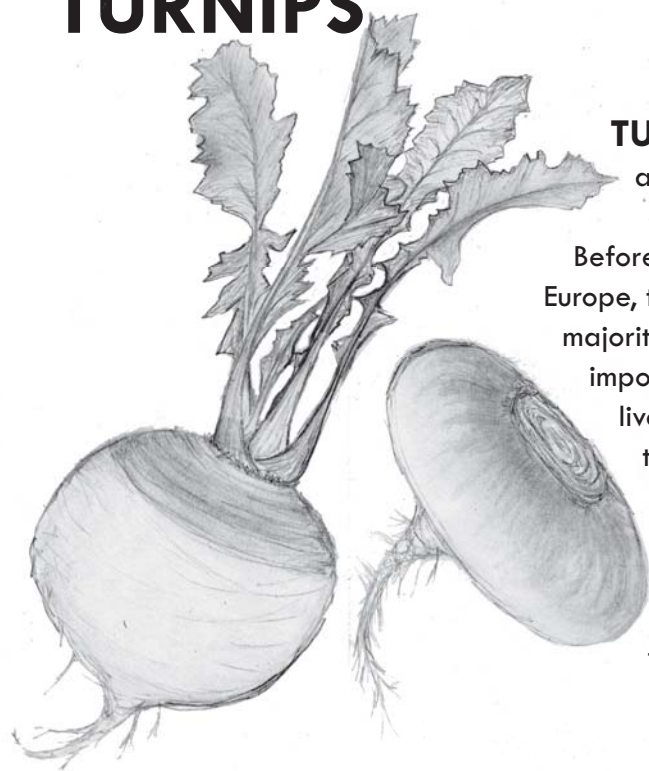


TURNIPS



TURNIPS (*Brassica rapa*) are among the most commonly grown and widely adapted root crops. Before the potato made its way to Europe, turnips were staple crops for the majority of the population. Turnips were a very important crop, since they could be used to feed livestock as well, allowing a fresh supply of meats throughout the winter. Turnip leaves are usually light green, thin and hairy and the roots of turnips generally have a distinct, and edible, taproot. Turnips are available in the spring, when they are young and can be eaten raw, or the fall, when they must be cooked.

STORAGE

- ◆ Store turnips **in your refrigerator drawer**, or the coldest part of your fridge, loosely in a plastic bag. They will keep for **up to four months**.
- ◆ For **long term storage**, **remove the greens** before placing the turnip in your refrigerator.

PREPARATION

- ◆ Good-quality turnips will be **very firm, smooth-skinned and heavy** for their size. The coloring will be light-purple on the top fading to bright-white at the bottom. In general, the smaller the turnip, the sweeter it is.
- ◆ The **greens can be cooked** as you would spinach.
- ◆ **Wash, peel and chop the bulb** before using. If the turnips are small, they can be added to salads.
- ◆ Turnips can be **boiled, baked, fried or microwaved** and served as a vegetable or included in casseroles, or soups. They also make a great addition to meat dishes as they can absorb a lot of fat.

Nutritional Information

Turnips are an excellent source of vitamin C and a fair source of calcium. Vitamin C is important in immune response, wound healing, and allergic reactions. Vitamin C also helps with iron absorption. Calcium can help maintain good bone health and may reduce risk of osteoporosis.

Turnip Recipes

Mashed Turnips (Serves 6)

3 medium sized turnips, diced
3 tablespoons butter
salt and pepper to taste

To prepare this Mashed Turnips Recipe 2, first peel and dice 3 turnips, cover with boiling salted water and cook till tender; drain and press the water well out of them. Return to pan and add 3 tablespoons butter, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1 pinch white pepper, beat and mash them well together, when thoroughly hot turn into vegetable dish and serve.

Recipe adapted from www.freerecipe.org



Turnips with Swiss Chard (Serves 6)

1 teaspoon olive oil
1 tablespoon garlic, minced
4 cups turnips, peeled, halved, and very thinly sliced
6 cups Swiss Chard, washed, stemmed, and chopped
3 tablespoons lemon juice
Salt and freshly ground pepper

Heat oil over medium-high heat in a skillet. Add the sliced turnips and saute for 5 minutes. Add the garlic and saute for 1 to 2 minutes more. Add the chard and lemon juice and stir. Turn the heat off, cover, and steam for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Recipe adapted from www.cdkitchen.com.



Turnip Souffle (Serves 4)

2 cups cooked, mashed turnips, cooled
1 cup bread crumbs
1/2 cup melted butter or margarine
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
2 eggs, separated

Combine turnips, bread crumbs, margarine, salt, pepper, and beaten egg yolks in a mixing bowl. Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form and fold into turnip mixture. Spoon gently in to 1 quart casserole and bake for 40 minutes at 350 degrees.

Recipe adapted from www.about.com

