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> Edible Flowers Guide



Edible Flowers Guide

It is surprising how many flowers growing in our gardens are edible. Edible flowers have been used for years in cooking or as decorations for various dishes. The Chinese were the first to experiment with flowers as food and their many and varied recipes can be traced back as far back as 3,000 B.C. In Roman times, the edible flowers of pinks, violets and roses were used in dishes and lavender in sauces. Gardeners and cooks over 1000 years ago were already using pot marigolds and orange blossom in their cooking. Today many fine restaurants around the UK and indeed the world are using more and more edible flowers to enhance salads with their colour, texture and intriguing flavours, as well as for decoration on appetisers, starters, cakes and many other dishes.

It is always best to grow your own edible flowers, and then you can be sure that they are clean, fresh and free from pests and disease. The majority of edible flowers are always best picked fresh from the garden the day you want to use them. Growing your own also allows you to experiment and show off to dinner guests both what you have grown and what you've created with a colourful and tasty dish. As with any food and salad preparation always maintain good personal hygiene and practices.

Even if you are not keen on experimenting with salads or sauces, edible flowers make excellent garnishes which, unlike some 'decorations' which appear in the guise of nouvelle cuisine, are actually nice to eat! Furthermore, as in Roman times, the flower garden becomes a treasure chest of delicately flavoured treats to scatter on your salads or to add a 'touch of class' to your culinary endeavours.

Edible Flowers

Disclaimer: Thompson & Morgan has researched all the edible flowers listed below. However, individuals consuming the flowers, plants, or derivatives listed here do so entirely at their own risk. Thompson & Morgan always recommends following good hygiene practices. Thompson & Morgan cannot be held responsible for any adverse reaction to the flowers. In case of doubt please consult your doctor.

Common Name	Botanical Name	Edible Tip	Edible Warning
Agastache	Agastache anisata, Agastache foeniculum	Both flowers and leaves have a delicate, fragrant taste. They are ideal for adding to cakes for a hint of anise flavour, or add the leaves and flowers to whipping cream for a creamy, liquorice flavour.	If you are pregnant, be sure to research possible contraindications to using this herb.
Apple/ Crab Apple	Malus domestica, Malus x robusta, Malus x zumi	Apple blossoms have a slightly floral taste and the petals are lovely in salads. Infuse petals in whipped cream or ice cream to go over an apple tart. Blossoms look attractive when floated in a fruit punch.	
Basil	Ocimum basilicum, Ocimum minimum, Ocimum x citriodorum	Flowers can be used as a substitute for leaves in any dish requiring basil. The flowers should be used more sparingly due to their very intense flavour. Delicious added to salads, soups or pasta.	
Begonia	Begonia x tuberhybrida	The brightly coloured flowers have a delicious light, lemon taste and a crisp texture. Use snipped petals as a garnish in salads and sandwiches or dip whole petals in flavoured yogurt and serve as an appetizer.	Only tuberous begonia petals are edible. The petals contain oxalic acid and therefore should only be eaten in moderation and should not be consumed by individuals suffering from gout, kidney stones or rheumatism.

