

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



baby spinach leaves

Select dark green baby spinach leaves that look fresh and crisp. Fabulous for summer salads, simply rinse and dry baby spinach leaves just before using.

Toss together a spinach, fennel & parmesan salad...

Place 2 finely sliced baby fennel bulbs in a bowl. Heat $\frac{1}{3}$ cup extra virgin olive oil in a small frying pan over medium heat. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pine nuts and cook until golden. Remove pan from heat, add 1 crushed garlic clove and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lemon juice. Drizzle mixture over fennel. Set aside for 10 minutes. Toss through 100g baby spinach leaves and 100g thinly sliced parmesan cheese. Season to taste, toss to combine, drizzle with a little extra oil and serve. Serves 4.



blueberries



Before purchasing, check the underside of the punnet to ensure blueberries are plump and not bruised or squashed.

Whip up a blueberry & summer fruit mascarpone trifle...

Plunge 2 peaches into boiling water for 30 seconds, refresh in cold water and peel. Chop peaches and 2 large nectarines. Place in a bowl, add 250g cherries (stems removed) and 150g blueberries. Stir to combine. Beat 250g tub mascarpone, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Greek-style yoghurt and 2 tbs sifted icing sugar in a bowl. Layer fruit, mascarpone mixture and 3 chopped thick slices of Madeira cake sprinkled with 50ml orange liqueur or rum, or orange juice in a serving bowl. Chill for 2-3 hours and serve. Serves 4

What's best in December

FRUIT

- Apricots
- Bananas
- Berries: blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, red & white currants, strawberries
- Cherries
- Grapes
- Lychees
- Mangoes
- Melons
- Nectarines
- Oranges: Valencia
- Papaya
- Passionfruit
- Papaw
- Peaches
- Pineapple

VEGETABLES

- Asparagus
- Beans: green, flat, butter
- Capsicum
- Celery
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Lettuce
- Onions: salad, green
- Peas: sugar snap
- Radish
- Sweetcorn
- Tomatoes
- Watercress
- Zucchini

Cooking is a breeze with barbecued vegetables

Mini Roma truss tomatoes >

Spray or brush the tomatoes with olive oil. Sprinkle with sea salt and barbecue, turning occasionally, for 5–8 minutes until tender. Team with crumbled feta cheese and rocket leaves and serve with barbecued meat, chicken or fish.



< mushrooms

Brush flat, cup or button mushrooms liberally with a mixture of olive oil, a dash of Worcestershire or sweet chilli sauce and salt and pepper. Barbecue over medium heat, turning occasionally, until just tender and serve.



sweetcorn >

Carefully pull back the green husks and remove the silk-like threads from the corn cob. Pull over the husk to enclose the cob, and tie with cooking string. Soak in cold water for 10 minutes, then barbecue over medium heat, turning often, for 15–20 minutes until kernels are tender.



eggplant



Easy preparation . . .

Most eggplants do not require salting before cooking. Simply trim the stem and slice or dice as required. Only salt eggplant if using to deep-fry or if the eggplant is mature and the seeds are black.

To salt eggplant, slice or cut as required, sprinkle salt over the cut surfaces and stand for 30 minutes to extract the bitter juices. Rinse well and pat dry.

Select firm **eggplants** that feel heavy for their size with smooth, satiny-like glossy skin. The stem should be green and not withered.

Store eggplants in the crisper section of your fridge for up to 5 days.

Barbecued eggplant with feta . . .

Slice eggplant as desired, then spray with olive oil. Barbecue over medium heat for 1–2 minutes on each side or until tender. Sprinkle with crumbled feta cheese, drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and serve.

radishes



Choose firm, rosy-red radishes that are free from cracks with fresh looking leaves attached. Trim leaves and gently scrub before using. For ultra crisp radishes, place them in iced water for 30 minutes just before serving.

Top ideas for using red radishes . . .

- Serve halved radishes with a spread of salted butter.
- Combine thinly sliced radishes in a salad with thin strips of Lebanese cucumber, cooked and peeled prawns and baby salad greens.
- Add coarsely grated radishes into coleslaw.
- Team thinly sliced radishes with rare roast beef, baby salad greens and mayonnaise on a crisp baguette.

