



#8124 Edible Flowers

955 Benton Ave., Winslow, ME 04901 • Phone: 1-877-564-6697 • Fax: 1-800-738-6314
Email: service@johnnyseeds.com • Web Site: Johnnyseeds.com

Edible flowers are the ideal way to add color to your garden and interest to your plate. They have been used for centuries to enhance food and are enjoying a spectacular resurgence in popularity, thanks, in part, to gourmet chefs and specialized food magazines. Many summer annuals have edible blooms, ranging in taste from peppery to citrus that can easily be added to a vegetable garden or grown among other flowers in an existing bed.

Growing Techniques: The most important growing technique to keep in mind is that flowers that you plan on eating should not be treated with pesticides or fungicides. Some edible flowers can be direct seeded in your garden while others will fare better if they are begun indoors and transplanted outside after danger of frost is past. Edible flowers can be grown in your vegetable garden or greenhouse. It is particularly convenient to grow a container of mixed edible flowers on your porch or patio for easy access at meal time. Another great source of edible flowers can be found right in your existing vegetable garden. Squash blooms make ideal vessels for stuffing and you can harvest the flowers from the row of basil that is bolting in the summer heat to use as a zippy garnish. If you grow a wide variety of edible flowers, you will have access to blossoms throughout the summer months.

Harvest and Storage: Harvest of edible flowers is best done just before the dish or salad you are decorating is to be served. Their shelf life is not long and they will look best if just picked. If it is necessary to pick the flowers several hours or a day in advance, there are some ways to keep the blooms looking fresh for the table. Most of the flowers can be cut much like you would a bouquet with stems as long as possible and then set in a cool, dark place in a mug of water. For pansies and other flowers without a significant stem, you can soak a few paper towels and line a small plastic container with them. Then set the flowers on the damp paper towels, close the container and store in the fridge. This will allow the blossoms to maintain that just-picked freshness a bit longer.

Market Growers: Edible flowers present a unique opportunity to distinguish your salad mixes at your farmers' market or roadside stand. Edible flower mixes or garnishes offer a chance to make use of crops that have bolted or gone to flower (i.e. basil and broccoli). Edible flowers can easily be incorporated into existing beds or hoop houses, making the most of a small space. Depending on the market, flowers can be added to salad mixes or sold separately. Provide customers with an opportunity to taste the flowers as they may not be familiar with all the varieties. Another way to generate interest is to supply recipes that call for edible flowers or ways of using them as a garnish.

Edible Flower Guide

Flower Type	Flavor	Suggested Use
Vegetable Blooms		
Arugula	nutty	garnish, salads
Broccoli	mild broccoli	sprinkle on salads, poached fish or combine with other flowers for petal confetti
Mustard	spicy	use to add a little bite to salads, soups
Okra	mild, sweet	deep fry flowers
Pea	mild pea	use in micro mix salads or candy them for use on cakes
Squash	mild squash	stuff and deep fry or slice and use in soups, omelets, salads and pasta dishes
Strawberry	mild strawberry	sprinkle on salads or garnish desserts
Flowering Herbs		
Agastache	anise	use petals in beef stir-fry, chicken marinade, use to flavor drinks, ice cream, cake
Basil	mild basil	use to garnish salads, soups, desserts
Borage	mild cucumber-like	add blossoms to salads, garnish cold drinks, freeze in ice cubes
Chervil	mild licorice	use to garnish salads
Chives	mild, sweet onion	pull apart florets and sprinkle on salads, dips and sauces, soups and stir-fry
Cilantro	mild cilantro	use raw on salads, chicken and spicy Southwestern dishes
Dill	mild dill	use young flowers to garnish potato salad, green salads, etc.
Fennel	sweet anise	use florets to garnish fish, dishes with fennel and potato, tomato and beet dishes
Mexican Mint Marigold	sweet licorice	garnishes for desserts
Lavender	sweet, perfumy	use in baked goods, steep flowers and leaves to use in sorbets and ice cream
Oregano	mild oregano	use in pasta salads, green salads
Sage	mild sage	flower spikes can be battered and fried or used to garnish salads
Thyme	mild thyme	use in potato dishes, salads
Flowers		
Bachelor's Button	mild, sweet	use petals to garnish salads and desserts
Calendula	tangy, slightly bitter	use petals in soups, soufflés, rice dishes, baked goods and to garnish salads
Dianthus	mild, clove	used to garnish salads, desserts, soups, icing, deviled eggs and cold drinks
Hollyhock	mild, sweet	use petals in salad mix or crystallize with sugar and use on desserts
Hyacinth Bean	heavily floral	flowers, leaves, beans and roots are edible; young pods and seeds are boiled; leaves can be used fresh or dried; flowers are eaten raw or steamed. Sprouts are comparable to soy or mung bean sprouts
Marigold	spicy, citrusy	use in salads, as garnishes
Monarda	spicy, minty	add petals to salads, sprinkle over mild fish, use in fruit salads or to garnish drinks
Nasturtium	spicy, peppery	use leaves, pods and flowers in salads, as garnishes or stuff flowers with soft cheese
Safflower	Slightly bitter	dried flowers are used for coloring rice dishes, butter, and confectionery. Seeds can be fried
Salvia	Mild, floral	use as a garnish for salads and soups; seeds are fried; oil is used to flavor beer and wine
Scarlet Runner Bean	bean-like	use to garnish soups, in sandwiches, in salads
Sunflowers	bittersweet	fry buds or use petals as a garnish in salads
Viola	wintergreen	use to decorate desserts, salads, as garnishes

Look for the knife and fork symbol in the Johnny's catalog for other edible flower varieties.

Peg 8/13