

# BROCCOLI RAAB



**BROCCOLI RAAB** or RABE, a member of the Brassica family, is actually related more closely to cabbage and turnips than broccoli. Thus, its other name, ‘rappini’, is derived from the Latin term for turnip, ‘rapa’, and the suffix, ‘ini’, meaning small. This cruciferous vegetable is native to the Mediterranean region and grows in the Northeast from June to October. Though it resembles broccoli with its long slender stalks, tiny buds and soft, green, jagged leaves, it is much more pungent and bitter. Other names for broccoli raab are ‘Chinese broccoli’, ‘Italian broccoli’, and ‘gai con’.

## STORAGE

- ◆ **Don’t wash broccoli raab before storing.** Excess moisture can promote mold.
- ◆ Place in paper bag in the refrigerator drawer for **up to 3 days**. Or, place broccoli raab stalks upright in a pitcher filled with ice water and cover the flowers with a plastic bag. This should allow the vegetable to keep for up to a week.

## PREPARATION

- ◆ Wash thoroughly and trim off tough portion of stalk.
- ◆ If broccoli raab is **young and tender**, it can be cut into bite size pieces and **eaten raw** in salads or on its own as a snack. Or shred stems and add shavings to a summer coleslaw.
- ◆ **As broccoli raab ages**, it gets increasingly bitter and **tastes better cooked**.
- ◆ Blanching can take the edge off the bitterness of this vegetable. **To blanch**, boil the vegetable in water for 2 minutes, drain, plunge into ice water, and drain again.
- ◆ **Steaming or sautéing** with olive oil and garlic are also great ways to prepare broccoli raab. Use as a side dish, with pasta, in soups, in stir-fries, or as a topping on homemade pizza.

### ***Nutritional Information***

Broccoli raab is very high in both beta-carotene and vitamin C. Both are antioxidants that help prevent cell and tissue damage that could cause disease. Vitamin C is also good for immune response, wound healing, and allergic reactions. Vitamin C also helps with iron absorption.

# **Broccoli Raab Recipes**

## **Sautéed Broccoli Raab**

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil  
4 large cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced  
1 teaspoon crushed red chili or one whole chili  
2 bunches broccoli raab, cleaned and trimmed  
Salt and fresh-ground pepper to taste



In a large saute pan, over medium flame, heat olive add garlic and chili. Add broccoli raab and sauté about 2 minutes. Add a little water and cook 3-4 minutes or until the broccoli raab is tender-crisp. Season with salt and pepper to taste and serve over rice, tossed with pasta or as a side dish.

Recipe contributed by Tracy Horner, Just Food Intern, 2001

## **Tuscan Bean Soup**

1/4 cup olive oil  
1 medium onion, chopped  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1/2 bunch each of broccoli raab and kale, washed, dried and torn into 2-1/2 inch pieces  
2 (14 ounce) cans white kidney beans (cannellini)  
3 1/2 cups chicken or vegetable broth  
1 (28 ounce) can whole tomatoes  
3 sprigs fresh thyme (leaves only) or 1 tsp dried thyme  
Salt and pepper  
1 medium loaf of Italian or sourdough bread



In a large pot, heat the olive oil over low heat. Add onion, cook until translucent, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes. Add garlic, cook 1 minute more. Add greens and cook until wilted, about 5 minutes. Add beans and broth. Add tomatoes and thyme, simmer until heated through. Season with salt and pepper and serve with bread.

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## **Pasta With Broccoli Raab and Roasted Garlic (Serves 4-6)**

12 ounces pasta  
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil  
4-6 garlic cloves, peeled, roasted for 10 minutes in a 450 degree oven or until golden  
1 1/2 pounds (2 bunches) broccoli raab  
1/2 cup chicken broth  
1/2 teaspoon dried red pepper flakes  
2 cups canned garbanzo beans  
Salt  
Slab of fresh Parmesan cheese



In large pot, bring water to a boil for the pasta. Meanwhile, trim and discard coarse leaves and approximately 1/2 inch of stem from broccoli raab. Using a potato peeler, peel large stems. Cut stems and leaves into 1 1/2 inch pieces. Rinse and drain. Add pasta to boiling water. In a large skillet, heat olive oil, add roasted garlic, broccoli raab, broth, dried red pepper flakes and salt, sauté about 3 minutes. Add beans and cook, stirring occasionally, until broccoli raab is just tender and beans are heated through. Drain pasta, transfer to serving bowl and toss with broccoli raab and beans. Shave Parmesan over the top.

Recipe adapted from [www.chefdecuisse.com](http://www.chefdecuisse.com)