

Edible Flowers

Common Name	Botanical Name	Comments
Angelica	Angelica archangelica	May be skin allergen to some individuals. Good with fish and the stems are especially popular candied. Tastes like: celery-flavored. More info here.
Anise Hyssop	Agastache foeniculum	Tastes like: sweet, anise-like, licorice
Apple	Malus species	Eat in moderation; may contain cyanide precursors. Tastes like: delicate floral flavor
Arugula	Eruca vesicaria	Tastes like: nutty, spicy, peppery flavor
Basil	Ocimum basilicum	Tastes like: different varieties have different milder flavors of the corresponding leaves. Tastes like: lemon, mint. More info here.
Bee Balm	Monarda species	Used in place of bergamot to make a tea with a flavor similar to Earl Grey Tea. More info here.
Borage	Borago officinalis	Taste like: light cucumber flavor. More info here.
Burnet	Sanguisorba minor	Tastes like: faint cucumber flavor, very mild. More info here.
Calendula *	Calendula officinalis	Tastes like: poor man's saffron, spicy, tangy, peppery, adds a golden hue to foods
Carnation	Dianthus caryophyllus (aka Dianthus)	Tastes like: spicy, peppery, clove-like
Chamomile *	Chamaemelum nobile	Tastes like: faint apple flavor, good as a tea
Chicory *	Cichorium intybus	Buds can be pickled.
Chives: Garden	Allium schoenoprasum	Tastes like: mild onion flavor. More info here.
Chives: Garlic	Allium tuberosum	Tastes like: garlicky flavor
Chrysanthemum: Garland *	Chrysanthemum coronarium	Tastes like: slight to bitter flavor, pungent
Citrus: Lemon	Citrus limon	Tastes like: waxy, pronounced flavor, use sparingly as an edible garnish, good for making citrus waters
Clover	Trifolium species	Raw flowerheads can be difficult to digest.
Coriander	Coriander sativum	Pungent. A prime ingredient in salsa and many Latino and Oriental dishes. Tastes like: Some palates detect a disagreeable soapy flavor while others adore it. More info here.
Cornflower *	Centaurea cyanaea (aka Bachelor's Buttons)	Tastes like: sweet to spicy, clove-like
Dandelion *	Taraxacum officinalis	Tastes like: very young buds fried in butter taste similar to mushrooms. Makes a potent wine.
Day Lily	Hemerocallis species	Many Lilies (Lillium species) contain alkaloids and are NOT edible. Daylillies may act as a laxative. Tastes like: sweet, crunchy, like a crisp lettuce leaf, faintly like chestnuts or beans
Dill	Anthem graveolens	More info here.
English Daisy *	Bellis perennis	Tastes like: tangy, leafy
Fennel	Foeniculum vulgare	Tastes like: sweet, licorice flavor. More info here.
Fuchsia	Fuchsia X hybrida	Tastes like: slightly acidic
Gardenia	Gardenia jasminoides	Tastes like: light, sweet flavor
Gladiolus *	Gladiolus spp	Tastes like: similar to lettuce

