



Edible Flowers

- Edible flowers can be used to add a splash of colour to edibles, from salads to desserts to drinks.
- Proper identification is essential to avoid any poisonous flowers
- Flowers should only be harvested from chemical free/ pollution free organically grown plants, avoid areas beside busy highways, old building lots, anywhere where there could be drifting of spray from other areas
- Shake and wash flowers in cold water to ensure no insects are hiding out inside them.
- The pollen from stamens and stylus can cause allergic reactions in people, so consider removing them before eating, also they tend to overwhelm the flavour of the flower. Exception: the Viola family, scarlet runner beans, honeysuckle, and clover.
- Best harvesting time is in the morning before the heat of the day.
- Consume in moderation, some flowers while edible, do contain substances that can make you sick if consumed in large quantities.

Anise Hyssop is also sometimes known as licorice mint.

Apple blossoms (*Malus* spp.) have an appealing but delicate flavour and scent.

Arugula – Once bolted, the spicy flowers are very tasty.

Basil – Colours vary but the whole flower is edible.

Bergamot reminds one of Early Grey tea, use the large tubular petals, lemon bergamot has a citris flavour.

Borage – Flowers and leaves taste mildly of cucumber.

Calendula – Use the petals, which have a peppery to bitter, and the colours look beautiful.

Chamomile – Fresh or dried, the flowers taste a bit like apple.

Chicory – blue petals as an earthy endive like flavour, unopened buds can be pickled like capers.

Chives – The purple flowers can be separated and used for colour and a mild onion flavour

Cilantro – Like the leaves and seeds, the flowers can be used as a garnish or where the leaves would be used.

Clover has a sweet, mild liquorice flavour.

Cornflower petals have a slightly spicy, clove-like flavour with a subtle sweetness..

Dandelion – small unopened buds remind you of honey, and the petals add colour and slight sweetness.

Day Lily flower petals remind you of mild melon or cucumber. Dehydrated they taste slightly like sweet potato.

Dianthus petals are colourful and have a mild clove flavour

Dill flowers are stronger in flavour than the leaves, use soon after opening before seeds start to form

Fennel's tiny yellow flowers have mild licorice flavour.

Garlic Scapes, the flower stem of garlic, are edible, and if left to open the flowers can be used for a mild garlic taste.

Hollyhock petals don't have much flavour, but are useful to decorate desserts.

Impatiens flower petals provide colour and a sweet taste. |

Viola/ pansy/ and violets add colour and taste to desserts, eat the whole flower.

Lavender – Remove clusters of flowers from the stem, they are sweet and have an intense floral flavour.

Lilac flowers have an intense floral taste, a few is all that is needed.

Gem Marigold (Tagets) have a citrus scent and flavour, depending on type. Use the petals.

Mint -all varieites have flavourful flowers, taste depends on type.

Nasturtium –Flowers and leaves have a peppery taste, fresh seeds can be pickled like capers.

Pea –produce edible flowers and grown for shoots, the plant stems and leaves taste like fresh peas.

Rose petals have a mild taste, but the scent is much more intense. Remove the white base to each petal as it is bitter.

Sage – The blue flowers have a mild sage taste, but a few go a long way.

Scarlet Runner Bean – The flowers of this vine (*Phaseolus vulgaris*) are vivid, intense red, and also delicious. They make excellent garnishes for soups and salads, providing a real visual high note.

Sorrel – Like the leaves of sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), its flowers have a strongly lemony flavour, and can be scattered over salad or used in sauces. The flavour comes from oxalic acid, so should be avoided by those with kidney conditions or rheumatism.

Squash – Both male and female flowers of all squash and zucchini varieties are edible, and have a faint squashy flavour. It may be sensible to only use the male flowers, as they will not form fruits. They can be torn into salads or stuffed with savory items like herbs and goat cheese, and then fried in a light tempura batter. There are many squash blossom recipes online.

Sunflower – It's still a little known fact that unopened sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) buds can be steamed or sautéed in butter and served whole. They have an artichoke-like flavour. Alternately, the petals can be pulled from the edge of the opened flower and added to soups and salads. Their flavour is somewhat bitter.