Biennial Clary	Salvia sclarea	Flowers have a very aromatic flavour and being pastel shades, make a lovely contrast when added to salads.	
Borage	Borago officinalis	Mix flowers into vegetable and fruit salads, or use to garnish soups or to decorate desserts. An excellent choice for freezing in ice cubes and floating on iced tea. Petals have a cucumber taste and the stamens add a hint of sweetness.	Pregnant and lactating women should avoid borage flowers, as more than eight to ten flowers can cause milk to flow. They can also have a diuretic effect, so should not be eaten in great quantity.
Busy Lizzie	Impatiens walleriana	The flowers come in many colours and look attractive used as a garnish in salads or floated in cold drinks.	
Cape Jasmine	Gardenia jasminoides	These extremely fragrant blooms can be used to make pickles, preserves and jams, or shredded and added as flavouring to cakes.	
Dianthus/ Carnation/ Pinks	Dianthus amurensis, Dianthus barbatus, Dianthus caryophyllus, Dianthus chinensis, Dianthus deltoides, Dianthus plumarius, Dianthus superbus	Most dianthus have a pleasant spicy, floral, clove-like taste, especially the more fragrant varieties, and are ideal for decorating or adding to cakes. They'll also make a colourful garnish to soups, salads and the punch bowl. The petals of Sweet Williams will add zest to ice cream, sorbets, salads, fruit salad, dessert sauces, seafood and stir-fries. It is advisable to remove the white heel at the base of the petal as this has a bitter taste.	
Catmint	Nepeta cataria	The small flowers have an aromatic, strong mint/spice flavour so should be used sparingly when cooking. Ideal for adding a bit of bite to pasta or rice dishes and all types of vegetables. Also makes a tasty complement to meat dishes like lamb.	Nepeta is not recommended to eat during pregnancy
Chicory, Raddichio	Cichorium intybus	The fresh flowers have a mild lettuce flavour and make a decorative addition to salads, whilst flower buds can be pickled. Picked blooms look attractive frozen in ice cubes and added to drinks.	Contact with all parts of this plant can irritate the skin or aggravate skin allergies
Chives/ Chinese Chives	Allium schoenoprasum, Allium tuberosum,	Chive flowers have a mild onion flavour and are surprisingly crunchy. They are widely used tossed in salads, pasta, omelettes and scrambled eggs. Or you can add a few to white fish dishes or to cheese sauce to give that extra bite. As tempting it may be to pop the whole flower into your mouth, refrain from doing so as the pungency in that quantity can be overwhelming. For garnish and cooking break the flower into individual florets .	
Citrus Trees	Citrus aurantium, Citrus limon, Citrus x latifolia	Citrus flowers are overwhelming in scent and flavour and go really well with many different foods from stir-fries to puddings. They are also ideal for crystallising and decorating cakes or desserts.	
Coriander	Coriandrum sativum	The flowers are as adaptable as the leaves in a variety of different dishes. Scatter over cauliflower, add to the end of a stir-fry or add to cream cheese. Scatter a few flowers over an orange fruit salad, as the flavour of the flowers will	
Cornflower	Centaurea cyanus	These attractive flowers have no fragrance but do have a sweet-to-spicy clove-like flavour. They are ideal for mixing with other flowers to make attractive confetti for sprinkling over salads, omelettes, and pasta dishes. Or they can be used on their own as a colourful garnish.	
Courgette	Cucurbita pepo	All squash flowers have a slightly sweet 'nectar' taste. These can be stuffed with cheeses and other fillings, battered and deep fried or sautéed and added to pasta. Thinly sliced blossoms can be added to soups, omelettes, scrambled egg or used to add colour to salads.	
Daisy	Bellis perennis	Pull flowers apart for a mass of small quill petals ideal for creating a colourful garnish on desserts or soups, in salads or with savoury dishes. Also make useful decorations for cakes, biscuits, mousses and pâtés.	If you have hay fever, asthma or severe allergies, you should avoid eating flowers of the daisy family because they could trigger an allergic reaction.
Daylily	Hemerocallis	Day lily petals are great in salads, hot and cold soups, cooked and served as a vegetable or chopped and added to stir-fries. Try sautéing the buds or flowers, which can then be stuffed with almost any filling.	Only hemerocallis , the ' Day Lily ' can be eaten. Do not eat other types of lilies (Lillium) as they are poisonous.
Dill	Anethum graveolens	Add flowers to fish dishes, omelettes or sprinkle over cooked vegetables. Add whole flowers to pickled gherkins, cucumbers or beetroots for a milder flavour than dill seed.	
Evening Primrose, Ozark Sundrops	Oenothera macrocarpa, Oenothera odorata, Oenothera versicolor, Oenothera speciosa,	The flowers have a similar taste to lettuce, so will make a fine addition to any green salad whilst also adding some colour.	

