

Vegetable of the Month

GARLIC!



For years garlic has been the topic of much folklore. In ancient times, its pungent odor was believed to supply strength and courage to those who ate it. Garlic has been used for numerous things including embalming, warding off evil spirits, and curing everything from the common cold to tuberculosis and broken bones.

Even in modern times, garlic is still being promoted as a health food with medicinal properties. Though garlic is a nutritious food, many of the claims surrounding it are not backed up by research.

Garlic is a member of the *Allium* genus and classified as *Allium sativa*. The garlic bulb is covered with a loose, white, crackly outer skin and comprised of individual sections called cloves. Each clove is covered in a white sheath.

Garlic is very popular in the Middle East and Mediterranean countries, India and China. In America, 250 million pounds of garlic are consumed per year and its use is growing.

Garlic is characterized by its strong flavor and smell, stemming from its sulfur compounds. It makes a great flavoring agent for a variety of dishes.

Varieties

There are approximately 300 varieties of garlic grown throughout the world. In the United States about 90% of the garlic is grown in California and most comes in two types, early and late.

Early garlic is white or off-white in color and harvested in mid-summer. Late garlic is off-white on the outside

American: white-skinned with a strong flavor.

Chileno: a reddish-colored, sharp tasting garlic grown in Mexico

Elephant: Not a true garlic, but a relative of the leek; its flavor is very mild and it is characterized by larger heads.

Green Garlic: Young garlic before it starts forming cloves. Green garlic looks like a baby leek with a long green top and small white bulb. Its flavor is much more mild than that of mature garlic.

Italian: Mauve in color with a somewhat milder flavor.

Garlic

Serving Size (3.0g)	
Amounts Per Serving	% Daily Value
Calories 5	
Calories from Fat 0	0
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 1g	0%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 0g	
Vitamin A	0%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	0%
Iron	0%

*** Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.**

Availability, Selection, and Storage

Garlic is available year-round frozen or fresh. When buying fresh garlic, choose from plump, dry heads that feel firm. Avoid soft, mushy or shriveled cloves. American garlic should be white to off-white. Garlic should be stored in a cool, dark place (though not a refrigerator) and can be kept for several weeks. Many people use small clay garlic holders to keep their garlic as fresh as possible. Cloves that have sprouted can still be used but they will not be



as strong in flavor as fresher cloves. The sprouts themselves can be cut up like scallions and chives and used in dishes.

Preparation

To remove individual garlic cloves, peel outer layers from the bulb and snap out each clove from the base. Cloves can then be peeled very easily. For a more mild flavor, whole cloves can be added (unpeeled for an even more subtle taste) to food while it cooks or marinates and then discarded before serving the meal. Another trick for imparting a mild garlic flavor in your dish is to spear a garlic clove with a fork and stir your dish with it — discarding the garlic when stirring is complete.

For a stronger flavor, use chopped, crushed, pressed or pureed garlic in dishes. The more finely garlic is chopped, the stronger its flavor will be. To chop garlic, cut in half lengthwise (remove the green core if there is one — it is bitter). Make several lengthwise cuts and then cut crosswise. A garlic press can be used also though these can be a bit tricky to clean.

To remove garlic odor from hands, use salt or lemon juice and then wash your hands with soap.

Cooking Garlic

Cooking garlic decreases the strength of its flavor making it much milder. The longer it is cooked, the more mild it tastes. Be careful not to sauté garlic too long at too high a temperature, it will brown very quickly and can become bitter.

To bake garlic, place whole, unpeeled bulbs rounded side down in a shallow baking dish, drizzle with oil, cover with foil and bake for 1 1/2 hours at 325°F.



Add garlic to spice up your 5 to 9 A Day Plan!

- Flavor soups and stews.
- Roast with meats or poultry.
- Chop finely for salad dressings.
- Bake whole heads until softened; pop out soft flesh from cloves and spread on bread.
- Put minced garlic on a loaf of bread to make an authentic tasting garlic bread!

