

Got Garlic?

By Emily McGovern

Garlic has more purposes than warding off vampires; it was one of the earliest known foods that humans used to treat and manage diseases. Garlic was found in Egyptian pyramids and ancient texts. WWI and WWII soldiers ate garlic to prevent gangrene and rubbed garlic on wounds as an antiseptic to prevent bacterial infections. (1)

Health Benefits

Garlic is a good source of prebiotics – a special type of fiber that our gut (or intestinal) bacteria need to grow and function. The gut is the body’s first line of defense against disease-causing germs – keeping our normal gut bacteria healthy, keeps us healthy. Prebiotics can be beneficial for human health and wellbeing. When gut bacteria eat these prebiotic foods, like garlic, they release byproducts. These byproducts may help to decrease risk for colon cancer. (2)



Photo by Gayle M. Volk

Garlic Guide

There are two main types of garlic: hardneck and softneck. Hardneck garlic tends to be more flavorful than softneck garlic – some people say they are more “garlicky” or spicy. Hardneck garlic, not surprisingly, has a hard woody stalk and has about 4-12 cloves. Types of hardneck garlic include Purple Stripes, Porcelain, and Rocambole. Softneck garlic generally has more cloves and is more common in grocery stores. Many people choose softneck garlic when they want to eat garlic raw or only lightly cook it. (3)

Growing Garlic at Home

For the best results, plant garlic in the fall – about 4-6 weeks before the ground freezes. Garlics that grow best in the warmer climates like Tennessee are softneck garlics and Creole (hardneck) garlics. To begin, break apart the head of your chosen garlic. Plant the biggest clove with the pointed end facing up and the wider bottom facing down. Push the clove about 2 inches into the soil and place the cloves at least 4 inches apart. Shoots will begin to emerge in the spring but you will harvest in late spring or early summer. Each green leaf represents a papery layer enclosing the garlic head – you will lose some layers when you harvest and clean the garlic, so it’s important to harvest when about 5 or 6 green leaves are present. Garlic that will be stored should be hung and dried for a couple of weeks. Clean the bulbs with a toothbrush and enjoy! (4)

Garlic in Nashville

Support your local farmers! Green Door Gourmet is a local farm that grows garlic using organic methods.

Recipe: Garlic Roasted Potatoes

Serves 4

Ingredients:

1 pound baby potatoes, washed and rinsed
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
2 tablespoons olive oil
4 cloves garlic, finely minced
Pinch of salt
Pinch of cayenne pepper
3 dashes ground black pepper
Chopped parsley, for garnishing



Method

1. Preheat the oven to 400F.
2. Place each potato on a wooden spoon and cut horizontal slits on the potatoes.
3. In a small bowl, combine the butter, olive oil, garlic, salt, cayenne pepper and black pepper together. Stir to combine well.
4. Toss the potatoes with the garlic mixture, coat well. Make sure the garlic mixture gets inside the slits of the potatoes.
5. Transfer the potatoes to a roasting pan.
6. Roast the potatoes for 20 minutes, then turn them over and baste with the garlic oil. Roast for another 20 minutes.
7. Remove from heat, garnish with parsley and serve immediately.

Nutrition Information (per serving):

Calories: 214, Total fat: 9g, Sodium: 171mg, Protein 4g, Carbohydrates 32g, Fiber 3g

Recipe adapted from Rasa Malaysia (5)

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Resources

1. Rivlin RS. Historical perspective on the use of garlic. *J. Nutr.* 2001;131:951-954.
2. Slavin J. Fiber and prebiotics: mechanisms and health benefits. *Nutrients* 2013; 5(4):1417-1435.
3. Rosen C., Becker R., Fritz V., et al. Growing garlic in Minnesota. *University of Minnesota Extension*. 2008;1-20.
4. Lively R. Growing your own garlic. Fine Gardening Web Site. <http://www.finegardening.com/grow-your-own-garlic>. Published 2005. Accessed October 23, 2016.
5. Malaysia R. Garlic roasted potatoes. Rasa Malaysia Web Site. <http://rasamalaysia.com/garlic-roasted-potatoes/2/>. Published March 13, 2016. Accessed October 14, 2016.
6. Garlic Picture: <http://www.growingformarket.com/articles/garlic-varieties>