	Oenothera missouriensis		
Feijoa sellowiana		The flower petals have a flavour often described as being similar to that of candyfloss. The petals are ideal added to a fruit salad, smoothie, milkshake or an iced drink. The fruits can also be used in chutneys and tropical fruit salads.	
Fennel	Foeniculum vulgare	The mild anise/licuorice flavour combines well with fish, meat and vegetable dishes. Delicious added to cucumber or potato soup. Make fennel flower oil and use to baste pork chops on a barbecue.	
Filipendula ulmaria		The sweetly scented flowers can be eaten in salads or added to homemade wine.	
Fuchsia		The stunning colours and graceful shape of fuchsias make them ideal as a green or fruit salad garnish. They look very decorative if crystallised or inserted into jelly. The berries are also edible and useful for making jams. Before eating the flower remove all green and brown bits and gently remove the stamen pistils as this will certainly enhance the petal flavour.	
Garland Chrysanthemum	Chrysanthemum coronarum	Petals are best quickly and lightly fried in vegetable oil before adding to soups, salads and stir-fries. Use the strongly spicy flavoured flowers sparingly in salads or when making Japanese Chrysanthemum soup.	Only chrysanthemum coronarium should be eaten; it is not advisable to eat other types of chrysanthemum.
Gladiolus		Flowers taste similar to lettuce, and make a lovely receptacle for sweet or savoury spreads or mousses. You could also toss individual petals in salads for colour. It is best to must remove the anthers, take the middle of the blossom out before eating/using.	
Hibiscus		Infuse the flowers to make a popular, mildly citrus-flavoured tea. Add strips of vibrant coloured petals to fruit salads. It is best to use the petals from the flower heads. If you use them whole, beware of the pollen.	
Hollyhock	Alcea rosea	The flowers can be crystallised and used to decorate cakes, mousses and roulades or try mixing them with salad leaves for a stunning dish. Flowers can also be used to make a subtly flavoured syrup to add to various puddings. Before eating , remove the centre stamen and any green bits.	
Hyssop	Hyssopus officinalis	Ideal for adding to soups or salads, or can be infused to make a refreshing tea. Hyssop also makes a perfect complement to fish and meat dishes.	
Japanese Basil	Perilla frutescens	The whole flower can be eaten, adding a spicy flavour to stir-fries, chicken or fish dishes.	
Jasmine	Jasminum officinale	The flowers are intensely fragrant and are traditionally used for scenting tea, but can also be added to shellfish dishes.	Only jasmine officinale is edible. The false Jasmine (Gelsemium sempervirens) is a completely different genus and is considered too poisonous for human consumption.
Lavender	Lavandula multifida, Lavandula stoechas, Lavandula angustifolia	There are many ways to use lavender flowers, both in sweet or savoury dishes. Make a delicious lavender sugar and add to biscuits, sorbets, jams or jellies. Add flowers to vegetable stock and create a tasty sauce for duck, chicken or lamb dishes.	Lavender oil may be poisonous. No more than two undiluted drops should be taken internally.
Lemon Balm	Melissa officinalis	The flowers are small, so are ideal for adding to salad dressings or soups. They can also be added to stuffing for poultry dishes too.	
Lilac	Syringa vulgaris	Mix fresh fragrant flowers with a little cream cheese and serve on crackers or stir flowers into yogurt to add a hint of lemon. Also useful as a garnish for cakes, scones or sweets.	
Marigold	Tagetes patula, Tagetes tenuifolia, Tagetes patula x erecta	The flowers and leaves have a citrus taste, making them ideal for adding to salads, sandwiches, seafood dishes or hot desserts.	Marigolds may be harmful in large amounts . They should only be eaten occasionally and in moderation .
Marrow	Cucurbita pepo	All squash flowers have a slightly sweet nectar taste . These can be stuffed with cheeses and other fillings , battered and deep fried or sauteed and added to pasta . Thinly sliced blossoms can be added to soups, omelets, scrambled egg or add colour to salads.	
Mint/ Pennyroyal Mint	Mentha x piperita, Mentha pulegium, Mentha suaveolens, Mentha x	These tiny flowers pack a real punch and add that something extra to green salads, fruit salads, fresh strawberries, chocolate mousse or chocolate cake. Can also be used to decorate and flavour lamb dishes.	

