

Gourmet Vegetables

Feed the Family

Artichoke

(*Cynara scolymus*)



DESCRIPTION

Thistle like perennial usually 1.75 m tall

Leaves large and deeply pinnatifid, grey-green above, white underneath; very rarely spiny. Large capitula with enlarged fleshy receptacle, broad involucre bracts and numerous purple flowers, appearing mid to late summer. **Imperial Star**, A green artichoke specifically bred for annual production, Imperial Star will produce well-developed artichokes the first year from seed. Plants become 1 1/2-3' tall and have an open growth habit. Each typically produces 1-2 primary buds, which average 3-4" in diameter, and 5-7 smaller secondary buds. **Purple Artichoke** is defined by its tulip shaped floret and deep violet-wine colored exterior that fades little when cooked. It is harvested young, at approximately 2 inches in diameter, for its tenderness and rich flavor. It has intense fruity and nutty flavors and grassy tones and is considered to be the most flavorful of all baby artichoke varieties.



PROPERTIES

A choleric which has been shown to promote liver regeneration, following damage by poisons.



USES

Culinary

Fleshy base of the petals and meaty heart are the most edible.

Medicinal

Stimulates and aids digestion; anti dyspeptic. Considered to be prophylactic against Arterio-sclerosis. A major constituent of digestive tonics.



CULTIVATION

Commercially and horticulturally either from seed or preferably from suckers arising from the root stock retaining a portion of the parent plant. The 'heels' are planted in rich moist soil 75 cm apart in late spring or early summer.



GROWTH

Give plenty of water, some protection in the cold weather may be required. Optimal cropping is reached in the third year, and plants should be replaced in the fifth season. Plant grows to an approximate height of 1.2-1.5m/4-5 feet and a width of 1.5 - 1.8m/5-6 feet

RECIPE

ARTICHOKES WITH SAUCE

Europeans admire the beautiful shape of artichokes and eat them cooked whole. The leaf forms a cup and is used to fill with mayonnaise and dip the leaves into a vinaigrette.

Serves 4

- 4 large globe artichokes
- vinaigrette
- mayonnaise

Snap off the stalk; with large tough artichokes this will bring away most of the string fibers underneath. It is more convenient that this hairy choke is removed before they come to the table.

Trim the bottom almost flat, removing little leaves. This will tell how tender the artichokes are, and give you a better idea of cooking time. Cook tender heads for 20 minutes, and large tough ones for 40 minutes in plenty of salted, boiling water. They will stay green if cooked without a lid. Drain them upside down for 10 minutes to cool. To prepare them for the table, start by pulling out the center leaves. When a soft, lighter cone becomes visible under the first leaves, hold the artichoke firm and pull the whole cone out. Underneath is the inedible hairy choke, scoop it out with a spoon. Eat barely warm or cold. To serve, stir a little garlic and parsley into the mayonnaise and fill each cup. Eat the outside leaves, dipping into a vinaigrette. Eat the inside leaves and the base. Remember to put the plate out for the discarded leaves.



www.herbherbert.com

Any enquiries can be directed to:
HERB HERBERT P/L

This Herb description is for informal use only, although due care is taken to make sure information is correct we cannot accept any liability for any harm or illness arising from the use of the plants described above.