

Edible Petals

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Edible flowers can be an appealing addition to your culinary creations, for it is said that we eat first with our eyes. Here are some ideas for expanding your horizons by incorporating colorful edible petals into your delicious home made meals. Please be mindful of people's allergies and sensitivities, for even small flower petals contain tiny amounts of pollen or other components which may upset those highly sensitive folks. Whether for eating or just for garnish we prefer to use only organically grown flowers. And remember, EVERYTHING IN MODERATION.

Some of the most popular blossoms of ornamental plants are:

Pansies and Violas, slight minty flavor. Use in salads, cake decorations, and candied.

Marigolds and Calendulas, citrusy to slightly bitter. Use in salads, cakes, breads and as natural coloring. Pull out the petals of whole *Calendula* flowers and sprinkle like confetti on top of each plated salad dish.

Nasturtiums, mild to strong peppery flavor. Use in salads or fill with soft cheeses. Use the leaves also of this watercress relative which are sometimes variegated or a bluish green color.

Borage, buttery wafer, mild cucumber flavor. Freeze these tiny blue flowers into ice cubes to impart a flowery chill to ice tea and lemonade.

Chive blossoms, mild onion flavor. Use in salads and sandwiches or as a garnish for dips and soups.

The flowers of most herb plants though edible are too small to make an impact on their own, so use a sprig with some flowers on it for garnishes. In general the flowers of herbs taste like mild versions of the herbs themselves. Here are some you'll want to try. *Arugula, Basil, Chamomile, Cilantro, Dill, Fennel, Lavender, Mint, Oregano, Rosemary, Sage and Thyme*.

Other edible blooms include;

Anise Hyssop or Agastache, licorice flavor. Use as substitute for tarragon.

Apple blossoms, sweet floral flavor. EAT IN MODERATION, MAY CONTAIN CYANIDE PRECURSORS.

Bee balm or Monarda, minty flavors for teas.

Cornflowers or Bachelor's Buttons, mild flavor for garnish.

Dianthus or Carnations clove flavor. Use in salads or candied.

Hibiscus and Hollyhock bland to sweet flavor. Use candied or as garnish.

Jasmine, floral-citrusy flavor. Use in teas and sweets.

Peony, sweet to slightly bitter flavor for tea and sweets.

Roses, sweet to slightly bitter. Use as garnish or to flavor jams.

Sunflowers, slightly bitter flavor, use as garnish.

Squash blossoms, mild squash flavor, try stuffed and sautéed.

Tips and ideas

- ❁ Pick your flowers in the cooler early morning or late afternoon, they'll last longer.
- ❁ Since insects are fond of flowers too, blow lightly into the blossom which usually sends any critters scurrying, then quickly dip into cool water and set on a lint free towel to dry.
- ❁ For the freshest presentations, wash your flowers just before using them.
- ❁ Any butter-cookie recipe can be made into a lavender cookie dough by adding 1-2 tablespoons of crushed lavender buds to the recipe.
- ❁ Lavender sugar is easy to make by sprinkling 1-2 tablespoons of lavender into one cup of sugar, place in a covered jar and leave to develop its flavor for 1 month.

Bon Appetite.