	gracilis, Mentha spicata		
Monarda/ Bergamot	Monarda citriodora subsp. Astromontana, Monarda didyma	As well as being colourful, the petals have a sweet, spicy flavour and will enhance salads, jellies and stuffings, rice and pasta dishes. Fresh or dried leaves can be used to make delicious bergamot tea. Before using the flowers, only give them a minimal rinse with water so as not to diminish the fragrance.	
Mooli Radish	Raphanus sativus	The radish flowers flavour is a milder version of the spicy root, making it ideal to add colour to the top of a salad or sprinkle over cooked vegetables to add a little spice.	
Nasturtium	Tropaeolum majus, Tropaeolum minus	The fresh leaves and flowers have a peppery flavour similar to watercress. The flowers will add a spicy touch to salads and the green seeds can be chopped and used with parsley as a garnish or made into capers. Try them combined with cream cheese or butter in canapés, or in a cheese and tomato sandwich. Flowers can also be used to garnish steaks or casseroles.	
Onion (Welsh/ Spring)	Allium fistulosum	Onion flowers offer an onion flavour, without the bite of an onion bulb. These are ideal for tossing in a salad or for mixing in with vegetables.	
Oregano	Origanum vulgare	Wonderful added to tomato dishes, pizza and when making your own bread. Flowers can also be added to butter for flavour.	
Ornamental Kale	Brassica oleracea (Acephala Group)	The leaves can be picked while still young and will make a tasty and colourful addition to salads.	
Pansy	Viola x wittrockiana	Flowers have a lettuce-like flavour and make a decorative addition to a green salad or to garnish a pâté or dessert. They can be crystallised and used to decorate cakes, cookies or creamy desserts.	
Pea	Pisum sativum	Flowers are slightly sweet and, surprisingly enough, taste like young peas. Delicious added to salads. Use candied flowers to decorate fish dishes or cakes. The shoots and vine tendrils are also edible and have the same delicate, pea-like flavour.	Only vegetable pea flowers can be eaten, not sweet pea flowers which are toxic.
Perennial Phlox	Phlox paniculata	These flowers have a slightly spicy taste. Great added to fruit salads and a colourful addition to any floral salad. As the flowers are small and colourful they are superb when crystallised and added as decoration to cakes or desserts.	It is only this perennial phlox, not the annual, or the low-growing (creeping) phlox that is edible.
Polyanthus, Cowslip, Primrose, Primula	Primula, Primula vulgaris, Primula veris, Primula hybrida	Popular as a garnish on salads. Remove the stalks so they sit open-faced on top of lettuce, cress etc. Crystallise or use in pancakes or cakes. Sprinkle fresh polyanthus blossoms in salads, adding a touch of colour and a sweet taste. Flowers can be crystallised and used as decorations, making them ideal for special cakes and desserts, for example on Mothering Sunday or at Easter.	
Poppy	Papaver somniferum, Papaver paeoniflorum	All poppies are poisonous , however the seeds that are produced from these species of poppy can be eaten.	All poppies are poisonous. However the seeds produced from Papaver somniferum and Papaver paeoniflorum can be eaten. The seeds of other species are not edible.
Pot Marigold	Calendula officinalis	Calendulas have a slightly peppery taste and will add a light, tangy flavour to breads and soups, as well as adding a touch of colour. They will make a bright and tasty addition to a tossed salad. You can use fresh or dried petals as an economical substitute for saffron for adding colour to rice or butter. The fresh young leaves can also be used sparingly in salads.	
Pumpkin	Cucurbita maxima, Cucurbita pepo	All squash flowers have a slightly sweet nectar taste. These can be stuffed with cheeses and other fillings, battered and deep fried or sauteed and added to pasta. Thinly sliced blossoms can be added to soups, omelets, scrambled egg or add colour to salads.	
Living Greens/ Microgreens/ Purple Radish	Raphanus sativus	The flavour of radish flowers is a milder version of the spicy root, making it ideal to add colour to the top of a salad or sprinkle over cooked vegetables to add a little spice.	
Rocket	Eruca vesicaria, Diplotaxis muralis, Eruca vesicaria subsp. sativa	The flowers and the leaves have a spicy, peppery flavour, and are delicious added to a salad, rice or sprinkled over cooked French beans. Add whole flowers to taramasalata and serve with brown toast.	
Rose	Rosa	As a general rule if a rose smells good, it will taste good. Petals have a delicate flavour which will improve cool drinks and fruit dishes, or why not try rose petal jam? Rosehips and petals can both be used in jellies. If the flowers are crystallised, they will make attractive cake decorations. It is best to remove the white heel from the base of the petals before eating.	

