

479° Popcorn Review - Review of 479° Popcorn Madras Curry Coconut Cashew Popcorn

By [Miri Rotkowitz](#), About.com Contributing Writer



The Bottom Line

That great care goes into the production of this small-batch artisanal popcorn is evident from the first bite. Handmade with heirloom organic popcorn and expertly-blended spices, this is the sort of popcorn I'd expect to find in a white tablecloth restaurant, served as a sendoff by a chef with a whimsical streak. Bold yet balanced flavor and crisp corn make this a satisfying snack. A great movie popcorn upgrade, and versatile enough for casual and upscale entertaining alike. Judging by the strength of the Madras Curry Coconut + Cashew popcorn, the entire line is very much worth sampling.

Pros & Cons

Pros:

- 479° Popcorn is handmade in small batches as orders come in, so it arrives at your door utterly fresh.
- Made from heirloom organic popcorn, locally-sourced, and fairly-traded ingredients.
- Inventive, chef-driven flavors are great for entertaining.
- Sharply-designed packaging makes 479° Popcorn ideal for gift giving.

Cons:

- Flavors are not available individually - they come only as part of a 5-flavor sampler pack, or a 3-canister collection.
- Though the flavor reviewed is dubbed "Madras Curry Coconut + Cashew," the coconut is barely detectable, which may disappoint coconut lovers.
- While the high-quality ingredients and handmade pedigree seem to justify the price, this popcorn is a bit of a splurge at \$7 per 2.4 ounce box.

About 479° Popcorn



Popcorn can be so much more than casual movie fare. It is a fantastic foil for spices and other savory culinary elements, and it dresses up magnificently without losing its fun. (Just ask Thomas Keller, who has served up truffled popcorn at Per Se.) So I was intrigued the moment I saw 479° Popcorn's website. The brainchild of a popcorn-loving, Cordon Bleu-trained culinarian, the fledgling company offers an inspired selection of internationally-flavored popcorns.

The company's moniker stems from founder Jean Arnold's discovery that 479° F is optimal for corn popping. That sort of high-caliber attention to detail extends through her entire popcorn-making outfit. The heirloom organic popcorn is popped in small batches in copper kettles, spices are ground and blended by hand each week, and most ingredients are locally sourced.

Tasting Notes & Product Review

Based on the web description, I expected purely savory flavors from the Madras Curry Coconut + Cashew popcorn. But a gossamer wash of cane sugar lies just beneath the surface of the heady curry spice blend. The unexpected sweetness evident in the first few bites gives way to the spicy, blooming warmth of chiles, turmeric, and paprika. A touch of sea salt heightens the flavors and provides balance. Plump roasted cashews are fresh, but almost superfluous (there aren't that many), and the tiny flakes of toasted coconut add just a whisper coconut flavor (I had to close my eyes and really concentrate to pick up on it).

That might disappoint coconut aficionados, but it's not necessarily a liability - the real magic is in the pairing of Arnold's alchemical Madras Curry blend with top-notch popcorn. The heirloom kernels are crisp, and the hulls are small and tender (so they're less prone to get stuck between teeth). This is a popcorn that's as much about sensation as flavor - the aroma of the spices, the warmth of spice on the tongue, the crunch of sugar-kissed corn. It's definitely snack-inducing, but because it's so satisfying on a multi-sensory level, the 2.4 ounce box is actually sharable. 479° Popcorn suggests each box will serve 2 to 4, though I think 2 servings is a more realistic estimate. Should you have leftovers, I'd recommend closing the bag tightly or sealing it in an airtight container to preserve the popcorn's crispness.

Product Information & Where to Buy:



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Certified USDA Organic. Vegetarian and Vegan Flavors available.

479° Popcorn is available in the following flavors:

- Alderwood Smoked Sea Salt (Vegan)
- Black Truffle + White Cheddar
- Chipotle Caramel + Almonds
- Fleur de Sel Caramel
- Ginger Sesame Caramel
- Madras Curry Coconut + Cashew (Vegan)
- Pimentòn de La Vera (Vegan)
- Vietnamese Cinnamon Sugar (Vegan)

Price:

- 5-box Sampler (Curry Coconut + Cashews is available as part of the Foodie or Globetrotter sampler): **\$35**
- 3-canister Collection: **\$48**
- Pop-It-Yourself Kit with popcorn, oil, and seasonings: **\$35**
- Popcorn That Gives Back: **\$14**, 100% of proceeds go to Urban Sprouts.

Buy online from these sources:

- 479° Popcorn
- Foodzie.com
- The Marin Store

479° Popcorn is also available in select retail shops throughout the United States. Check the retail directory to find one near you.