

**DANDELIONS**  
**(and other edible flowers)**

## Dandelion – The Overlooked Food

Most of us have seen dandelions popping up in our yard during the Spring and Summer. Below is a picture of what they look like so that you're sure to be able to identify them.



It is important that any edible flower you pick is not next to a road or a railway track and it is best if they grow in your yard so to be sure they are not covered in pesticides or other chemical. Once picked, clean thoroughly and then put in plastic bag with holes in it to dry out the plant.

All parts of the dandelion plant, roots included, can be ingested. Dandelions are extremely high in nutrients. They contain vitamins C and B6, thiamine, riboflavin, calcium, iron, potassium, manganese, folate, magnesium, phosphorus, and copper. Dandelions have also been used in the past for some of their medicinal benefits.

You might have heard of Dandelion tea and dandelion wine before. This section will tell you how to make them and more.

## **DANDELION TEA WITH LEAVES:**

### **PREPARATION**

Firstly, follow the instructions on the previous page for how to pick and store.

After the dandelions dry a bit, pick off enough leaves to make one teaspoon and then put in a tea egg. Then put the filled tea egg in a cup and pour boiling water over it. If preferred, you can also put leaves (without the tea egg) directly into your cup and add boiling water.

## **DANDELION TEA WITH LEAVES AND ROOTS:**

### **Digestive Problems Herbal Tea**

1 ounce dandelion root

1 ounce dandelion leaves and stems

2/3 ounce fennel seeds

2/3 ounce peppermint leaves

Steep this mixture in 1 cup of hot water for about 10 minutes and strain. This medicinal tea combination helps stimulate bile production, promote digestion and alleviate intestinal gas.

**Caution:** Never give children an herbal tea with peppermint. The menthol in the peppermint could have an adverse reaction.

### **Dandelion Tea with roots:**

Wash the roots, leaving as much of the root sheath on as possible. Finely mince the roots and dry them thoroughly. Once thoroughly dried, roast them in a dry pan on medium high heat, stirring frequently. You'll know they are done when they have turned a darker shade of brown and have a rich aromatic smell. You can also roast them in the oven at 350 degrees, checking on them frequently to stir and keep an eye on them to avoid burning. Once roasted you can store them in a dark, airtight container for up to a year.

### **Medicinal Tea Ideal for Skin Cleansing**

2/3 ounce dandelion root

2/3 ounce dandelion leaves

2/3 ounce nettle leaves

2/3 ounce red clover blossoms

2/3 ounce rose hips

Steep this mixture in 1 cup of hot water for 10 minutes and strain. You will need to drink a cup of this tea daily for several weeks before the skin-clarifying effect becomes evident.

## **Pink Dandelion Wine**

### **INGREDIENTS**

2 quarts of dandelion petals (stem and green collar of each flower removed)  
2 quarts of boiling water  
3 lemons  
3 1/2 cups sugar  
10 oz package of frozen sweetened red raspberries  
1 yeast cake  
cheesecloth  
1 one-gallon jar (stoneware jar works best)  
3 one quart wine bottles with screw-on caps

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Pick the dandelions, snip off the stem and green collar and rinse in cool water. Place petals in the one-gallon jar and pour the boiling water over them.

Let stand overnight.

In the morning, strain the liquid through cheesecloth, being sure to squeeze the flowers to remove all the juice. Combine dandelion juice with strained juice of lemons. Add juice to frozen raspberries and sugar. Bring mixture to a boil and simmer for 20 minutes.

Pour mixture back into jar, cooling to lukewarm temperature. Add yeast cake. Stir until yeast dissolves, cover the jar, and let mixture ferment for 10 days or until hissing subsides.

Using a double layer of cheesecloth, strain the liquid into a cider jug and let stand for 3 days.

Strain liquid again and place into quart wine bottles with screw-on caps, but DO NOT tighten the caps. Let the wine stand for awhile and then cap the bottles. Best if you let it age for a few months before drinking.

## **Dandelion Greens with Double Garlic**

Makes: 4 servings

Time: 15 minutes

The first measure of garlic mellows as it cooks with the greens; it's the second that adds a real kick. Substitute minced ginger for the second addition of garlic if you like.

Other vegetables you can use: broccoli, beet greens, turnip greens, chard, kale or collards cabbage, or spinach. Recipe from How to Cook Everything.

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

1/4 cup thinly sliced garlic (5 or 6 cloves), plus

1 teaspoon minced garlic, or more to taste

1/2 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes, or to taste

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 pound dandelion greens with stems, well washed and roughly chopped

1/2 cup chicken, beef, or vegetable stock

Lemon wedges for serving

1. Put the olive oil in a large, deep saucepan with a lid over medium-high heat. When hot, add the sliced garlic, pepper flakes, and some salt and black pepper and cook for about 1 minute.
2. Add the greens and stock. Cover and cook until the greens are wilted and just tender but still a little firm, about 5 minutes.
3. Uncover the pan and continue to cook, stirring, until the liquid has all but evaporated and the greens are quite tender, at least 5 minutes more. Taste for seasoning and add red or black pepper and salt as needed; add the minced garlic, cook for 1 minute more, and serve hot, warm, or at room temperature, with lemon wedges.

## Other Edible Flowers

If you decide to try out any of the edible flowers in the list below; be sure, after cleaning, to pull **out** the pistils and stamens. It is also best to eat only those that you grew in your own yard to avoid pesticides likely used on commercial flowers. If you're unable to grow; then a good cleaning should suffice.

1. Blossoms from several food and herbal plants are edible. The list of foods and herbs with edible blossoms is below:

### **Food Blossoms**

Leeks  
Chives  
Garlic  
Orange  
Lemon  
Lime  
Grapefruit  
Kumquat  
Raspberry  
Squash  
Pumpkin  
Radish

### **Herbal Blossoms**

Basil  
Cilantro  
Dill  
Fennel  
Mint  
Oregano  
Rosemary  
Sage  
Chamomile

Every part of these plants is edible.

2. **Angelica** - have a licorice-like flavor.
3. **Anise hyssop** - Both flowers and leaves have a subtle anise or licorice flavor.
4. **Arugula** - have a peppery
5. **Bee balm** - The red flowers have a minty flavor.
6. **Borage** – have a blue hue and taste like cucumber
7. **Marigold** - Blossoms are peppery, tangy, and spicy
8. **Chicory** - Mildly bitter earthiness of chicory
9. **Clover** - Flowers are sweet with a hint of licorice.
10. **Hibiscus** - vibrant cranberry flavor is tart
11. **Jasmine** - These super-fragrant blooms are used in tea; you can also use them in sweet dishes
12. **Johnny Jump-Up** - have a subtle mint flavor
13. **Lavender** - Sweet, spicy, and perfumed
14. **Nasturtium** - sweet, floral flavor bursting with a spicy pepper finish. When the flowers go to seed, the seed pod is a marvel of sweet and spicy. You can stuff flowers, add leaves to salads, pickle buds like capers, and garnish to your heart's content.
15. **Rose** - Remove the white, bitter base All roses are edible
16. **Violets** - floral and sweet

Most of the flower petals are good as garnishes for salads, soups, and other dishes, as well as for drinks to add aroma and flavor. The above list includes only those flowers and blossoms that are not bland or bitter.