Rosemary	Rosmarinus officinalis	Rosemary flowers and leaves can be used with poultry or pork - try adding a few flowers to biscuit dough to add flavour.	
Runner Bean	Phaseolus coccineus	Flowers can be eaten raw in salads, adding a mild bean flavour with a hint of nectar, or add to cooked runner bean dishes for decoration.	Only scarlet-flowered runner beans are recommended for eating.
Sage	Salvia officinalis	The flowers taste similar to the leaves and make a vibrant contribution to salads and pâtés, mustards and vinaigrettes.	
Salsify	Tragopogon porrifolius	Usually grown for its nutty flavoured roots, but the young leaves are tasty in salads adding a mild nutty flavour. The flower buds should be picked just before they open with about three inches of stem attached. They can be lightly simmered and then eaten when cold in salads or as a garnish.	
Scented pelargoniums	Geranium clorinda, Geranium fragrans, Geranium graveolens, Geranium quercifolia, Geranium tomentosum	The leaves have a powerful citrus fragrance and will add flavour to cakes and meringue roulades. The flowers have a faint citrus flavour similar to the leaves and are ideal crystallised and scattered on desserts.	
Squash	Cucurbita moschata, Cucurbita pepo, Cucurbita maxima	All squash flowers have a slightly sweet nectar taste . These can be stuffed with cheeses and other fillings , battered and deep fried or sauteed and added to pasta . Thinly sliced blossoms can be added to soups, omelets, scrambled egg or add colour to salads.	
Strawberry	Fragaria x ananassa, Fragaria vesca	The flowers retain their strawberry fragrance as well as a milder strawberry flavour. Float petals in drinks, add to salads or candy them and add to desserts for decoration.	
Sunflower	Helianthus annuus	The buds, petals and seeds are all edible. Add the petals to a green salad for a colour contrast and a mild nutty taste. The green buds can be blanched, then tossed in garlic butter; they are similar in flavour to a Jerusalem artichoke. The kernels inside the seeds can be eaten raw or toasted as a snack.	
Sweet Cicely	Myrrhis odorata	The sweet anise-flavoured flowers are lovely added to apple, plum or rhubarb tarts.	
Sweet Mace	Tagetes lucida	Use the flowers of this attractive plant in salads and its leaves in soups and stews much like French tarragon.	
Sweet Marjoram	Origanum majorana	Combines well with all chicken dishes and many fish recipes. Can also be made into a flavoursome hot tea.	
Sweet Rocket	Hesperis matronalis	This combines well with all chicken dishes and many fish recipes. Can also be made into a flavoursome hot tea.	
Tulip	Tulipa	Tulip petals have a sweet, pea-like flavour and a tender crisp texture. Try stuffing whole flowers with a shrimp or chicken salad. Add strips of petals to salads or sandwiches for that added touch of colour. Carefully remove pollen and stigmas from the base of the flower before stuffing.	Some people have had strong allergic reactions to tulips . If touching them causes a rash, numbness etc. - Don't eat them! Don't EVER eat the bulbs . If you have any doubts, don't eat the flower.
Viola	Viola cornuta, Viola hybrida, Viola tricolor, Viola x williamsiana, Viola odorata	Flowers have a lettuce-like flavour and make a decorative addition to a green salad or to garnish a pâté or dessert. They can be crystallised and used on cakes, cookies or creamy desserts.	
Yucca		The white yucca flower petals have a crunchy, mildly sweet taste with a hint of artichoke flavour. Delicious added to salads or used as a garnish.	

