

Perennial and ornamental edible plants (Page 1)



Alexanders – *Smyrniolus atrum* – leaves in salads, shoots picked and cooked, flowers and flower buds used like broccoli, seeds used as a spice, roots roasted like parsnips.

Babington's leek – perennial leek, a British native.

Buckwheat, perennial – leaves are edible, best cooked, boiled or steamed. Seeds are also Edible.

Cabbage Thistle – *Cirsium oleraceum*, young leaves used as a vegetable, roots can be eaten Too.

Campanula – see rampion but all other campanulas have edible leaves for salads.

Cardoon – large plant, use the leaf ribs and stalks – best blanched

Chinese artichoke – *Crosnes*, use the small tubers as a vegetable, eat raw or cooked.

Chinese broccoli – *Kailan* short lived perennial.

Chives – well known culinary member of the onion family – pink, purple, white flowered Variants.

Chinese Chives – garlic chives

Day Lilies – young leaves and shoots, flowers can be eaten, flowers battered and fried (as courgette flowers)

Dents de Kyoto, *Elatostema unbellatum*, used as a wild vegetable in Japan, leaves cooked like spinach.

Dittander – all parts edible, leaves and shoots finely chopped and added to salads, peppery taste, can also be cooked.

Earth Chestnut – (*pig nut*) – harvest leaves and stems and use as parsley (grows in winter so invaluable garnish) – harvest roots in winter, roast or boil flavour of chestnuts, use the seed as a spice.

Egyptian Tree Onion – walking onion, all parts edible

Everlasting onion – non flowering, useful in winter as it is evergreen (unlike welsh onion), use as spring onions.

Figs – well known for the fruit but the leaves can be used as a flavouring in ice cream or to make syrups for cocktails and used as a spinach substitute.

Fool's Cress – *Helosciadum nodiflorum*, shoots and leaves have a celery/carrot flavour and can be used in salads all year.

French Scorzonera – *Reichardia picroides*, tender leaves with a cucumber like flavour, excellent in salads. Evergreen so can be harvested year round.

Garlic cress – garlic/mustard flavour, small quantities in salads or added to soups and stews

German garlic – *Allium senescens*, lavender pink flowers, all parts are edible.

Giant Butterbur – *Petasites japonicus*, huge leaves, needs a moist, shady site. Use leaf stalks as a vegetable.

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Globe Artichoke – use unopened flowers.

Good King Henry – use leaves like spinach, flower stems cooked and eaten as broccoli, seeds used like poppy seeds on bread.

Grape vines – apart from the fruit, the leaves can be used to wrap food or shredded in salads or used layered in dishes such as lasagne.

Groundnut – *Apios americana*, twining perennial climber producing tubers in strings which can be cooked in any way a potato can, high in protein. Seeds can be used like peas, raw or cooked.

Hops – young shoots eaten like asparagus.

Horseradish – apart from the root, the leaves can be eaten lightly steamed.

Hostas – use the young shoots in spring

Japanese Ginger – *Zingiber mioga*, hardy Japanese ginger, young shoots are edible but the plant is prized for the flower buds appearing in autumn. Crisp and crunch and used in mizo soup or pickled.

Jerusalem artichoke – use the tubers for soups or boil, fry or roast. We have a dwarf form available and also ‘woodland sunflower’ which will produce small tubers and grows in semi shade.

Mashua – perennial scrambling climbing nasturtium – tubers are high in protein and vitamin C. Cook as other root vegetables, use leaves in salads and flowers are also edible.

Mountain sorrel – leaves have a lemony flavour, use in salads or for soups.

Mulberries – use the fruit but the leaves can also be used as a cooked vegetable.

Oca – *New Zealand yam* – eat tubers raw or cooked, leaves in salads.

Oenanthe javanica ‘Flamingo’ – young stems and leaves are edible raw or cooked with a flavour like carrots.

Perennial broccoli – perennial cauliflower – Nine Star

Perennial Kales – various varieties

Perennial wall-rocket – *wild rocket*, well known, use in salads.

Quamash – *Camassia*, attractive bulbous plants, bulbs can be harvested to eat but need a long cooking time.

