

## EDIBLE FLOWERS - A VERY SPECIAL TOUCH!

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KITCHEN

### *Quick Tips for Using, Selecting, and Storing Edible Flowers*



Flowers can add an undeniably beautiful and eye-catching touch to the presentation of a dish along with a bit of spicy or herbaceous flavor. Many edible flowers also have medicinal qualities, and have long been used in Greek, Roman and Chinese cultures.

#### **How to Use**

Edible flowers can be used in a multitude of ways! Add them to tea, salads, pasta, ice cream, and beverages, use in pickling or as a garnish for appetizers and desserts. The key is to use them sparingly - as an accent, flavoring or garnish - not as the main ingredient. Herb flowers are a great place to start. They generally taste similar to the leaf but can be a bit spicier or more richly flavored.

Remove the pistils and stamens in the center of the flower before using as they tend to taste bitter and use only the petals. There are a few exceptions - violas are completely edible, as are some herb flowers or buds.

#### **Selecting Edible Flowers**

Look for flowers grown for “culinary” purposes and assure the flowers have not been treated with chemicals or pesticides. Confirm a flower’s identity before consuming - University Extension offices and growers are good resources for further information.

- Edible flowers are available for purchase at
  - some grocery stores - check the refrigerated produce section
  - farmers markets or local growers
  - online sources

#### **Grow and Harvest Your Own:**

- The best time to harvest edible flowers is in the cool morning or late afternoon.
- Avoid any blossoms that are faded, limp, or show signs of disease or insects.
- Gently shake flowers to remove any insects or excess dirt before bringing inside.

#### **Clean and Store:**

- Gently rinse the blossoms in a large bowl of cold water and drain well.
- Spread them in a single layer on a paper towel to air dry.
- If not using within a couple of hours, place them (blossom facing down) on damp paper towels and refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

#### **RECIPE**

Look for this recipe for [MIXED GREENS WITH EDIBLE FLOWERS](#) on my website. It is a light and beautiful accompaniment to a breakfast, brunch or lunch entree, or as a salad course at dinner.