Recipes

Sesame Garlic Chicken Stir Fry

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day servings

Source: Wegmans

Ingredients

1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breast, sliced across the grain in 1/4-inch strips

3 Tbsp water

1½ Tbsp cornstarch

1 pkg (16 oz) stir-fry vegetables

1½ Tbsp vegetable oil

1 medium garlic clove, peeled and minced

½ Tbsp fresh ginger, peeled and minced

8 Tbsp sesame garlic sauce

½ tsp ground white pepper

2 Tbsp sesame seeds, toasted

Place chicken in small bowl. Add water 1 Tbsp at a time, working in with hands until water is absorbed into chicken. Sprinkle cornstarch over chicken and work in with hands to coat all pieces.

Blanch vegetables in boiling water until crisp-tender, 2-3 min; drain and set aside. Heat nonstick wok or large nonstick skillet on high 2 minutes. Add vegetable oil; swirl to coat pan (oil should smoke slightly).

Add chicken, garlic, and ginger, stir fry 3 min. Add sesame garlic sauce; stir fry 2 minutes. Add pepper and vegetables; stir fry to heat through, 30 seconds.

Remove from pan, garnish with sesame seeds.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 299, Protein 28g, Fat 10g, Percent Calories From Fat 30%, Cholesterol 63mg, Carbohydrates 21g, Fiber 6g, Sodium 295mg.

Italian Flat Beans with Garlic Spread

Makes 8 servings

Each serving equals one and one-half 5 A Day servings

Source: Wegmans

Ingredients

1½ tsp sea salt

2 lbs Italian flat beans, trimmed, cut in thirds

4 Tbsp garlic spread (dairy dept)



Bring pot of water with sea salt to boil on high; add beans. Cook uncovered 3-4 minutes or until tender; drain.

Melt garlic spread in skillet on medium — low heat; add beans. Toss to heat through, 1-2 minutes. Season with fresh ground black pepper to taste.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 51, Protein 2g, Fat 1g, Percent Calories From Fat 19%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 10g, Fiber 4g, Sodium 450mg.



Roasted Squash with Potatoes & Garlic

Makes 8 servings

Each serving equals one and one-half Five A Day servings

Source: Wegmans

Ingredients

1 unpeeled acorn squash (about 1 to 1½ lbs), washed, halved, seeded and cut into 12 equal pieces

4-5 medium (about 2 lbs) butter potatoes, unpeeled, washed and quartered,

4 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed

3 Tbsp olive oil

1 large sprig rosemary

Preheat oven to 425°F. Combine squash, potatoes and garlic in 9 x 13-inch shallow baking pan. Drizzle with oil. Salt and pepper to taste. Top with rosemary sprig. Bake 45-50 minutes, turning once after vegetables are browned on one side.

Option: Squash may be peeled if desired.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 176, Protein 3g, Fat 5g, Percent Calories From Fat 27%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 30g, Fiber 3g, Sodium 13mg.

Vegetarian Stir Fry with Edamame

Makes 4 Servings

Each serving equals two and one-half 5 A Day servings

Source: Wegmans

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{2}$ white onion (5 oz), diced small
- 1 lb eggplant, peeled and diced into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch cubes
- 1 red bell pepper ($\frac{1}{2}$ lb), seeded and medium diced
- 2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 small clove garlic, peeled and chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp fresh ginger, peeled and chopped
- 1 pkg (14 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz) extra firm tofu, diced medium
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sesame garlic sauce
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pkg (5 oz) edamame (soybeans), pods removed
- 2 Tbsp chopped cilantro
- 3 Tbsp (about 2) scallions, washed and cut on bias

Blanch onion, eggplant, and red pepper in boiling water, until crisp tender about 2-3 minutes, drain and set aside. Heat nonstick wok or large nonstick skillet on high, about 2 minutes. Add vegetable oil; swirl to coat pan (oil should smoke lightly).

Add garlic, ginger, and tofu (tofu breaks up slightly); stir fry 1 minute. Add in vegetables and stir fry 2 minutes. Add garlic sauce; stir fry 3 minutes. Add edamame; stir fry 2 minutes.

Add chopped cilantro, remove from pan, garnish with scallions.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 180, Protein 13g, Fat 6g, Percent Calories From Fat 30%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 17g, Fiber 2g, Sodium 85mg.