

[Cast iron pans and pots](#) have been used around the world for centuries. And there are good reasons for that. If you maintain a cast iron skillet properly, it will last a lifetime. You will then come across pots that are over a hundred years old. They still look great and can still be used after all these years. Cooking with a cast iron skillet has many more benefits.



What is a Cast Iron Skillet?

A cast iron skillet is almost always made entirely of, you guessed it, cast iron. They consist of a mixture (alloy) of iron, carbon, manganese and silicon. Raw iron is smelted together with coke, a type of coal, and lime. This compound is then placed in a mold. Hence the name "cast iron".

In Asia, especially China, Japan and Korea, there is a long tradition of cooking in cast iron pots. The first time these pots appeared in history was around AD 680. They were used over an open fire. Something cast iron cookware can stand up to. Famous are the Dutch Ovens, cast iron pots that were brought to America by Dutch emigrants in the 19th century. It was only after the arrival of the stove that the cast iron skillet really became popular. They were loved for the durability of the material.

You can easily recognize a cast iron skillet by that material. When you have a cast iron skillet in your hands, you will notice that it is noticeably heavier. The material is also much rougher than a regular aluminum pan. It is precisely this material that offers the advantages of a cast iron pan.



Does cooking in a cast iron pan have any advantages?

Yes of course! When you decide to buy a cast iron pan, you will immediately discover the advantages of these extremely resistant pans.

A cast iron skillet gets better with every use

When you want to buy a new pan, you'll find yourself inundated with an absurdly large selection of non-stick pans. Ceramic, enamel, Teflon, they all promise to be the perfect non-stick coating. However, it is and remains a chemical layer that will deteriorate over time.

When you [buy a cast iron skillet](#), it still has a nonstick coating. You have to create this layer yourself. By letting a vegetable oil adhere to the pan at a high temperature, you ensure the best non-stick coating.

Regular use and good maintenance (important!) will make your cast iron pan better and better. As a result, you end up with an indestructible pan that can not only get very hot, but in which food doesn't even stick.



Cast iron can hold heat well

One of the best properties of cast iron is its ability to retain heat for a long time. When your cast iron skillet is at the right temperature, it stays hot too. If you're looking for a good skillet for steaks and other meats, then a cast iron skillet is the best buy.

Cast iron skillets are durable

Cast iron is so incredibly durable that a pan that's 100 years old can still be used without a problem. We can't say that about the average non-stick pan that shows traces of use after only a few months. A cast iron skillet is virtually indestructible. It is therefore a purchase that you will enjoy for years to come.

Prevents burning of food

It is sometimes thought that food always sticks in a cast iron skillet. This is really a myth. A normal frying pan is made of aluminum and conducts heat very well. If you put it on fire, the heat will be distributed unevenly. These are the so-called "hot spots" which ensure that the food burns.

This is not the case with a cast iron skillet at all. Cast iron is a poor conductor of heat, but it holds heat well. That's why you let the pan come up to temperature first. The heat is distributed evenly and food is prevented from burning in a cast iron pan.



Cast iron is suitable for all heat sources

The heat source used affects the [type of cookware](#) you can use. Many pans cannot be used on all stoves or hobs. Make it easy with a cast iron skillet. A cast iron skillet is suitable for all heat sources.

You can use a [cast iron pan on an induction or ceramic hob](#), but also on gas. You can also switch between gas and induction with this pan. And because the pan stands up to high temperatures so well, you can just pop it in the oven with the greatest of ease. You can also cook on the barbecue with a cast iron skillet.

Cooking at high temperatures

Cast iron can get very hot. Much hotter than a regular frying pan. This is a big plus of a cast iron skillet. Because the hotter the pan, the faster the Maillard reaction, that delicious brown crust, will be. A quality that makes every passionate cook happy. Cast iron pans are therefore perfect for searing meat or roasting vegetables.

A cast iron skillet and a sous vide are a golden combination for the same reason. After soaking in warm water, the meat is already perfectly cooked, but there is no brown crust. You just need the pan to ensure that delicious caramelization. It should be as warm and at the same time as short as possible.

Easy cleaning

A cast iron skillet is easy to clean. Just use some water and a soft dish sponge. If the pan is very dirty, you can also use a little dish soap. Make sure you rinse the pan well afterward. After cleaning, add a little oil to the pan and rub with a paper towel. Your pan is then completely ready for the next use.

Cook healthier

Regular non-stick pans have a chemical coating to prevent food from sticking. The use of these coatings is not entirely undisputed. For example, there has been a lot of talk about the [Teflon coating of cookware](#). That is why other non-stick materials are now used. But however you look at it; a chemical layer remains which cannot withstand high temperatures and will be damaged quickly.

A cast iron skillet, on the other hand, is pure and has no lab-developed chemical coatings. By greasing the pan with a little vegetable oil after use, you ensure the best natural non-stick coating.

You therefore need to use much less oil in a cast iron pan than in an aluminum or sheet steel pan. A little oil is enough for even cooking without burning. It's much healthier.