

Collards



What are Collards?

Collards are naturally hearty, leafy greens with tough stems and a toothsome cabbage *sometimes slightly* bitter flavor. In fact, collards, like kale, are basically non-heading cabbages.

They are a great source of vitamin K, antioxidants, and anti-inflammatory nutrients.

How to store:

Collards are best stored in a loosely wrapped plastic bag in the refrigerator or wrapped in a damp towel (paper or cloth.) They should last 1 to 2 weeks like this.

How to Prep:

First remove the tough stems that you won't eat by folding the leaf in half lengthwise and trimming it off with a knife. Or tear the leaf away from the stem.

Next - wash any grit or dirt off the leaves by filling a sink or big bowl with cold water, add the leaves, and swish them around so the dirt settles to the bottom. Drain the leaves in a strainer or on towels to remove some of the water.



Collard plant in field

How to Use:

In the South, collards have traditionally been cooked for long periods of time, usually in bacon fat, until they break down and form a soft mass.

However they are also delicious used in other ways.

- **Cook to medium-firm or slice thin and saute.** Collards work well with simple seasoning or pungent flavors, like curry or chiles.
- **Include in salads.** Slice in thin strips, massage with oil, and leave to marinate for a while, even overnight.
- **Use in smoothies.** Their slight bitterness is easily hidden by fruit such as banana, strawberry, blueberry, or pineapple.
- **Toss into pasta or soups.**
- **Blanch whole and use as a wrap.**
- **Bake into crispy chips.**



Substitute = *Kale*

Collards & Kale are similar in flavor and texture, both provide a sturdy backdrop for more assertive flavors.

Freezing:

You can freeze collards raw by washing, chopping heartily and putting in freezer containers (remove as much air as you can) for a couple months.

However they will retain more color and last longer (8 to 12 months) if you blanch them before freezing.

- After washing, plunge in boiling water for three minutes.
- Quickly cool in icy cold water for three minutes.
- Squeeze out as much water as you can - I grab handfuls and squeeze over the sink.
- Put the greens in freezer containers, label and freeze.
- Or freeze in individual portions by placing handfuls on a cookie sheet in the freezer for a couple hours to overnight. Once at least the outsides are frozen, store in your freezer containers.

Suggested Recipes:

Southern-Style Cooked Collards

Bring a soup pot filled with water and 1/2 pound of ham hocks (or bacon, neck bones or other smoked meat of your choice) to a boil. Reduce heat and cook for about 1 hour.

Place washed greens into the soup pot and cook for an additional hour.

Taste the greens. If they are too bitter for your taste, add a teaspoon or two of salt or lemon juice. Mix the greens, ham hocks and water. Continue adding a teaspoon of salt or lemon juice and tasting until the bitterness is cut.

Continue cooking until the greens are soft. Total cooking time should be between 1 and 2 hours.

Tip: A dousing of vinegar complements and subdues collard greens' naturally tangy taste.

Raw Collard Green Salad

Adapted from The Daily Raw Cafe

1 bunch collard greens, washed
1/8 cup olive oil
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
6–8 chopped sun-dried tomatoes
1/3 cup onion, chopped
1–3 cloves raw garlic, minced
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/2 teaspoon black pepper

- De-stem and chop the collard greens. An easy way to de-stem collard greens is by folding them in half lengthwise along the stem with the darker green side down and then pull up the stem until it comes off and you're left mostly with leaf. An easy way to chop the collards is to stack a few leaves, roll them up into a cigar shape and cut the through the collard cylinder, making strips.
- Place strips in a large bowl. Pour olive oil on collard strips and sprinkle on salt. Massage the oil and salt into the strips with your hands until all pieces are well coated.
- Whisk together apple cider vinegar, sun-dried tomatoes, onions, garlic, red pepper flakes and ground pepper.
- Pour apple cider vinegar dressing over the collard green strips. Let marinate in the refrigerator for at least 3-4 hours, but overnight is best.

Green Smoothie

Serves one

- 1 banana
- 1 handful chopped collards or kale
- 1 handful strawberries
- 1 teaspoon peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons dry oats
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- ¼ teaspoon ginger
- pinch of black pepper (*to make the turmeric more bioavailable*)
- 1-2 cup milk

Put everything into a high-speed blender and blend till creamy.

Spiced Pork Tenderloin with Collard Green Salad

Serves 4

1 tablespoon chili powder
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
2 small pork tenderloins (about 12 ounces each)
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 bunch collard greens, (up to 1 pound) stems removed, leaves thinly sliced
1 15-ounce can black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
½ cup jarred Peppadew peppers, drained and roughly chopped
2 scallions (green onions), thinly sliced
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
⅓ cup crumbled cornbread

1. Preheat the oven to 475 degrees Fahrenheit and line a baking sheet with foil. Combine chili powder, thyme, cayenne and ¾ teaspoon each salt and black pepper in a small bowl. Rub the pork with 1 tablespoon olive oil and the spice mixture. Transfer to the prepared pan and roast, turning once, until a thermometer inserted into the center of the pork registers 145 degrees, about 15 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board; let rest.
2. Meanwhile, combine the collard greens, 1 tablespoon olive oil and ¼ teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Massage the greens with your hands until slightly wilted, about 1 minute. Add the black-eyed peas, Peppadews, scallions, vinegar and the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil; season with salt and black pepper and toss to combine. Set aside.
3. Toast the crumbled cornbread in a small dry skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until crisp, 3 to 5 minutes. Slice the pork and serve with the collard greens. Sprinkle the toasted cornbread over the greens.

Collards with Freekeh, Hazelnuts, and Grapes

Adapted from Six Seasons
serves 4

Freekeh substitutes include farro, barley, whole wheat couscous or quinoa.
Best hazelnuts substitutes are almonds, macadamia nuts, and cashews

- 1 cup freekeh *or substitute above*
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed and peeled
- Red wine vinegar
- 1 bunch collards, ribs cut out, leaves sliced into 2-inch-wide ribbons
- 2 cups red seedless grapes, halved
- ½ cup hazelnuts, lightly toasted and roughly chopped
- 1 bunch scallions, trimmed (including ½ inch off the green tops), sliced on a sharp angle, soaked in ice water for 20 minutes, and drained well
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Dried chile flakes

Cook the freekeh, farro, barley, couscous or quinoa and when you drain it, drain the water into a large saucepan in which you'll cook the collards. Spread out the freekeh to cool as per the recipe.

Put the cooking liquid pan back on the stove and add the garlic, a splash of vinegar, and the sliced collards. Adjust the heat to a lively simmer, cover, and cook until the collards are tender but still retain some tooth to them, 12 to 20 minutes depending on their maturity. Drain the collards and let them cool.

Combine the collards and freekeh in a large bowl. Add the grapes, hazelnuts, and scallions and toss. Add ¼ cup olive oil or more if needed. This salad tastes best after the flavors have had at least 15 minutes to mingle.

Collard Chips

Next time you reach for chips or crackers, make a batch of these veggie crisps they're delicious and so healthy.

Yield: Makes 3 servings
Adapted from Martha Stewart



Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil or olive oil spray
- 6 collard leaves, torn into 3-inch pieces
- Salt *or* gourmet salt blend *or* other desired spices

Drizzle olive oil over, or spray with olive oil, collard pieces; season with salt or other seasonings. Bake in a single layer at 300 degrees until crisp, 15 minutes. *Line sheet pan with parchment paper for easy clean up.*