

**Pumpkins
Turnips**

Seasonal Eating

October

Try a Turnip Instead

THIS MONTH I USED THE FEATURED PRODUCE ON THESE DAYS:

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Turnips can be used in so many ways that they are great at substituting for other ingredients—such as potatoes or cabbage. An excellent source of vitamin C, turnips come in many shapes and colors from round to cylindrical and rose to black. You can use turnips raw or cooked giving them good versatility and you can even use the young tender leaves for a pot of greens. Smaller, younger turnips are better as they turn more cork-like in texture and stronger in flavor as they age. Although related to the rutabaga, they are two different plants. Here are some ways to try a turnip this fall.



- Add cut up turnips to a pot of stew or a pot roast
- Serve cut up sticks of turnip on a vegetable tray with dip
- Add sliced turnips to your coleslaw—either in place of or in addition to cabbage
- Julienned turnip strips make a nice crunchy addition to salads
- Mash cooked turnips just like potatoes or mix potatoes and turnips for a new twist on a traditional favorite
- Make quick turnip pickles by covering thin slices of turnip with a heated mixture of white wine vinegar, a little sugar, pinch of salt and few thin slices of hot red pepper (preferably Asian)

Beta Carotene

The bright orange color of pumpkin is a dead giveaway that pumpkin is loaded with an important antioxidant, beta-carotene. Beta-carotene is one of the plant carotenoids converted to vitamin A in the body. In the conversion to vitamin A, beta carotene performs many important functions in overall health.

Current research indicates that a diet rich in foods containing beta-carotene may reduce the risk of developing certain types of cancer and offers protection against heart disease. Beta-carotene offers protection against other diseases as well as some degenerative aspects of aging.

Produce	Size	Vit. A
Canned Pumpkin	1/2 cup	953 mg.
Sweet Potato	Medium	1096 mg.
Carrots	1/2 cup	671 mg.
Spinach	1/2 cup	573 mg.
Turnip Greens	1/2 cup	441 mg.

Did You Know?

- Turnip roots have been used as livestock fodder for at least 600 years.
- Turnip is a member of the mustard family and therefore related to cabbage and cauliflower.
- Pumpkin comes from a Greek word, pepôn, meaning “cooked by the sun”.
- The largest pumpkin ever grown weighed 1,140 pounds.
- Pumpkins are grown on every continent except Antarctica.

Pumpkin Muffins

1 cup golden raisins	3/4 teaspoon cloves
1/2 cup water	1/2 teaspoon salt
2 eggs	1/3 cup vegetable oil
1 cup pumpkin	1 3/4 cups flour
1 1/4 cups sugar	1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
3/4 teaspoon cinnamon	1/2 teaspoon baking soda

In small bowl, combine raisins and water. In medium bowl, combine eggs, pumpkin, sugar, cinnamon, cloves, salt and oil. Beat well. Stir in raisins and water mixture. In large bowl, combine flour, baking powder and baking soda. Make a well in the center. Pour in pumpkin mixture; stirring just until moistened. Spoon into greased muffin tins. Bake at 400 degrees for 25 minutes.



Maple Glazed Turnips

- 2 pounds turnips
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 3 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 pinch ground nutmeg
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Water
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

Peel the turnips and cut into even 1 inch cubes. Heat 1 tablespoon of butter in a saute pan over medium heat. Add the maple syrup, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and pepper. Add the turnips and then enough water to reach a depth of 1/4 inch. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to a simmer, cover and pan steam until the turnips are tender, 7-8 minutes. Remove the cover from the pan and continue to cook the turnips until the water has cooked away and the syrup has glazed each piece evenly, about 3 minutes. Add the remaining butter to the pan with the parsley and lemon juice. Shake the pan until the butter is melted and the turnips are evenly coated. Season to taste with additional salt and pepper and serve immediately.

Pureeing Fresh Pumpkin

Although all pumpkin varieties are edible, some have a better flavor and texture for cooking. Look for the smaller sugar pumpkins or pie pumpkins instead of the Jack-O-Lantern type if you are buying them for culinary purposes. Some of the varieties are Small Sugar (also known as New England Pie, Northern Pie and Sugar Pie), Winter Luxury, Cheese or Golden Cushaw.

You can boil, steam or roast your pumpkin. Roasting gives it good flavor and less moisture. Wash the pumpkin, cut it in half and scoop out the strings and seeds. Place cut side down in a roasting pan and add 1 cup water. Place in a 350 degree oven for 60-90 minutes or until the flesh is very tender to a fork. Let cool slightly and scoop out the flesh. Mash by hand or with a mixer.

Whether you boil, steam or roast the pumpkin, it is usually moister than the canned variety so try draining it before using in recipes. Place a sieve over a bowl and line with paper towels or a double layer of coffee filters. Spoon in the pureed pumpkin. Cover with plastic wrap and let drain for 2 hours or overnight.

If your pumpkin is larger or more of a Jack-O-Lantern type and has strings in it try beating it with an electric mixer on high for 10 seconds and then on low for 60 seconds. The strings will wrap around the beaters making them easier to remove. Cooking pumpkin at a high temperature can also cause stringiness.

Use All of Your Pumpkin!

Not only is the pumpkin flesh useful for cooking and baking, but the seeds and shells can also be used. Try these ideas:

Use the shells of small cooking pumpkins (about 2 pounds each) to bake chicken pot pie in for a spectacular presentation. Cut off the top and scoop out the seeds and strings. Season inside with butter, a little salt and pepper and tiny bit of nutmeg. Place on a baking sheet and cover with foil. Bake at 375 degrees for about 30 minutes until tender. Add your hot chicken pot pie filling and top with pastry crust. Bake another 45 minutes or until golden.

Toast the pumpkin seeds for a tasty little snack. Wash seeds to remove all pulp, pat dry and spread on a baking sheet to dry overnight. Toss seeds with a little melted butter and sprinkle with your choice of seasonings - seasoned salt, salt, garlic powder, onion powder, a little cayenne, etc. Spread on a baking sheet and bake for an hour at 250 degrees, tossing every 15-20 minutes, until golden. Let cool and store in an airtight container.