

Spring Produce Guide

Martin's
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Artichoke

In season:

March – May/June (Spring)

Grown in:

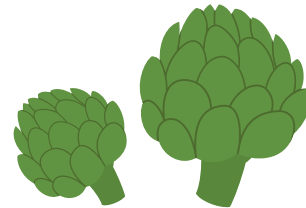
Mediterranean; California, USA (near the coast, with the town of Castroville being the Artichoke Capital of the World)

What to look for:

Firm, heavy artichokes with dark green color and tightly closed leaves, brown shadings on the outer leaves, listen for a squeak

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* stuffed, baked, or braised; use in dips/sauces, soups/stews, grains, salads
- *Pairings:* lemon-butter, basil mayonnaise



Arugula

In season:

Spring and Fall (cool season crop)

Grown in:

Mediterranean; Asia

What to look for:

Fresh, green leaves that are free of wilting

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* raw, cooked, sautéed
- *Pairings:* pesto, lemon, garlic, parmesan, delicious addition to salads

<http://www.saveur.com/gallery/arugula-recipes-salad>



Asparagus



In season:

February – June (cool season crop); peak: April

Grown in:

Most parts of the country; regions with cool winters

What to look for:

Bright green stalks, no signs of shriveling, should be firm and tight, closed and tight tips of spears

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* boiled, roasted, raw, grilled; use in soups, casseroles
 - *Pairings:* lemon, butter, garlic, prosciutto, parmesan, aioli
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Broccoli

In season:

Year round; peak: October – April (cool season crop)

Growing tips:

Grow from seeds or transplants; plant 1 month before last frost; should bud 2-3 months after planting

What to look for:

Heavy stalks with small, tightly packed buds; deep green heads, avoid ones with thick white stalks – they will be tougher

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* raw, roasted, steamed, sautéed; use in casseroles, etc.
- *Pairings:* garlic, soy, lemon, hot chiles, beef, chicken



Cabbage

In season:

Spring and Fall (cool weather)



Growing tips:

Start seeds indoors 4-6 weeks before last frost; place transplants in ground 3-4 weeks before last frost; ready to harvest in approximately 3-4 months.

- *Harvesting:* Cabbage heads must feel hard and solid before cutting. When harvesting, use a sharp knife to cut the head off at the base of the plant, keeping a few outer leaves to protect the head.

Tips:

Grows well in container gardening; companion plants include: beets, celery, herbs, onion, potatoes

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* raw, boiled, braised, pickled; use in coleslaw, soups/stews, sauerkraut
- *Pairings:* garlic, potatoes, onions, corned beef, sausage, pork

Carrots

In season:

Late Spring, Fall

Growing tips:

Plant in sandy soil, outdoors 3-5 weeks before last frost

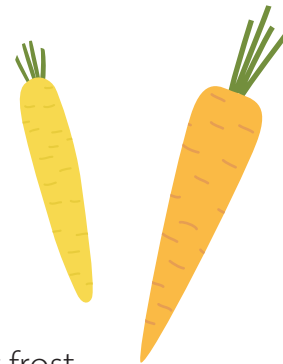
- *Harvesting:* Carrots are mature at around 2.5 months and ½ inch in diameter. You may harvest whenever desired maturity is reached.
- *Storage:* You may leave mature carrots in the soil for storage if the ground will not freeze.

What to look for:

Smooth, firm, crisp; deep color (there are a range of colors – purple, red, orange, yellow, white)

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* raw, roasted, braised, steamed, sautéed, use in baked goods
- *Pairings:* peas, garlic, potatoes, chicken, beef, butter, spices



Cauliflower

In season:

Spring, Fall (cool weather)



Growing tips:

Transplant 2-4 weeks before average spring frost; same as cabbage

- *Harvesting:*
 - Harvest when heads are compact, white, and firm; ideally, the heads will grow 6 to 8 inches in diameter.
 - Cut the heads off the plant with a large knife. Be sure to leave some of the leaves around the head to keep it protected.
 - If the heads are too small but have started to open up, they will not improve and should be harvested.
 - If the cauliflower has a coarse appearance, it is too mature and should be tossed.
- *Storage:* Put the head in a plastic bag and store it in the refrigerator, for up to 1 week. For long-term storage, you can also freeze or pickle the heads.