Hibiscus	Hibiscus rosa-sinensis	Tastes like: slightly acidic, boiled makes a nice beverage
Hollyhock	Alcea rosea	Tastes like: very bland, nondescript flavor
Honeysuckle: Japanese	Lonicera japonica	Berries are highly poisonous. Do not eat them!
Hyssop	Hyssopus officinalis	Should be avoided by pregnant women and by those with hypertension and epilepsy.
Impatiens	Impatiens wallerana	Tastes like: very bland, nondescript flavor
Jasmine: Arabian	Jasminum sambac	Tastes like: delicate sweet flavor, used for teas.
Johnny-Jump-Up	Viola tricolor	Contains saponins and may be toxic in large amounts. Tastes like: sweet to bland flavor
Lavender	Lavendula species	Lavender oil may be poisonous. More Info . Tastes like: floral, slightly perfumey flavor
Lemon Verbena	Aloysia triphylla	Tastes like: lemony flavor, usually steeped for tea
Lilac	Syringa vulgaris	Tastes like: lemony, floral, pungent
Mallow: Common	Malva sylvestris	Tastes like: sweet, delicate flavor
Marigold: Signet	Tagetes tenuifolia (aka T. signata)	Tastes like: spicy to bitter
Marjoram	Origanum majorana	More info here .
Mint	Mentha species	More info here .
Mustard	Brassica species	Eating in large amounts may cause red skin blotches. More info here .
Nasturtium	Tropaeolum majus	Buds are often pickled and used like capers. Tastes like: sweet, mildly pungent, peppery flavor
Okra	Abelmoschus aesculentus (Hibiscus esculentus)	Tastes like: similar to squash blossoms
Pansy	Viola X wittrockiana	Tastes like: very mild sweet to tart flavor
Pea	Pisum species	Flowering ornamental sweet peas are poisonous.
Pineapple Guava	Feijoa sellowiana	Tastes like: similar to the ripe fruit of the plant, flavorful
Primrose	Primula vulgaris	Birdseye Primrose (P. farinosa) causes contact dermatitis. Tastes like: bland to sweet flavor
Radish	Raphanus sativus	Tastes like: milder, sweeter version of the more familiar radish heat
Redbud	Cercis canadensis	Tastes like: mildly sweet
Rose	Rosa rugosa or R. gallica officinalis	Tastes like: sweet, aromatic flavor, stronger fragrance produces a stronger flavor. Be sure to remove the bitter white portion of the petals. Rose hips are also edible (see Rose Hips Recipes).
Rosemary	Rosmarinus officinalis	Tastes like: pine-like, sweet, savory. More info here
Runner Bean	Phaseolus coccineus	Tastes like: nectar, bean-like
Safflower*	Carthamus tinctorius	Another "poor man's saffron" without the pungent aroma or strong flavor of the real thing
Sage	Salvia officinalis	Sage should not be eaten in large amounts over a long period of time. Tastes like: varies by type. More info here .
Savory: Summer	Satureja hortensis	More info here .
Scented Geranium	Pelargonium species	Citronella variety may not be edible. Tastes like: varies with differing varieties from lemon to mint. More info here .
Snapdragon	Antirrhinum majus	Tastes like: bland to bitter flavor
Society Garlic	Tulbaghia violacea	Tastes like: a very mild garlic flavor
Squash Blossom	Cucurbita pepo species (aka Zucchini)	Tastes like: sweet, nectar flavor. More info here .

	Blossom)	
Sunflower*	Helianthus annuus	Tastes like: leafy, slightly bitter. Lightly steam petals to lessen bitterness. Unopened flower buds can be steamed like artichokes.
Thyme	Thymus vulgaris	Tastes like: lemon, adds a nice light scent. More info here.
Tuberous Begonia	Begonia X tuberosa	ONLY HYBRIDS are edible. The flowers and stems contain oxalic acid and should not be consumed by individuals suffering from gout, kidneystones, or rheumatism. Further, the flower should be eaten in strict moderation. Tastes like: crisp, sour, lemony
Violet	Viola species	Tastes like: sweet, nectar
(Banana) Yucca	Yucca baccata	Flowers (petals only) and fruit are edible. Other parts contain saponin, which is poisonous. Large amounts may be harmful. Tastes like: crunchy, fresh flavor Tastes like: crunchy, fresh flavor
Flowers to Avoid	Some flowers in <i>particular</i> to be avoided (but not a complete list) are: azalea, crocus, daffodil, foxglove, oleander, rhododendron, jack-in-the-pulpit, lily of the valley, and wisteria. See a more complete list .	
*Only the petals of these composite flowers are edible. The pollen of composite flowers is highly allergenic and may cause reactions in sensitive individuals. Sufferers of asthma, ragweed, and hayfever should not consume composite flowers, and may have extreme allergies to ingesting any flowers at all.		

Edible Flowers to Grow in Your Vegetable or Flower Garden

Edible flowers make salads beautiful and add color to any plate when used as a garnish. Larger edible flowers - squash blossoms and daylilies - can be used as vegetables and sauteed or stuffed. Nasturtiums and Johnny-Jump-Ups are sometimes available at fancy grocery stores, for the others look at farmers markets or [grow your own edible flowers](#). Also make sure to buy spray-free flowers grown for human consumption and use them as soon as possible after they've been picked.

