

New brews

Many of us enjoy a morning cup of coffee, and it has its benefits. But is there a healthy alternative for those who aren't keen? *Words: Ellie Swain*

A recent study published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* found that people who consumed a moderate amount of coffee daily had a lower risk of death over a seven-year period than those who didn't. But while coffee has its health and energising benefits, it's not for everyone. Reaching for caffeine in the morning may come as second nature to some, but it can leave others feeling jittery, dehydrated, or anxious — sometimes with an unwanted midday caffeine crash. Fortunately, there are a number of other drinks, both stimulating and healthy, to start your day with.

CLEANSE WITH CHAI TEA

Teeming with energising and health benefits, chai tea also smells and tastes heavenly. The black tea base contains caffeine, and the medley of spices provides various benefits: cardamom helps cleanse your system, ginger helps with digestion and soothes stomach troubles, while cinnamon could help boost your metabolism.

A study published in *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* found that black tea in chai tea may also help lower blood cholesterol levels.

DE-STRESS WITH MATCHA
Unlike coffee, matcha offers a less skittish pick-me-up. It's made from dried, ground tea leaves with significantly more antioxidants than regularly brewed green tea. The drink contains a high concentration of flavonoids and L-theanine. Research in the *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition* has suggested that L-theanine increases relaxation without causing sleepiness, which is particularly helpful for those with high anxiety levels. Even a single cup of matcha has been found to have that effect.

BOOST YOUR MEMORY WITH GUARANA
Guarana is a caffeine alternative that's been used in Brazil for generations. In the UK, you may find it in small doses in energy drinks. As well as waking you up, guarana



also supports healthy heart function, learning and memory. A study in international research journal *Appetite* found that those who took a guarana-containing vitamin supplement felt less tired while completing several tests than those who took a placebo.

MIX IT UP WITH CHICORY ROOT
If you enjoy the taste of coffee and the process of making it, but you'd

like to ditch the caffeine high, chicory root could be for you. With a nutty scent and woody taste, the drink has become quite popular. You can grind, roast and brew chicory root just like you would with coffee. But you'll avoid the coffee shakes, thanks to its caffeine-free status. Drinkers will enjoy the coffee-like flavour, without experiencing that dreaded afternoon crash. And if you can't go cold turkey from the

real thing, you can also mix chicory root with coffee grounds on the days you're craving a proper brew. Chicory root is a source of inulin, a type of prebiotic fibre, which, according to a study in the *European Journal of Nutrition*, may help with weight loss and boost gut health. Don't over-consume chicory root if you have digestive problems, though, as inulin can also contribute to gas and bloating.

Why eating California raisins should be part of your daily diet

But, you might ask, just where do they come from?



Not too long ago, we lived in a world where ignorance was bliss when it came to food. For many, knowing where their food came from and how it was made wasn't a priority. Since then, there's been a shift in attitude, a slow realisation that where our food comes from is equally as important as how it tastes. California Raisins lets you know exactly where its raisins originate from — the clue is in the name. The San Joaquin Valley in central

California provides the perfect combination of sun, soil and snowfall, making it an ideal location to turn those sweet clusters of grapes into the delicious, all-natural California Raisins the world has come to love.

HOW ARE THEY MADE?
Central California's Mediterranean climate means that farmers can dry their grapes using only the sun's energy, making California Raisins

100% natural. Not only does this mean no preservatives or unwanted chemicals, but it also means that California Raisins can save a vast amount of energy in the form of fossil fuels, making them extremely sustainable. All of this means that California Raisins are grown with nature in mind.

ADDING THEM TO YOUR DIET
You can find them in salads, your morning cereal, protein balls and so much more. The small but mighty raisin is not only versatile, but also packed with minerals, essential nutrients and energy, making the often-undererrated fruit a great addition to a healthy and balanced diet.

IF YOU'RE DOUBTFUL, CHECK OUT SOME OF THE HEALTH BENEFITS:

- Great source of fibre
- Contains iron, which contributes to the reduction of tiredness and fatigue and to the normal function of the immune system
- Contains calcium, which is needed for the maintenance of normal bones

- Contains potassium, which contributes to normal muscle function and the maintenance of normal blood pressure



For further information

Visit: californiaraisins.co.uk