What to look for:

Firm, with compact florets; fresh leaves; comes in white, green, and purple varieties

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* steamed, boiled, roasted; use in salads, casseroles, soups/stews
- *Pairings:* sauces like hollandaise, garlic, butter, spices, cheese, beef, pork

Garlic

In season:

Year-round, best in the fall



Growing tips:

Usually plant in Fall, 4-6 weeks before ground freezes, harvest in summer; can also be planted in Spring as soon as the ground can be worked; garlic is a natural pest repellent; very easy to grow

- *Fall Planting:*
Plant cloves in mid-autumn in a sunny location with rich, well-drained soil. Set cloves root side down 4-6" apart in rows 1-1/2 to 2" apart, and cover with 1-2" of fine soil. In the North, put down 6" of mulch for winter protection. Garlic may begin growth late in fall or early in spring.
- *Spring Planting:*
Plant cloves as early in spring as soil can be worked, about the same time as onion sets. Spring planted garlic should be put in the ground in the same manner as in the fall.

Harvest/Storage:

In late summer, bend over tops to hasten yellowing and drying of tops. Then pull up the garlic plants and allow them to dry in sun a few hours. Spread out in a well-ventilated place until tops are thoroughly dry (2-3 weeks). Cut tops off 1-2" above garlic bulbs, or braid tops together into strings. Store loose bulbs in a dry, cool, airy place in baskets; hang garlic strings.

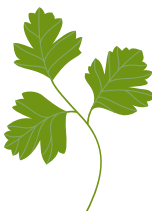
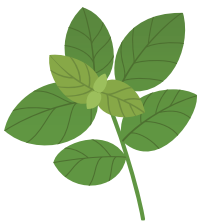
Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* roasted, sautéed

Herbs

Growing tips:

- Basil:
 - *Planting:* Sow seeds near sunny window or in greenhouse in early spring. Transplant to garden in early summer. Or sow seeds directly into the garden in late spring.
 - *Harvesting:* Pinch them from the stems any time after the plants have reached a height of 6 to 8 inches. You can dry basil leaves, but freezing it or using it in vinegar best preserves the herb's flavor.
- Cilantro:
 - *Planting:* Plant 12 to 18 inches apart in the fall or the spring about a month before the last frost.
 - *Harvesting:* Cut the leafy stems near ground level; most will be around 6 to 12 inches long. Avoid cutting more than one-third of the leaves at one time, or you may weaken the plant.





- Mint:
 - *Planting:* In autumn or spring, plant 4-6 inch pieces of root 2 inches deep and 12 inches apart. Water well. Check roots' tendency to overtake nearby plant roots by sinking boards or bricks 1 foot deep around beds or by planting in a large bottomless plastic bucket sunken into a garden bed.

What to look for:

Bright, uniformly colored leaves, crisp firm stems; fresh, vibrant fragrance

Spring Onions

In season:

Year-round; peak in May and June

Growing tips:

Grow in rows 6" apart or thinly scattered in a patch and either raked in or covered with half an inch of fine soil.

- They do not need a great depth of soil and can also be grown in a greenhouse in an ordinary seed tray filled with compost. Salad onions are also ideal for container growing.
- You can over-winter spring onions outdoors as well. Late sowings in August, September and a fine October will provide an early crop by late spring. Always use a winter hardy variety for this.

What to look for:

Firm, unblemished bulbs and bright green perky leaves; avoid those that are slimy or wilting; skin can be either white or deep red fading to white at the roots; bulb can be quite pronounced or more like a leek in shape.

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* roasted, raw, grilled, pickled; use in soups, casseroles
 - *Pairings:* butter, chives, thyme, vegetable stock, chicken, stir fry, pasta
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Peas

In season:

April – May (cool season)



Growing tips:

Sow seeds outdoors 4-6 weeks before last spring frost; ready to harvest in 60-70 days; plant far apart; be careful when pinching the pods off the vine; pick every other day, starting with pods that are overly mature

What to look for:

Bright-green pods, firm and crisp

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* Best when cooked very quickly. Do not boil as sugars will dissolve and flavor will be lost. Instead, steam until just tender or stir-fry briefly.
 - *Pairings:* pastas, salads, soups
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Radish

In season:

Spring and Fall (cool season)

Growing tips:

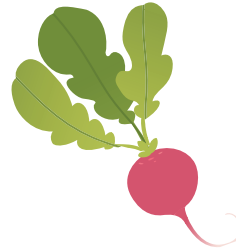
(Spring or Fall) Plant 4-6 weeks before the average date of last frost; short growing time (within a month); water in moderation (soil should be neither too wet nor too dry).

