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## Wizened way 風乾之道

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## Wizeden Way

### 風乾之道

Accentuate flavours and enhance nutrition with a dehydrator

風乾機能保存食物營養，令味道更濃郁



By Rachel Duffell

Dehydrating was originally a means of extending the shelf life of foods. Fruits and vegetables, for example, have been dried in the open air and under the sun for thousands of years, unfortunately leaving them prone to pests and the elements. Today, the dehydrator offers an easy, efficient and safe way of removing moisture, intensifying flavours, locking in nutrition and preserving a wide range of foods.

Inside a dehydrator, warm air circulates around ingredients, which are laid out on trays. Fruit and vegetables are generally dehydrated at a constant temperature of 54°C, while 68°C

works better for meat. Dry food at too high a temperature, and it will harden on the outside while remaining moist inside, making it susceptible to spoiling.

Great for drying mushrooms and tomatoes, or for making healthy snacks such as vegetable crisps, flax seed crackers and banana chips, dehydrating is extremely useful to people on a raw food diet. The method also invites experimentation: add cinnamon to apples, nutritional yeast to kale, or sauces such as soy or Worcestershire, or a spice blend, to meat to create new flavours of jerky.

For the best results, flash blanch vegetables and soak fruit for a few minutes prior to dehydration, and slice thinly and evenly before spreading across the trays with no overlap. Then let the dehydrator get to work. Once food is dried, allow it to cool in the dehydrator, then store in airtight containers to ensure crispness and taste last for as long as possible.

以風乾來延長食物的保存期限自古有之，數千年來，人們都把蔬果放在太陽底下自然風乾。不過，這方法很容易受害蟲和其他因素影響，不像現時的風乾機，既安全方便又有效率，能烘乾各種各樣的食物，鎖住其營養，令味道更濃郁。

風乾機內有暖風循環吹送，慢慢烘乾平鋪在盤上的食材。蔬果通常以攝氏54度風乾，而肉類則以68度為佳。溫度太高的話，會導致食物表面乾硬但裡面仍然濕潤，容易腐壞。

用風乾機做蘑菇乾、番茄乾、蔬菜乾、亞麻籽餅和香蕉乾等，非常方便，因此深受奉行生機飲食的人喜愛。風乾食物的可塑性也很高，可以嘗試在蘋果加入肉桂粉、在羽衣甘藍加入營養酵母，甚至在肉類加入醬油、喼汁或混合香料等調味，製造新口味的肉乾。

在風乾前先稍稍汆燙一下蔬菜，或將水果浸泡幾分鐘，然後切成薄片平鋪在盤上，不要重疊，效果會更佳。風乾後，讓食物在機內放涼，然後儲存在密封的容器內，保持香脆和味道不變。