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CAUTION: Flowers to Avoid

Although there are probably many more flowers in the garden which can be eaten safely we would recommend that you confine yourself to trying the ones mentioned here and avoid anything that has not been widely recommended. [Click here](#) to view the common garden flowers which are **ALL POISONOUS** to a greater or lesser degree should be especially avoided.

Edible flower books recommended for reading

The Edible Flower Garden by Kathy Brown

Edible flowers by Kathy Brown

The Edible Flower Garden by Rosalind Creasy

Cooking with Edible Flowers by Miriam Jacobs

Good Enough to Eat by Jekka McVicar

Edible Flowers, Desserts & Drinks by Cathy Wilkinson Barash

Edible Flowers from Garden to Palate by Cathy Wilkinson Barash

Eat your Roses & 49 other Edible Flowers by Denise Schreiber

The Scented Kitchen by Frances Bissell

Edible Flower Recipes

Here are just a few of the many ways you can include flowers in your meals.

Bloomsbury Salad

Select some young tender lettuce leaves, then wash and dry them before tearing into a wooden or glass bowl. Add several whole monarda leaves and a similar quantity of nasturtium leaves, and toss in an oil and vinegar dressing. Gather the fresh flowers of borage, viola, nasturtium, rose, calendula, and monarda flower heads. Lightly pull apart the calendula, monarda, nasturtium and viola, but leave the borage flowers whole, then mix them all gently into the salad. Garnish the top of the salad with a few whole nasturtium flowers and rose petals.

Calendula Scones

- For 8 scones:
- 450g (1lb) plain flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 45g (1½ oz) butter
- 300ml (½ pt) milk with 2 tsp of cream tartar.
- 2 tbsp fresh calendula petals.

Preheat oven to 220°C (425°F) Gas mark 7. Sift the flour into a bowl with the salt and bicarbonate of soda. Rub in the butter and add the milk and the cream of tartar and the calendula petals. Mix thoroughly until a soft dough is formed. Turn onto a floured board, knead lightly, and then roll to about 2cm (¾in) thick. Use a 5cm (2in) plain cutter to cut out the scones and put them on a lightly floured baking sheet. Bake in the oven for 12-15 minutes until risen and golden brown. Cool on a baking tray before eating.

Citrus Blossom Special Salad

- ¼ cup lemon juice
- ½ cup orange juice
- 3 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp lemon rind, finely grated
- 2 tbsp ginger, finely grated
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 4 cups carrots, finely grated
- ½ cup almonds, thinly sliced

Marigold Butter

- Petals of 20 French marigolds or tagetes
- 225g (½ lb) butter, softened to room temperature

Finely chop the petals. Mix them into the softened butter and leave to sit in a cool room for several hours. Roll into a log shape using greaseproof paper and place in the fridge overnight. This will keep in the fridge for up to 2 weeks. Cut slices and garnish any grilled fish or serve on toast or muffins.

Nasturtium & Runner Bean Omelette

- 50g (2oz) young tender runner beans
 - 2 eggs
 - 30ml (2tbsp) milk
 - 2 nasturtium seeds
 - 4 nasturtium petals
 - Salt and freshly ground pepper
 - 15ml (1tbsp) butter
 - Freshly grated parmesan cheese
- to taste.

Slice the runner beans finely and add to a saucepan of boiling water and cook for 4 minutes, then drain. Beat the eggs with the milk. Crush the seeds with a fork, and then add the seeds, leaves and petals to the egg mixture. Season lightly with salt and some freshly ground black pepper. Melt the butter in a frying pan over a gentle heat. Pour the egg and nasturtium mixture into the pan, add the beans and cook gently until the omelette has just set. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese and serve immediately, garnished with extra petals.