Rakkyo – *Baker’s garlic* – dormant period in summer but grows over winter, bulbs, leaves and stem can be used, flowers as a garnish.

Rampion – *Campanula rapunculus* – good in dry shade, flowers, roots and leaves are edible.

Ramsons – wild garlic, moist shade, short season, great for soups or egg dishes.

Rocamboles – *Serpent garlic*, use flower stems as a vegetable, bulbs and leaves are edible.

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Rock Samphire – *perennial* – leaves and young shoots are lemon flavoured and can be added to salads. Can be pickled or lightly steamed as a vegetable or chopped and added to potatoes, soups or pasta.

Saffron crocus – *Crocus sativus*, grow your own saffron.

Salad Burnet – young leaves in salads where they have a cucumber flavour, also add to soups and stews, good with beans.

Sea Aster – leaves have a salty, nutty flavour, eat raw, pickled or cooked.

Sea Beet – use like spinach or chard, glossy dark green leaves best steamed or boiled.

Sea Kale – easy coastal plant, grows in well drained, fertile soil. Young leaves raw in salads, or lightly steamed. Blanch in winter, unopened flower heads are delicious raw or cooked. Flowers can be used in salads.

Siberian purslane – part or full shade, moist soil, use stems and leaves at any time of year, in salads or lightly cooked. Tiny tubers (fairy potatoes) are eaten cooked.

Skirret – very old vegetable grown for its sweet, edible roots. Finger roots can be boiled or roasted.

Society Garlic – *Tulbaghia*, leaves and flowers are edible. Adds a garlicky flavour to salads without the unsociable after effects.

Solomon's Seal – *Polygonatum multiflorum* – harvest the young shoots in spring, treat like asparagus.

Sorrel – leaves are lemony, eat in moderation, use raw in salads, in soups and stews or layered in pasta dishes.

Strawberries – obviously the fruit can be eaten but also the leaves are edible and can be used in salads or added to soups and stews.

Sweet Cicely – all parts have an anise flavour, use leaves and stems in salads or added to soups and stews, roots are also edible. Leaves and stems can be added to tart fruits such as redcurrants and rhubarb where it enhances the flavour and has the ability to reduce the tartness enabling less sugar to be used.

Turkish rocket – young leaves can be eaten raw or cooked, older leaves best cooked as can become very 'hot'. The flower heads can be used as broccoli.

Udo – Japanese asparagus. Eat shoots and leafstalks raw or chopped finely and used in soups.

Violets – *Viola odorata*, flowers, flower buds and leaves can be used in salads, leaves used in cooked dishes where they have a thickening effect.

Wasabi – Japanese horseradish, very expensive to buy grow your own in shade in a well drained yet moist soil. Takes a couple of years to produce a usable rhizome but the leaves and flowers can be used in the meantime.

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Welsh Onion – perennial onion, use leaves and stems in salads or cooked as a substitute for bulb onions, bulbs used as small onions.

Yacon – large growing (tender) perennial tuber. Eat tubers raw or cooked, juicy, crisp and crunchy with hint of pear flavour. Juice from the tubers can be concentrated by boiling to make a delicious low calorie sweetener (similar to maple syrup but without the calories).

Alternative fruits

Amelanchier alnifolia – Saskatoon, sweet and juicy Juneberries.

Aronia – the unfortunately named ‘chokeberry’, high antioxidant fruits are too astringent to eat raw but are great in baking, jams, jellies, juice and wine!

Berberis – *Berberis darwinii*, bright orange flowers followed by lovely flavoured berries.

Cornus mas – winter flowering dogwood, cornelian cherry, large fruits produced on the named varieties.

Elaeagnus umbellata – autumn olive, masses of edible red berries. All the *Elaeagnus* produce edible fruits but this species has the largest.

Fuchsia – all forms are edible although the berries, which make excellent preserves, are not freely borne on all varieties. Flowers can be used for decorating cakes and salads.

Sea Buckthorn – you need to grow both male and female to get berries. Excellent for juice, syrups and jams but too astringent to eat raw.

Ugni molinae – *Chilean guava*, delightful small shrub, delicious berries in October, aromatic flavour between a wild strawberry and a guava.

