

Endive



Varieties

Endives are nutritious leafy greens that come from the chicory plant family. There are three main types of endives. Curly endive, also known as frisée, has tightly bunched, frizzy leaves and is mostly eaten as a salad green. Broad-leafed endive, also known as escarole, is delicious raw or cooked. Belgian endive is related to these two and the one you will most likely see in your grocery store. Belgian endive is small and has a cylindrical head of lettuce with pale yellow leaves and curly edges.

Selecting

Look for endives that are free from blemishes and discolourations, feel heavy for their size, and have densely packed leaves. Belgian endives should have a bright white base with just a splash of yellow on the tips of the leaves.



Storing

Wrap the endives in a damp paper towel and place them in the refrigerator's vegetable drawer. Endives may be stored in the refrigerator for up to a week. Avoid washing or cutting endives before storing them. If the outer leaves start to brown and become soft when pressed, simply peel them off and discard them. The inner leaves should be just fine!

Preparing

Belgian endives are delicious sautéed, braised, or grilled, but the simplest way to prepare them is to eat them raw.

Prepare them by pulling off and discarding any outer leaves that have been ripped or bruised and trimming the base of the spear. If you are eating them raw, you'll probably

want to remove the bitter core. If you're cooking the endives, you can leave the core as it will sweeten with cooking. The endives can be sliced or whole leaves can be removed, depending on how you are using them.

Eating

Enjoy endives raw or cooked. When raw, they are crisp and bitter, making them a great addition to salads. When cooked, the flavour softens and even tastes a bit sweet. Try these delicious ideas:

- Use them as scoops or edible spoons! They are great for dips and fillings.
- Braise endives. They make an amazing side dish as braising softens the bitter flavour and makes them tender.

- Sauté Belgian endives alone or add other greens to the mix.
- Chop them up and add them to soups, stir-fries, and chilis.
- Add endives to your burgers and sandwiches.
- Grill the whole heads until charred and crisp-tender.

Seasonality

Endives are available year-round, but the traditional peak season is from November to April.

Nutrition

Endives (85 g portion) are a source of fibre and folate.

Try endives in this delicious salad!

www.halfyourplate.ca/endive-salad-with-apples-and-walnuts