Pink Marmalade

- 1 cup granulated sugar
 - 1 cup water
 - 2 cups dianthus petals
- coarsely chopped

- 1 cup golden raisins
- ½ cup calendula petals
- ¼ cup citrus petals
- 15 to 20 nasturtium leaves

Whisk together juices and honey. Mix in lemon rind, ginger and cayenne pepper. Add carrots, almonds and raisins. Just before serving, toss in calendula petals and citrus petals. Serve on a bed of nasturtium leaves.

Citrus Dip for Begonia Blossoms

- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tbsp frozen orange juice concentrate
- 1 tsp orange zest
- ½ tsp lemon zest
- ½ cup low fat yogurt
- 4 large tuberous begonia flowers.

In a small bowl, combine the honey, orange juice concentrate and orange and lemon zests. Add the yogurt and mix well. Pour the yogurt mixture into a small decorative bowl, cover with cling film and refrigerate until ready to serve. Just before serving, gently wash the begonia blossoms and remove each of the petals at its base. Place the bowl of flavoured yogurt on a large platter and arrange the petals in a decorative pattern around the bowl. Serve as a delicious appetiser within the hour to prevent the petals wilting, Serves 4-6.

Cottage Cheese Dip

- 1 cup cottage cheese
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- ¼ tsp. caraway seeds
- ¼ cup yoghurt
- ½ cup mixed flower petals torn into small pieces
- Salt

Force the cottage cheese through a sieve. Add remaining ingredients. Chill for 2 hours and garnish with borage flowers. Makes 1½ cups.

Courgette Flower Fritters

- 125g (4oz) plain flour
- Pinch of salt
- 1 large egg
- 300ml (10fl oz) semi-skimmed milk
- Sunflower oil for deep frying
- Icing sugar for serving

Beat all the ingredients together in a bowl for a smooth, lump-free batter. When the frying oil has almost reached the correct temperature of 188°C (370°F), dip the courgette flower in the batter and allow any drips to fall back into the bowl. Drop the flower into the hot oil and remove after 1 minute or so when the fritter will be a pale golden colour. Drain on paper towels and serve dusted with icing sugar. The same process can be used to make fritters of other types of edible flower as well.

Put sugar and water into a non aluminium saucepan. Bring to a boil and simmer until it thickens to a syrup consistency. Add the chopped dianthus petals and gently simmer, stirring frequently until pulpy. Pour into sterilised jars and allow to cool to room temperature. Once cool, place in the fridge and eat within 3 weeks.

Primrose Salad

- 1 round lettuce
- 115g (4oz) lambs lettuce
- 2 tbsp young primrose leaves, finely chopped
- 50g (2oz) parsley, chopped
- 450g (1lb) tomatoes, skinned and chopped
- ½ cucumber, peeled and chopped
- 15-20 primrose flowers
- 3 tbsp sunflower or olive oil
- 1 tbsp primrose or white wine vinegar
- Freshly ground black pepper and salt.

Wash and shake lettuce dry, discarding the outer leaves. Add the lambs lettuce, tomatoes, parsley, primrose leaves and cucumber and mix thoroughly. To make the salad dressing, combine the oil and vinegar in a bowl, whisk thoroughly, season with pepper and salt. Pour the dressing over the salad just before serving, toss and scatter the primrose flowers on top.

Rose Petal Sorbet

- 115g (4oz) caster (superfine) sugar
- 300ml (½pt) boiling water
- Petals of 3 large scented red or pink roses, with the white ends of the petals removed
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 300ml (½pt) rosé wine

Place the sugar in a bowl and add boiling water. Stir until the sugar has completely dissolved. Add the rose petals and leave to completely cool. Blend the mixture in a food processor then strain through a sieve. Add the lemon juice and wine and pour into a freezer container. Freeze for several hours until the mixture has frozen around the edges. Turn the sorbet into a mixing bowl and whisk until smooth. Re-freeze until frozen around the edges. Repeat the whisking and freezing process once or twice more, until the sorbet is pale and smooth, then freeze till firm. Serve decorated with a few crystallised roses or rose petals.

