



Malabar Spinach

Growing and Harvest Information

Plant Malabar spinach in moist and fertile soil. Malabar spinach grows best in a hot and humid climate and with full sun exposure. This variety of spinach needs a trellis or tomato cage to grow. To save garden space, grow peas and Malabar spinach on the same trellis.

Plant seeds indoors about 6 weeks before the last frost. To speed up germination, scar the seed with a sharp knife. Wait until the soil is warm and there is no chance of frost to transplant outdoors. Space transplants about a foot apart. Water plants sufficiently to avoid a bitter taste.

Malabar spinach is ready to harvest in the beginning of summer, when the main stalk is strong. To harvest, cut leaves and stems 6-8 inches long. Harvest leaves all summer or until it begins to flower.

Introduction

Although Malabar spinach is not technically spinach, it very closely resembles the green leafy vegetable. It typically grows in India, throughout the tropic regions and in moist lowlands. While typical spinach does well in cooler climates, malabar spinach thrives in high temperatures, allowing for a summer harvest.

Preservation

Storage:

- Malabar spinach does not keep long, so pick only what is needed and store in the refrigerator. It will keep for 2 to 5 days.
- To keep longer, cut a 1/2 inch off the bottom of the stem and place in a jar with fairly deep water. They will start to root in less than a week. Cut off leaves as needed.

Freezing:

- Blanch the leaves for about 1 minute. Drain well and let dry. Pack into freezer bags and store in the freezer. It will keep for 10 to 12 months.

Dehydrating:

- Wash and dry leaves and place in single layer on drying trays.
- Dehydrate at 125 degrees F for 3 hours, or until the leaves are crispy.
- To make powder for later use in recipes, crumble or pulse in a food processor .

Nutritional Benefits

Source	Rating
Vitamins	GOOD
Minerals	GOOD
Fiber	MODERATE

Use By Guide

Vegetable State	Use by
Refrigerated	2-5 days
Frozen	1 year
Dehydrated	15 years



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Fun Facts:

The purple berries of the flowering plant have an intense color and that can be used as a food coloring in sweet dishes.

Try Malabar Spinach In:

Stews
Curries
Soups
Salads
Stir-fries

Prepare Malabar Spinach Like This:

Malabar spinach tastes more like traditional spinach when cooked, but this rids the stem of its beautiful red color.

Preparation

Recipe 1: Buttery Malabar Spinach

Ingredients:

- 3-4 cups Malabar spinach leaves, washed
- 2 tbsp butter
- salt and pepper, to taste
- juice from 1 lemon

Directions

- Add a small amount of water to a deep pan and heat on medium. Add Malabar spinach leaves. Steam until leaves are wilted and tender. Drain off remaining liquid.
- Melt butter in bottom of pan with spinach. Add salt and pepper to taste. Toss to coat leaves. Cover and braise for a few minutes.
- Remove from heat and transfer to bowl. Add lemon juice and toss. Serve warm.

Recipe 2: Malabar Spinach Salad

Ingredients:

- 6 cups torn Malabar spinach
- 6 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
- 1/2 cup fresh bean sprouts
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1-2 hard-boiled eggs, chopped

Directions

- Combine all ingredients. Serve with dressing of choice or rhubarb dressing. Recipe for dressing can be found here: <http://www.greendeanfarm.com/malabar-spinach-recipes/>