

the smart fruit & veg autumn COOK

➤ Whip up a quick dish ➤ Great hints and tips ➤ What's best for the season



figs

Choose plump, sweetly-fragrant figs that feel heavy for their size. They're best eaten within 1-2 days.

Whip up a starter... figs & prosciutto with balsamic ricotta

Combine 200g ricotta with 2 tsp honey, 1 tsp balsamic vinegar and salt and pepper to taste in a small bowl. Arrange 8 halved figs on a serving platter. Top with 12 thin slices prosciutto. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and serve with balsamic ricotta. Serves 4.



chestnuts



The best tasting chestnuts have glossy brown, undamaged shells and feel heavy for their size. Store them in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 2 weeks.

roast chestnuts to perfection...

Preheat oven to 200°C. Cut a small cross into the round side of each chestnut. Place on a baking tray and roast for 15 minutes or until the skin peels back. Wrap chestnuts in a tea-towel and set aside for 5 minutes. Peel and eat while warm.

What's best in March

FRUIT

- Apples
- Bananas
- Figs
- Fuji fruit
- Grapes
- Guava
- Kiwifruit
- Limes
- Mangosteens
- Nashi
- Oranges: Valencia
- Passionfruit
- Pawpaw
- Pears
- Plums
- Pomegranates
- Quinces
- Tamarillo

VEGETABLES

- Asian Greens
- Beans
- Broccoli
- Capsicums
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Lettuce
- Nuts: chestnuts
- Okra
- Onions
- Potatoes
- Pumpkin
- Sweetcorn
- Tomatoes
- Zucchini

white radish (Daikon)

To buy

Select long, firm, white radish that feels heavy for its size with fresh-looking green leaves attached.

To store

Trim green leaves leaving 2 cm attached. Store in the crisper in the fridge. Use within 3–4 days.

To prepare

Cut off the top and root. Peel with a vegetable peeler and shred or grate.

Whip up a salad

Toss shredded white radish with sliced cucumber and oak-leaf lettuce leaves. Drizzle with a soy dressing, sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds and serve.

ginger

To buy

Select plump, firm ginger with shiny skin. The least knobby ginger is the easiest to peel.

To store

Store ginger in a paper bag in the crisper of the fridge for up to 1 week. To extend storage, place peeled ginger in a jar of dry sherry in the fridge for up to 6 weeks.

To prepare

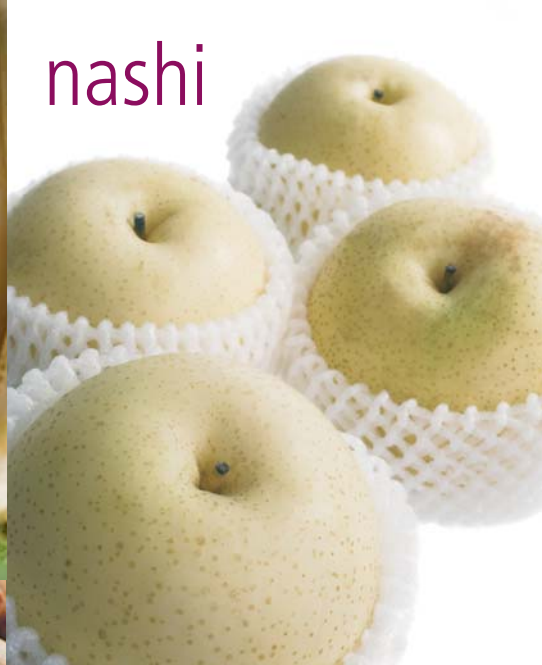
Peel ginger with a vegetable peeler and grate, shred or slice. Ginger graters are available from kitchenware and Asian food shops.

Whip up dinner

Marinate chicken fillets for 30 minutes in a grated ginger, lime juice and red chilli marinade. Char-grill and serve with rice.



nashi



Crisp and crunchy nashi is harvested ripe and ready to eat. It's shaped like an apple but has the flavour and juiciness of a pear.

Store nashi in a single layer in the fridge and eat within 1–2 weeks.

team nashi with cheese

Nashi teams really well with cheese. Add nashi wedges to a cheese platter or toss sliced nashi through a baby spinach, toasted walnut and blue cheese salad.

