

Produce of the Month

Belgian Endive



Nutritional Information

- Belgian endive is a source of thiamin, potassium, calcium, magnesium, vitamins B6 and C, as well as folate and copper.
- It also contains Intybin which is not only responsible for the bitter taste of the leaves but is also known to be an appetite stimulant and a digestive aid.
- When consumed in large amounts Belgian endive can also act as a diuretic and laxative.

Cooking Suggestions

- While Belgian endive is commonly used raw in recipes it is also versatile in cooked preparations. Roast whole or halved endive with olive oil until softened and serve as a side dish with grated cheese.
- Grill endive halves and add to cooked grains or serve atop pizza.
- Add chopped or halved to tarts, quiche, soups, stews and stir-fries.
- Braising Belgian endive in butter will slightly mellow the bitterness of the vegetable.
- The bitter flavor of Belgian endive pairs well with onion, pear, apple, cranberries, herbs such as basil and thyme, walnuts, pecans, butter, cream based sauces, olive oil, bacon lardons, prosciutto, lamb, poultry and gorgonzola, and feta.

<http://95210.townofmanchester.org/>

Selecting & Storing

Belgian endive is available year-round with a peak season in the winter months.



Belgian endive is shaped like a torpedo and grows to about six inches in length. It has tender white leaves with either yellow or red-colored leaf edges. The leaves offer a soft texture and delicate crunch with a pleasantly bitter flavor. Choose Belgian Endives that are covered to prevent light exposure and that have tight leaves and a crisp, solid head.



Refrigerate in the crisper section and use within 2 weeks.

Fun Facts

- Modern cultivation of Belgian endive was first discovered in the 1830's by Jan Lammers, a Belgian chicory farmer, who stored the roots in his cellar for drying to use as a coffee substitute. However, after several months, he found the roots had sprouted small white leaves, which he tasted and found tender, moist, and pleasingly bitter.
- Belgian endive is botanically known as part of *Chichorium intybus* and is grown from chicory roots in a dark environment, while endive is botanically known as *Cichorium endive* and grown in the fields as a green curly lettuce.

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Manchester's Message for a Healthier You

9 Hours of Sleep – 5 Servings of Fruits & Vegetables – 2 Hours or less of Screen Time – 1 Hour of Physical Activity – 0 Sugary Beverages