What to look for:

Firm, with bright green tops and brightly colored roots

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* sautéed, raw, pickled; use in salads, stir-fries, stews, soups
 - *Pairings:* butter, spices, herbs; marinated in vinegar, honey, and soy sauce for Chinese dishes; slaws, egg and potato salads
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Rhubarb

In season:

Spring (April – June)

Growing tips:

Plant roots in spring as soon as the soil may be worked. Set the roots 3-4



feet apart each way and cover with 3-4 inches of fine soil. Plants should emerge in 6-8 weeks. covered with half an inch of fine soil.

- *Harvesting:* Begin harvesting rhubarb plants the second year for two weeks. The third year, harvest for 6 weeks. After the third year, harvest until the stalks become thinner. Always leave at least one third of the leafstalks on each plant so it does not get weak. Do not harvest from frozen plants in fall.

What to look for:

Thick, firm stalks; no wrinkling or drying; fresh leaves.

Preparation tips:

Remove the leaves from the picked stalks and discard them. NOTE: Do not eat leaves, they are toxic.

- *Cooking methods:* cooked or baked (not recommended raw); pickled, dried, made into chutney or jam; may also be frozen
- *Pairings:* strawberries, baked goods, chicken, sauces

Spinach

In season:

Year-round; peak – spring (cool weather)

Growing tips:

Very early spring, fall and winter; sow seeds in early spring as soon as ground thaws; requires 6 weeks of cool weather from seeding to harvest

- Best to grow in the fall as it thrives in cool weather.
- Northern gardeners can plant an early spring crop followed by another in midsummer to mature before the first hard freeze.
- In southern gardens, spinach easily tolerates a light frost, especially if it is acclimated.
- Plant seeds an inch apart in rows 14-18 inches apart and cover the seeds with a 1/2 inch of soil. Keep the soil moist and after the seeds germinate thin them to stand 3-5 inches apart.

What to look for:

Leaves that are crisp, dark green, smooth, and glossy

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* raw, cooked, sautéed, pureed; use in salads, quiches, omelets

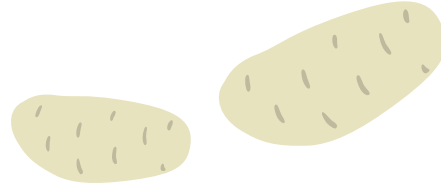


- *Pairings:* blue cheese or ranch dressing, bacon, hard-boiled egg, green onion, vinegar/hot pepper sauce
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Potatoes

In season:

Spring – Fall



Growing tips:

Early season: plant in March/April; Late season: plant in July. Earliest you should plant is two weeks before your last anticipated freeze date.

What to look for:

Firm, with smooth undamaged skin, avoid bruised, tinged with green or sprouting

Preparation tips:

- *Cooking methods:* boiled, mashed, steamed, stir fried, deep fried, sautéed, braised, roasted, baked; use in soups/stews, casseroles
- *Pairings:* bacon, onions, cream, eggs, garlic, spices, butter, cheese, chicken, herbs, meat

Resources

General:

- <http://www.saveur.com/content/produce-guide-spring>
- <http://veggieharvest.com/vegetables/index.html>
- <http://www.almanac.com/plants>
- <http://www.ufseeds.com/What-To-Plant-Now.html#April>

Artichoke:

- <http://pantry.blogs.pressdemocrat.com/10519/fall-artichokes/>
- <http://www.popsugar.com/food/When-Artichokes-Season-14781544>
- <http://www.thecitycook.com/articles/2011-05-05-what-s-in-season-artichokes>

Arugula:

- <http://blog.foodnetwork.com/healthyeats/2011/05/19/in-season-arugula/>
- <http://www.saveur.com/gallery/arugula-recipes-salad>

Asparagus:

- <http://www.wikihow.com/Choose-Asparagus>

Broccoli:

- <http://www.thecitycook.com/articles/2012-10-03-what-s-in-season-broccoli-broccolini-and-broccoli-rabe>

Cabbage:

- http://www.harvesttotable.com/2009/01/how_to_grow_cabbage/
- <http://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/cabbage/growing-cabbage-in-pots.htm>
- <http://geekgardener.in/2009/10/12/transplanting-seedlings-cabbage/>

Carrots:

- <http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/vegetables/growing-carrots-and-root-vegetables/>
- <http://www.wikihow.com/Grow-Carrots-in-Pots>

Cauliflower:

- <https://bonnieplants.com/growing/growing-cauliflower/>
- <http://www.almanac.com/plant/cauliflower>

- <http://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/cauliflower/growing-cauliflower.htm>

Garlic:

- <http://www.wikihow.com/Grow-Garlic>
- <http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/home/gardening/advice/a18057/growing-garlic-460709>

Potatoes:

- <http://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/potato/types-of-potatoes.htm>