

These beautiful green curly shoots are the early summer flower stocks of hardneck garlic. Gardeners will trim these stocks to encourage the plant to put its energy into producing a large root bulb, and are left with tasty green garlic that has a consistency similar to asparagus. Garlic scapes are a real delicacy: they have a fresh garlic flavour, but are mild and contain little spice or bite. Scapes are most often used to make pesto, pickles, soups and stir-fries, and can even be steamed or roasted and eaten on their own. Scapes are generally only available directly from your local farmer in summertime.

NUTRITION

As members of the allium family (onions, leeks, chives, etc), garlic is rich in sulfur-containing compounds that can reduce blood pressure, lower triglycerides and total cholesterol, and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. Garlic has long been used as a traditional medicine for preventing and fighting the common cold. Garlic is an excellent source of manganese, a very good source of vitamin B6 and vitamin C and a good source of selenium. Because the health benefits of garlic are best acquired through its raw form, scapes are an ideal way to consume raw garlic without the enduring overwhelming and spicy flavour of the garlic bulb.

HOW TO SELECT

Scapes should be young, green and curly, free from discolouration. Older scapes will straighten out over time and develop a tougher texture and spicier flavour.

HOW TO PREPARE

RAW: Wash and dice into small pieces as an addition to salads. Mince scapes and add them to cream cheese or mayonnaise for a tasty dip. Puree raw scapes with parmesan cheese, olive oil and salt for a delicious pesto

COOKED: Scapes can be roasted, boiled, steamed, sautéed, grilled, or stewed. Try adding scapes to your favourite soup or omelet, steam or sauté them and place them in a sandwich or burger, or eat them roasted all on their own with a bit of oil, salt and pepper

SIMPLE GARLIC SCAPE PESTO RECIPE

YOU NEED: GARLIC SCAPES, PARMESAN CHEESE, ALMONDS OR WALNUTS, OLIVE OIL, PEPPER

1. Use equal parts nuts, cheese and oil, and use two parts garlic scapes. Add pepper to taste.
2. Mince the garlic scapes and nuts, and finely grate the cheese, or add all ingredients in a food processor and blend.
3. Mix all ingredients together. The longer the mixture sits, the more the flavours will meld
4. Coat your favorite cooked pasta noodles with pesto for a delicious meal, spread the pesto on French bread as an appetizer, or serve a dollop on your with eggs at breakfast.