with it and overall as part of the daily diet
- No other fermented food provides as many strains of beneficial organisms
- Either kefir made from cow, goat or coconut milk should be considered a must for gut health

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