

Organic Argan Oil



Where the Sahara meets the sea.

We travelled again to explore the origin of **Morocco's most valuable treasure**. Our destination was our long-standing suppliers of **argan oil**, with whom we have maintained a good relationship for many years. We visited their women's cooperatives and production sites to answer many interesting questions.

Where does argan oil come from?

Argan trees, from whose fruit argan oil is extracted, only grow in **southern Morocco** (and south-eastern Algeria). UNESCO recognised the use of the trees and their fruit as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2014.



What ingredients make argan oil so valuable?

Argan oil is **rich in antioxidants** (polyphenols), **tocopherols** (vitamin E), especially alpha-tocopherol, **essential fatty acids** such as omega 6 and 9, phytosterols, carotenoids, which are among the precursors of **vitamin A** and, last but not least, **natural squalene**.

Who owns the trees?

The owners of the argan trees are the **families** who live in the **rural regions** (south-west of Morocco) where argan trees grow.



When are the argan fruits ripe and how old can an argan tree grow?

The fruits generally ripen between **July and September**, depending on the location and environmental conditions. Argan trees can live up to around 200 years.

How long do the trees bear fruit?

Argan trees can bear fruit from the age of 7-15 years and reach their maximum production at the age of 40.

Is it a certified wild collection?

Yes, the harvesting areas of our suppliers are fully certified.

How does the collection and processing of argan nuts work?



Harvesting the argan nuts: Argan nuts are harvested from argan trees (*Argania spinosa*). Harvesting is time-consuming and requires a lot of manual labour. **Only picking the nuts from the ground is permitted**; picking directly from the tree is prohibited. After the nuts have been collected, they are dried, including the pulp, packed in sacks and stored in warehouses. Depending on the demand for oil, the nuts including the dried pulp are taken to the production centres for further processing. The dried nuts are **traditionally** first freed from the dried flesh **by the women** and then cracked with stones to get to the kernels (argan almonds) inside. This **process requires skill and experience**, as the nuts are very hard. The argan nuts obtained can be processed roasted or unroasted. Roasted argan nuts are pressed to obtain a culinary argan oil. Cold-pressing the **unroasted argan nuts** produces native argan oil with a **typical argan odour**, which is used as a **cosmetic oil**.



There are **various pressing methods**, including traditional stone mills or modern spindle presses. With the cold-pressed method, the temperature remains low in order to preserve the quality of the argan oil. The extracted argan oil is filtered to remove residues and to obtain a pure, clear oil.

Seasonal employment of women?

The employment of women who work in our partner cooperatives **is permanent**. In addition to the collection of the argan nuts and the communal cracking of the nuts, this is an essential part of the **local value creation worthy of protection**. This plays a central role in promoting gender equality and socio-economic development within the community.



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What additional social aspects are there?

Our partners are proud to support the local economy by creating **fair and sustainable long-term employment opportunities** for local women. The argan tree has long been an integral part of the life, culture and economy of the Berber villages. The projects were set up according to the principles of **fair trade** in order to share a common value with the producers and co-operative owners while supporting the local population and contributing to the promotion and preservation of the argan trees.



Our aim is to promote sustainable development by supporting and empowering local communities to support initiatives for **clean water, legal aid, youth development, women's empowerment, education, sports, leisure activities and healthcare**, with the **planting of argan trees** serving as the main means of community building and greater involvement of women. The project has had a positive impact, for example in terms of reduced migration, lower unemployment, improved educational opportunities and greater gender equality within the community.

Our qualities

Argan Oil Cold Pressed, Organic	Golden yellow, slightly nutty smell
Argan Oil Refined, Organic	colourless, almost odourless
Argan Oil Roasted Cold Pressed, Organic	Yellow-brownish, stronger smell

Why is argan oil so interesting for cosmetics?

In fact, argan oil has excellent beauty and skin benefits:

- **Best anti-ageing ingredients** against wrinkles
- **Complete hydration** of the skin
- **Protection and moisturisation** of hair and scalp
- **Skin rejuvenation effect**

Overall, the unique **combination of fatty acids, antioxidants, and other bioactive substances** in argan oil makes it a versatile ingredient in cosmetics. Its ability to moisturise, protect and soothe the skin, as well as its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, make it a sought-after ingredient for skincare products designed to improve skin texture, tone and overall appearance.



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Upcycling: What happens to the leftovers?



The remains of argan are **the shells** from the crushing and an **oily cake** from the extraction. No part of the nut is thrown away; the soft pulp and the dry cake are used as **animal feed**. As it is full of nutrients, it is also suitable as an ingredient for beauty products such as **soap**. Argan shells are an excellent, natural source of **biofuels** such as fuel for baths or heating.

What is the goat doing in the tree?

Argan trees are also known as goat trees, as the fruits of the tree are highly sought after by goats. Individual herds of goats roam the region and so the argan fruit-bearing trees are a **natural source of food for the goats**. The short trunks and low-hanging branches of the trees make it easy for goats to climb to the highest treetops.



The yellow flesh is highly sought after and the kernels are excreted by the goats after being eaten. When picking up the argan fruits, however, the women immediately recognise whether they are **digested argan kernels** and these **are not picked up**. As already described, only the fully ripe, yellow argan fruits lying on the ground are collected for further drying and processing.

