



12 - SPRING - 2022

“LETTUCE”

(Let Us)

Report

Spring In the Kitchen

Abundant Ingredients : Asparagus 101

Seasonal & Delicious Recipe



Spring In The Kitchen

March 20th

Just as front of the house gets a refreshed ambiance; the back of the house need to do some ad-

June 21st

justments based on menu changes as well. Re organize your cooler space, specify different prep areas, use more ice baths, or may be re organizing staff by station. All while focusing on the fresh spring ingredients, their prep, cooking time, and projecting a smooth service rhythm.



Spring, the concept of freshness

Spring represents re-birth, a re-start; it is the season when nature gives it all. Taking sun light, oxygen, water and transforming it in such powerful energy that most plants emerge vibrantly fertile. Spring also reminds us of being fresh and clean, a time where all is new (or most of it)!

ASPARAGUS

This is an awesome veggie. The history, how its cultivated and... all we can do with it. Just starting with its name, kind of transports us to the Greek Gods. It is believed that this amazing vegetable is native to the Mediterranean lands. It was then the Romans that got interested and started to cultivate it. But... how DOES Asparagus grow?

Most of our veggies grow from or out of the same plant / flower. Asparagus has two kind of plants; one with staminate flowers and the other with pistillate flowers from which a little red berry with seeds develops. This plant also differs from other veggies as it can live up to 30 years. This crop requires patience, as if you are starting from seed, the plant wont really be productive until reaching its 3rd year.



What was first?

Plant, vegetable, seeds? It's always a tough answer. For practical purposes, lets pretend seeds is the way to start.



- More likely seeds will sprout better in a nursing bed or peat cup.
 - Transplanted into the field with some distance in between
- Be patient for 2 years as plant need to build underground crown. This will allow the plant to be strong and provide for many years to come. 3 years to have nice yields.
- Harvest spears when 4 to 10 in long. Before they become too fibrous or heads start to open.



White asparagus is the result of covering them with soil as they grow avoiding chlorophyll to be produced. Purple asparagus are higher in sugar and lower in fiber. Were originally developed in Italy. Heat (cooking) can change their color.



Healthy - From The Ground UP

3.2 oz. — 90 gr. of cooked asparagus contain an average of:

Calories: 20 / Protein: 2.2 grams / Fat: 0.2 grams / Fiber: 1.8 grams / Vitamin C: 12% of the RDI / Vitamin A: 18% of the RDI / Vitamin K: 57% of the RDI / Folate: 34% of the RDI / Potassium: 6% of the RDI / Phosphorous: 5% of the RDI / Vitamin E: 7% of the RDI

Fun Facts

- White asparagus is not genetically induced, it is one of the most labor-intensive vegetables to grow.
- Asparagus will reproduce for 20+ consecutive years.
- Asparagus plants exhibit sexual differentiation.
- Michigan is the self-proclaimed asparagus capital of the US.
- Eating asparagus is good for hangovers.
- It takes 2+ years from seed to harvest.
- Sea salt was farmer's original herbicide.
- China outdoes the world in asparagus production, by far.
- Will make your pee stink, by cleaning your kidneys.

Asparagus in the kitchen

The fun part

As with many items, the fresher the product the better taste. If you can not cook asparagus the day you buy them, then trim the bottoms and stand the spears up in a container with about an inch of water. Cover with a plastic bag and refrigerate between 34F - 36F.

Asparagus is very versatile. You can cook them as simply (steam), or as complicated as you want (souffle). Wrapped with bacon or prosciutto, sprinkle with pecorino or parmesan cheese, serve with lemon, olive oil and nuts, roast, grill or sauté.

Asparagus fries

Garnish — serves up to 4 customers

INGREDIENTS

- Asparagus — 20 ea.
- Panko* — 14 oz.
- Parmesan cheese grated — 7 oz.
- Flour, all purpose — 1/2 cup
- Eggs — 2 ea.
- Refined olive oil — 1 cup.
- Tomato, roma — 8 ea.
- Garlic cloves, chopped — 4 ea.
- Oregano — 1 pinch
- Basil — 4 leaves
- Olive oil extra virgin — 1/4 cup
- Salt / pepper

* Can substitute with bread crumbs





DIRECTIONS

Trim about 1 inch off the bottom from the asparagus. Bread them by going first with flour, then eggs and finally with the panko and cheese mixed together. Reserve to deep fry with refined olive oil, just before serving. If you are looking for a healthier preparation, you can bake them instead.

Marinara sauce: in a sauce pan slightly sauté the chopped cloves with virgin olive oil. Blend the tomatoes and strain into the pan. Add oregano and reduce until desired consistency. Season at the end with salt, pepper and finely chopped basil leaves.

Other Fun Items In Season



Kale



Carrots



Avocados



Peas



Kohlrabi



Arugula



Lemons



Leeks

Coming up — Summer Edition!

June 21st — September 22nd

Summer: Maybe being inside in front of your stove is as hot as the outside world. If so, besides a cold drink, how can you refresh your customers with your menu selection? Make sure to check back for our summer edition as we cool things down and dig into fun summer commodities!



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