

Flowers aren't just for looks! There are many ornamental, herb, fruit, and vegetable flowers that can be used in the kitchen to enhance your cooking. Just be careful and do your research before using varieties you're not familiar with - not all parts of every flower are edible, even the ones on this list.

A great online resource to refer to is *What's Cooking America*. Search for their "Edible Flowers Chart" for tips on harvesting and preserving edible flowers as well as a bunch of recipes on how to use them.

In general, all herb flowers are edible and will taste slightly spicier or stronger than its leafy counterpart - our favorites being basil, cilantro, ginger, mint, rosemary, sage, and thyme. Sprinkle on top of a dish for a colorful garnish and extra kick.

Do's and don'ts before you pick:

DO eat flowers only if you are certain they are edible; consult a reference book if you don't know.

DO wash flowers before eating.

DON'T eat flowers if they've been sprayed with pesticides unsafe for edibles.

DON'T eat flowers from florists, garden centers, or picked from the side of the road.

DO introduce edible flowers slowly into your diet; too much at once can upset your digestive system.

DO eat only the flower petals in most cases (exceptions include pansies and violas).

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FIND US:   

Plant	Flavor	Use In
Allium (chives, shallots, garlic, onions)	spicy, oniony, garlicky	soups, salads, any dish already calling for the herb
Anise Hyssop <i>Agastache foeniculum</i>	delicate licorice and anise, not unlike root beer	salads, Chinese-style dishes
Arugula <i>Eruca vesicaria</i>	very similar to leaf, spicy and peppery	salads, sandwiches
Bee Balm <i>Monarda didyma</i>	mix of oregano and mint, slightly citrusy	fruit and regular salads or in place of oregano; leaves taste like Earl Gray tea
Begonia* <i>Begonia</i>	Tuberous: citrus, sour Wax: slightly bitter	Tuberous: salads or garnish Wax: raw or cooked
Borage <i>Borago officinalis</i>	subtle cucumber	punches, lemonade, gin and tonics, sorbets, chilled soups and dips
Broccoli <i>Brassica oleracea</i>	mildly spicy	salads, stir fries, steamed dishes
Calendula <i>Calendula officinalis</i>	spicy to bitter, tangy to peppery; resembles saffron	soups, salads, pasta, rice dishes, herb butters, scrambled eggs
Celosia <i>Celosia argentea</i>	mild corn	soups, steamed, colorful garnish
Chrysanthemum <i>Chrysanthemum coronarium</i>	faintly peppery to cauliflower-like, tangy, bitter	blanched in a salad or used as a garnish, young leaves and stems can be stir-fried
Clover <i>Trifolium sp.</i>	sweet, anise-like, licorice	
Cornflower <i>Centaurea cyanus</i>	slightly sweet to spicy, clove-like	colorful garnish or food dye
Dianthus <i>Dianthus caryophyllus</i>	sweet nutmeg, perfumy	wine, candy, cake decoration, salad garnish
Dandelion <i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	sweet, honey-like buds that get bitter as they mature	rice dishes, salads (raw or steamed)
Day Lily* <i>Heemerocallis sp.</i>	sweet, mild vegetable	spring salads, stuffed, dessert garnish

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<i>Plant</i>	<i>Flavor</i>	<i>Use In</i>
English Daisy <i>Bellis perennis</i>	bitter	colorful garnish; use for looks rather than taste
Gladiolus <i>Gladiolus</i> spp.	vaguely vegetal	salad garnish, stuffed, or a receptacle for spreads or mousses
Hollyhock <i>Alcea rosea</i>	somewhat bland, vegetal	decorative garnish; use for looks rather than taste
Impatiens <i>Impatiens walleriana</i>	sweet	salads, drinks
Johnny Jump-Ups <i>Viola tricolor</i>	mild wintergreen	salads, drinks, soups, desserts, with soft cheeses
Lavender <i>Lavandula angustifolia</i>	sweetly floral with notes of lemon	champagne, chocolate cake, sorbets and ice creams
Lemon Verbena <i>Aloysia triphylla</i>	delightfully citrusy	herbal teas, custards and flans
Lilac <i>Syringa vulgaris</i>	slightly bitter with hints of lemon and floral overtones	salads, crystallized with egg whites and sugar
Marigold <i>Tagetes</i> sp.	herbaceous, floral, pleasantly bitter	soups, salads, tea, or a substitute for saffron
Nasturtium <i>Tropaeolum majus</i>	sweet to peppery, similar to watercress	salads, appetizer garnish, stuffed with spreads or mousses, or even pickled
Pansy <i>Viola x wittrockiana</i>	vaguely grassy	fruit or regular salads, desserts, soups, colorful garnish
Pea** <i>Pisum</i> species	sweet and crunchy	salads, decorative garnish
Peony <i>Paeonia lactiflora</i>	light and sweet	salads, punches, lemonade, teas
Perennial Phlox <i>Phlox paniculata</i>	slightly spicy	fruit salads
Primrose <i>Primula vulgaris</i>	sweet to bland	salads, cooked as a vegetable, fermented into wine, pickled
Radish <i>Raphanus sativus</i>	spicy bite	salads (raw or sautéed)
Rose <i>Rosa</i> sp.	sweet with subtle undertones ranging from fruity to minty to spicy	salads, punches, ice cream, desserts, syrups, jellies, butter, frozen in ice cubes
Scarlet Runner Bean <i>Phaseolus coccineus</i>	mildly vegetal	soups, salads
Scented Geranium <i>Pelargonium</i> spp.	corresponds to variety, usually citrusy, spicy, or flowery	desserts, drinks, frozen in ice cubes
Squash <i>Cucurbita</i> spp.	hint of raw squash	stuffed with spreads or mousses
Sunflower <i>Helianthus annuus</i>	similar to artichoke, bittersweet	steamed like artichokes
Violets <i>Viola</i> spp.	sweet and perfumy	salads, desserts, drinks, punches, frozen into ice cubes, or crystallized
Yucca	crunchy, mildly sweet, artichoke-like	salads, garnish

*Day lilies may act as a diuretic or laxative, so enjoy in moderation

**Don't confuse *Pisum* species with ornamental sweet peas (*Lathyrus odoratus*), which are poisonous