

APRIL 2017 FOOD OF THE MONTH

ARTICHOKES

If you have never eaten artichokes before, their intricate outer appearance can look intimidating. Once you try them, though, you will find them a lot of fun to eat and downright delicious. Although they are considered by most to be a vegetable, they are actually flower buds. The artichoke is a big thistle plant that was first developed in Sicily, and is at the heart of Mediterranean cooking. There are several types of artichokes available, including green or purple regular artichokes and baby artichokes.

Baby artichokes are actually fully mature artichokes that grow closer to the ground, sheltered by the larger leaves on the plant. Unlike regular artichokes, which have a fuzzy, inedible portion called the "choke," the entire baby artichoke is fully edible. Artichokes can be found year-round, but they are at their prime between March and May. Responsible for 80% of all artichokes sold in the United States, Castorville, CA is known as the "Artichoke Capital of the World". It is also where Marilyn Monroe was crowned "Miss California Artichoke Queen" in 1947.

Nutrition Tidbits for Artichokes:

1 cup of cooked artichoke (edible portion only) contains:

- **Calories:** 89 kcal
- **Fat:** 0.3 g
- **Carbohydrates:** 20.1 g
- **Fiber:** 14.4 g
- **Protein:** 4.9 g
- **Glycemic Index (GI):** Low (below 55)



Ways to Include More Artichokes in Your Diet:

Artichokes are best enjoyed whole, freshly cooked. You may boil, steam, or microwave the whole artichoke, and enjoy it by peeling and dragging each leaf between your teeth to reach the edible portion. When you are done with all the leaves and approach the center, you can spoon out and discard the fuzzy choke portion and the delicious "heart" will remain.

WORLD CLASS. LOCAL TOUCH.

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Roasted Artichoke

Ingredients

- 1 whole artichoke
- Olive oil
- Garlic cloves or minced garlic
- Lemon juice
- Pinch of sea salt
- Aluminum heavy-duty foil



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Cut off the top 1-2 inches of the artichoke (it's inedible) and the stem to create a flat base.
3. Spread about 1 tbsp. olive oil on a square of aluminum foil. Place artichoke on foil and spread leaves apart slightly with your fingers.
4. Place garlic cloves or minced garlic between leaves as much as possible.
5. Sprinkle top of artichoke with sea salt, a little bit of lemon juice, and a drizzling of more olive oil. Cover completely with aluminum foil and place on a lipped baking sheet to catch any potential drippings.
6. Bake for about 1 to 1 1/2 hours, depending on the size of the artichoke.
7. Remove artichoke from oven and from foil. Using the pointed edges as your grasping point, scrape the meaty, flat edges of the leaves with your teeth. Keep pulling off leaves until you reach the heart.
8. Using a fork, scrape the hairy top half of the heart off, exposing the meaty center. Spoon the meaty center out of the base and eat it.

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