What's best in April

FRUIT

- Apples
- Avocados
- Bananas
- Custard apples
- Fuji fruit
- Guava
- Kiwifruit
- Limes
- Mandarins: Imperial
- Nashi
- Pears
- Passionfruit
- Persimmons
- Pomegranates
- Quinces
- Tamarillo

VEGETABLES

- Asian greens
- Beans
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbages
- Capsicums
- Chokos
- Fennel
- Leeks
- Mushrooms
- Okra
- Nuts: chestnuts
- Peas
- Potatoes
- Pumpkins
- Silverbeet
- Spinach
- Turnips

baby eggplant

The best baby eggplant is firm and glossy-skinned with a green stem attached. Simply slice or chop as required — no other preparation necessary.



barbecued baby eggplant with tomatoes...

Preheat a barbecue on medium-high heat. Slice 8 baby eggplants lengthways. Spray or brush eggplants, 2 x 250g stems truss cherry tomatoes and 4 lamb leg steaks with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Barbecue eggplants and tomatoes for 2–3 minutes. Serve with barbecued lamb and hummus. Serves 4.



gai lan

Ultra-healthy gai lan is perfect for stir-frying or steaming. Choose bunches with crisp, deep green leaves and firm stems.



Steamed gai lan drizzled with ginger & soy glaze...

To make ginger & soy glaze, combine ¼ cup soy sauce, 1 tsp sesame oil, 2 tbs brown sugar and 1 tsp finely grated ginger in a saucepan. Bring to the boil, stirring until sugar dissolves, and simmer for 1 minute. Wash, trim and cut 1 bunch gai lan into 12cm lengths. Arrange stems in a steaming basket. Steam stems for 1 minute. Add leaves and steam for 2 minutes or until leaves wilt. Arrange on a serving plate. Drizzle with glaze and serve.



Smart things to do with... okra

Dip whole small okra in a light tempura batter, deep-fry until pale golden and serve with lemon wedges. Toss chopped okra into a stir-fry with garlic, chopped chillies, peeled green prawns and sweet chilli sauce and serve with rice.



pears

For an easy salad, toss sliced Williams or Packham pears with rocket leaves and shaved parmesan cheese. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil, season with salt and pepper and serve with crusty bread.



pomegranate

Cut a plump pomegranate into quarters and remove the ruby-coloured seeds – discard white pith and membranes. Scatter the juicy seeds over roast lamb or salads or toss them through couscous.



plums

For maximum flavour, leave firm plums at room temperature until they yield to gentle pressure. Once fully ripe, eat or cook them within 2 days.

whip up dessert... amaretti crumble blood plums

Process 125g amaretti biscuits, 1/4 cup walnuts and 2 tbs caster sugar in a food processor until crumbs form. Add egg and process. Place 6 halved and deseeded plump blood plums in an ovenproof dish. Drizzle with juice of 1 orange. Spoon amaretti mixture onto plums. Bake at 200°C for 10 minutes. Serve with ice-cream.



Fresh for Kids® grape jellies



Kids love seedless grapes! Pack a few chilled grapes for recess or school lunch. Freeze grapes for a healthy iced snack or serve grapes with a wedge of reduced fat cheese for a nutritious after-school snack.

whip up grape jellies...

Half fill 4 serving glasses or plastic cups with seedless grapes. Make a jelly following packet directions. Pour jelly mixture over grapes. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 4–5 hours or until set.

What's best in May

FRUIT

- Apples
- Avocados
- Custard apples
- Kiwifruit
- Lemons
- Mandarins: Imperial
- Nashi
- Oranges: Navel
- Pears
- Persimmons
- Pomegranates
- Quinces
- Rhubarb

VEGETABLES

- Asian greens
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbages
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Celeriac
- Chestnuts
- Fennel
- Ginger
- Leeks
- Mushrooms
- Okra
- Parsnips
- Silverbeet
- Spinach
- Sweet potatoes
- Turnips

snake beans

Select slender, crisp snake beans that are flexible when bent. Store in a plastic bag in the fridge and use within 2 days.

wok-fry snake beans with baby pak choy and cashews...

Stir-fry 1 bunch chopped snake beans, 150g halved shiitake mushrooms with 2 crushed garlic cloves in 2 tbs peanut oil in a wok over high heat for 2 minutes.

Add 1 bunch chopped baby pak choy and 1/3 cup oyster sauce. Stir-fry for 2 minutes. Toss through 1/2 cup cashews and serve with steamed jasmine rice.