Bachelor's Buttons

Bachelor's Buttons aren't sharp when you bite them - but they sure look pointy! Their spiky look is their main appeal, since their flavor is very mild - almost like a non-crunchy cucumber. Look for Bachelor's Buttons in blue, pink, purple, or white.

Basil Flowers

The flowers from basil plants make easy, lovely additions to salads, great garnishes for dishes that have basil in them, and delightful additions to decorate a platter of grilled meats or vegetables. They are usually a soft green, but can have white or purple tones. Basil flowers taste like... you guessed it: Basil. Taste basil flowers before using them, since they can be bitter.

Borage

Borage has brilliant blue flowers that look fabulous in salads or as a garnish. Like Bachelor's Buttons, they have a vaguely cucumber-like taste.

Calendulas

Calendulas have a bit of tang (although they are not at all peppery like nasturtiums). Their petals look like daisies and come in orange or yellow.

Carnations

Be extra sure to buy carnations that have been raised to be eaten and not sprayed with pesticides. Carnation petals are a bit sweet, a bit spicy and come in a range of soft colors - white and pink look particularly pretty in salads. Taste each flower before using carnations, since they can turn bitter.

Chive Flowers

Chive flowers are spiky little purple balls that add a decidedly onion-like flavor to dishes.

Daylilies

Yes, daylilies are edible. They are used like squash blossoms - stuffed and fried or chopped and added to dishes - rather than added to salads or as a garnish, though.

Nasturtiums

Nasturtiums are probably the best known and most widely available edible flower. Nasturtiums have a real peppery kick (as do the leaves from the plant, which make lovely salads all on their own). Most are yellow or orange, although red nasturtiums are often available as well.

Violas (Pansies and Johnny-Jump-Ups)

The whole family of Violas can be eaten - from large Pansies to tiny Johnny-Jump-Ups. They have a velvety feel and extremely mild taste that can best be described as a bit like Iceberg lettuce without the crunch. Sometimes pansies have a slightly minty taste, so, as with all flowers, taste them before you use them.

[Zucchini Blossoms / Squash Blossoms](#)



Photo © Molly Watson

Zucchini blossoms can be chopped and sauteed or added to soups, or, in classic Italian style, fried or stuffed with a bit of cheese and then fried.

Edible Flowers to Grow in Your Vegetable or Flower Garden

- **Borage:** Borage has a cucumber like scent and flavor. The vivid blue flowers make a striking addition to a salad or a last minute garnish to cooked foods.
- **Calendula: (Pot Marigolds)** The petals work well in cooked and fresh dishes. Calendula is also used as a saffron substitute. The yellow or orange petals will color and flavor foods when chopped and sautéed.
- **Dandelion:** Everyone is familiar with dandelion wine, but the flowers are also edible and quite delicious when young and tender. There are many cultivated varieties that have been developed for less bitter taste and more controlled growth, but even the so called weeds in your lawn can be eaten, provided you haven't used pesticides on them.
- **Daylily:** Most people are surprised to hear that Daylily flowers are edible, however they are often stuffed and prepared like squash blossoms.
- **Gem Marigolds (Tagetes tenuifolia):** 'Lemon Gem' and 'Tangerine Gem' Marigolds are the only edible marigolds. As their names suggest, they have a citrus flavor, even though you won't smell a citrus scent. Pull off the petals and break off and remove the bitter portion that comes to a right angle.

- Herb Flowers: (Anise Hyssop, Basil, Bee Balm, Chives, Cilantro, Dill, Fennel, Garlic...) Many herb flowers are just as tasty as the foliage and more attractive. Add some petals to any dish you were already going to flavor with the herb.
- Nasturtium: Easy to grow. Flowers have a peppery tang to them. The bright colors make great accents in salads. Can also be used to infuse vinegar. or even vodka.
- Pansy: The whole flower is edible, sepals and all. Pansies have a mild, minty flavor. The flowers work well for candying and make great decorations on top of hor d'oeuvres and cakes.
- Squash Blossoms: All squash flowers are edible, not just zucchini. A popular way of preparing them is to stuff the blossoms with cheese and fry them.