

COSMO BODY & SOUL

THE FEEL-GOOD GUIDE YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT!

The word 'hemp' usually conjures up thoughts of naughty giggles and the munchies. But industrial hemp is, in fact, only distantly related to marijuana, and the hemp seed contains almost no tetrahydrocannabinol (better known as THC), the active ingredient in cannabis. More importantly, hemp is incredibly versatile: its more than 25 000 recorded uses range from cosmetics to nutrition, fabrics and even building materials.

HEMPRESSIVE!

Legend has it that Buddha used to live on one hemp seed a day,' says Tony Budden of Cape Town's Hemporium. That may be more fiction than fact but hemp's status as a superfood is confirmed, thanks to the high concentration of essential fatty acids (EFAs) – omega-3, -6 and -9 – present in the seeds. EFAs have immune-boosting properties and are necessary for healthy brain functioning. Hemp is also an excellent source of protein that's easily digested and absorbed.

So how do you reap the healthy benefits of hemp? 'Shelled hemp seeds have a deliciously nutty flavour,' says Budden. 'You can sprinkle them over salads or cereal, or you can use hemp oil to bake bread and muesli.' Hemp flour can also be used as a protein booster, while the protein powder – manufactured from the seed cake remaining once the oil has been pressed from the seeds – can be added to smoothies to provide a nutritious kick. You could even stir a little hemp milk into your coffee.

GRASS ROOTS

Hemp-seed oil mimics the skin's own oils and penetrates deep into the dermis, so it also makes an outstanding moisturiser. 'Cosmetics made from hemp, including shampoos, conditioners, bath products, massage oils and even after-sun treatments, are all highly effective,' says Budden. – Lisa Witepski

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Hemporium ☎ 021 797 8233,
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Hempton's ☎ 011 781 8956,
www.hempton.co.za

WONDER WEED

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