Rosemary Chicken

- 450g (1lb) skinless, boneless chicken breasts
- 3 tbsp sweet (unsalted) butter
- 2 tbsp rosemary flowers, coarsely chopped
- Juice of 1 lemon

Place chicken breasts in a polythene bag and hit with a rolling pin until 6mm (¼in) in thickness. Melt the butter in a pan and add chicken. Add rosemary flowers, then quickly sauté each side until golden brown. Sprinkle with lemon juice, then serve the chicken drizzled with the pan juices.

Strawberry Jelly and Fuchsia Flowers

Crystallised Flowers for Decoration

- Use freshly picked primroses, pansies, violets, pinks, roses or other recommended small flowers.
- Caster sugar
- The white of an egg

Pick the flowers when the dew has dried and select only undamaged, perfectly formed flowers. Gently whisk the egg white until it is bubbly, but not frothy. Paint the white onto all parts of the flower, then dip it into the caster sugar, making sure that it is completely covered. Shake off any surplus and leave on greaseproof paper in a warm room to dry. Use when hardened. When thoroughly dry, place in an airtight container, layered with greaseproof paper and store in a cool place. They will keep for about a week.

Fried Golden Needles

- 12 hemerocallis (Daylily) flowers
- 1 egg beaten with 1tsp of water
- 1 cup of all purpose flour
- Vegetable oil

Dip each flower in the beaten egg. Roll them each in flour. Sauté the coated flowers in hot oil until crispy.

Hibiscus Tea

- 1 tbsp of fresh hibiscus petals
- 1 cup boiling water
- Honey (optional)

Steep petals in water in a cup for 5 minutes, for additional sweetness add honey if desired.

Hollyhock & Nectarine Salad

- 2 nectarines with either white or yellow flesh
- 2 hollyhock flowers
- 2 sprigs of mint (in flower if possible)

Cut the nectarines in half, remove the stones (pips) and slice the fruit. Arrange the slices on individual serving plates. Remove the stigma from the centre of the hollyhocks, and then cut off the green parts. Brush any excess pollen off the petals. Arrange the petals around the nectarine slices and garnish with sprigs of mint.

Home Fries with Chive Blossoms

- ¼ cup (59ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 cups (944ml) boiled or steamed potatoes, sliced
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 8 chive blossoms, florets snipped off and separated

Heat the oil in a frying pan. Add the potato slices; cook until the undersides begin to brown. Using a large spatula, turn the potatoes; sprinkle with salt and pepper to

- 675g (1½lb) fresh strawberries
- 125g (5oz) caster sugar
- 400ml (14floz) water
- 3 tbsp gelatine
- 6 fuchsia flowers, with stamen, pistils, and green parts removed
- 12-14 whole strawberries
for decoration.

Put the fruit, sugar and water into a saucepan and bring to the boil; simmer for 3 minutes as you stir. Push the fruit and liquid through a fine mesh sieve to remove all the pips. Return to the saucepan, heat to just below boiling and sprinkle the gelatine over the surface. Whisk until dissolved completely. Stir in the fuchsia flowers and pour into a 1.25lt (2¼ pt) metal jelly ring mould. Allow to cool and then chill for several hours until firmly set. Turn out onto a plate and fill the centre with strawberries and a few more prepared fuchsia flowers.

Sunflower Buds

- 8 sunflower buds
- 30g (1oz) butter, melted
- Sunflower petals for garnish

Bring a large pan of water to the boil. Put in the sunflower buds and blanch for 2 minutes, this will kill any bugs and remove any bitterness. Strain them into a colander. Refill the pan with water and bring to the boil. Add the sunflower buds and simmer for a further 3 minutes until tender, drain and toss in melted butter. Serve garnished with sunflower petals.

Violet Soup

- 1 litre (1¾ pint) of stock
- 40g (1¾ oz) long grain rice
- 1 teaspoonful lemon juice
- ¼ cupful of freshly picked, unwashed violets or small flowered pansies or violas.







Boil the rice in the stock for twenty minutes or until soft, add the violets and lemon juice, cover with a saucepan lid and simmer very gently for 2 minutes. Serve immediately.

taste. Sprinkle with chive florets. Continue cooking until the potato slices are browned on both sides and serve immediately.

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