What's best in January

FRUIT

- Apricots
- Avocados
- Bananas
- Berries: blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, strawberries
- Cherries
- Grapes
- Limes
- Lychees
- Mangoes
- Melons
- Nectarines
- Oranges: Valencia
- Passionfruit
- Peaches
- Pears: Williams
- Pineapples
- Plums
- Rambutans

VEGETABLES

- Asparagus
- Beans: green, flat, butter
- Capsicums
- Celery
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Lettuce
- Onions: salad, green
- Okra
- Peas: sugar snap
- Potatoes
- Radish
- Sweetcorn
- Tomatoes
- Zucchini

peaches Fresh for Kids®

Be cool with summer fruit & banana sundaes

1. Halve 2 ripe peaches, remove stones and chop. Toss together in a bowl with 2 ripe chopped apricots.
2. Peel and slice 4 small bananas lengthways. Place 1 halved banana into each serving dish.
3. Top bananas with small scoops of frozen berry yoghurt and chopped fruit. Decorate each with 2 cherries. Drizzle with a little strawberry sauce if you'd like! Serves 4.





lychees

To buy Select plump, bright-skinned, rosy to deep pink lychees that feel heavy for their size. A small part of the stem should still be attached.

To store Store unpeeled lychees in a sealed plastic bag in the fridge. Use within 2 days.

To prepare Split the skin and peel the fruit. Leave whole or cut lengthways around the stone to halve the lychee and remove the stone if desired.

Whip up dessert Team peeled lychees with chopped mango and papaya, sliced banana and passionfruit pulp. Serve with vanilla ice-cream.



mangoes

To buy Choose unblemished mangoes with a sweet tropical aroma that yield to gentle pressure at the stem end. Skin colour depends on the variety.

To store Store mangoes at room temperature out of direct sunlight. They're ripe and ready to eat when they yield to gentle pressure.

Cook's tip To honeycomb mango cheeks, stand the mango upright and cut down each side, slicing off the cheeks close to the stone.

Criss-cross the flesh almost through to the skin using a sharp knife, bend the skin back and enjoy the succulent flesh.

apricots

Select plump apricots with a fragrant aroma and no sign of greening around the stem.

Serve spiced poached apricots for an easy summer dessert. . .

Combine ½ cup caster sugar, 1 cup water, 1 cinnamon stick, 2 thick strips of orange rind and 1 halved vanilla bean in a medium saucepan. Stir over medium heat until sugar dissolves, then bring to the boil. Reduce heat, add 8 plump apricots and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until apricots are just tender. Remove from heat and leave in syrup to cool. Serve with ice-cream. Serves 4.



Lebanese cucumbers

Whip up a coriander, cucumber & chilli salad. . .

Combine 1 cup coriander leaves, 1 cup trimmed bean sprouts and 75g baby Asian salad leaves in a large bowl. Add 1 deseeded and thinly sliced long red chilli. Using a vegetable peeler, thinly slice 2 Lebanese cucumbers lengthways and add to salad.

To make dressing, combine ⅓ cup olive oil, 1 tbs white wine vinegar, 1 tbs caster sugar, 2 tsp soy sauce and ½ tsp sesame oil in a screw-top jar. Shake well. Drizzle dressing over salad, toss to combine. Sprinkle with ¼ cup chopped roasted peanuts and serve with barbecued meat or fish. Serves 4.



Look for firm, deep green **Lebanese cucumbers** with unwrinkled skin. Store them in the vegetable crisper in the fridge.

raspberries



A stunning make-ahead dessert. . .

Raspberry and yoghurt ice-cream cake

Remove 2 litre tub vanilla ice-cream from freezer and leave at room temperature until softened. Meanwhile, combine 250g raspberries, 150g blueberries and 250g hulled and diced strawberries in a bowl. Line the base and sides of a 23cm spring-form pan with non-stick baking paper. Combine ice-cream and 500g Greek-style yoghurt in a large bowl. Fold through berries. Spoon mixture into pan and flatten top. Cover and freeze overnight. Slice and serve. Serves 8-10.

Raspberries are best stored in the fridge on a plate lined with paper towel and loosely covered with plastic wrap.

What's best in February

FRUIT

- Avocados
- Berries: blueberries, raspberries, strawberries
- Figs
- Grapes
- Limes
- Lychees
- Mangosteens
- Melons
- Nectarines
- Oranges: Valencia
- Passionfruit
- Peaches
- Pears: Howell, Williams
- Pineapples
- Plums
- Prickly Pears
- Rambutans

VEGETABLES

- Beans: butter, flat, green, snake
- Capsicums
- Celery
- Chillies
- Chokos
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Lettuce
- Onions: salad, green
- Okra
- Peas: sugar snap
- Radish
- Squash
- Sweet corn
- Tomatoes
- Zucchini