



# *Eating Local & Seasonal: Rhubarb*

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE REGISTERED DIETITIAN AT  
GEORGINA NURSE PRACTITIONER LED CLINIC

**Fresh rhubarb is one of the first signs of local seasonal produce during the arrival of spring and summer. Check out this quick guide on the must-knows of using rhubarb. Learn how to choose, store and use it in your recipes, and it will likely become one of your favourite spring-time produce!**

## **How to Buy Rhubarb**

Rhubarb has an appearance like celery stalks. The colour ranges from yellowish green, to shades of pink and red. The colour does not indicate the ripeness. Rhubarb grown in a greenhouse will have more yellowish leaves, rosier stalks and milder flavour than field grown rhubarb. Choose rhubarb with stalks that are crisp and firm for the best quality.

## **How to Store Rhubarb**

- To refrigerate, discard the leaves and store the whole uncut stalks with or without prior washing. Keep in an airtight container for up to a week.
- Rhubarb that has lost its crisp can be refreshed by standing the stalks in a container of cold water for an hour or more.
- To freeze, discard the leaves and rinse the rhubarb in cold running water. Dry the stalks and cut into smaller one-inch pieces. Place onto a baking sheet, making sure there is space between the pieces. Freeze for at least four hours, then transfer into an airtight freezer bag. Frozen rhubarb can be stored for up to a year.

## **How to Use and Eat Rhubarb**

- Always remove and discard the leaves as they contain oxalic acid and are toxic.
- Avoid cooking rhubarb in aluminum and cast iron cookware as they will react with the metals and turn dark during cooking.
- Rhubarb tastes tart and is excellent in sweet recipes when combined with other fruits. They make great jams, desserts, and other baked goods. Rhubarb-based sauces also pair well in savory dishes with meat and fish. Check out our Rhubarb Chutney recipe on the next page.

## **Medicinal & Nutritional Qualities**

- Rhubarb is a great source of vitamin C, fibre and vitamin K. Half a cup provides 9% of Vitamin C, 24% of vitamin K, and 18% of fibre's daily recommended requirements.
- Historically, rhubarb was used for its medicinal properties and is known for its laxative qualities. If you struggle with constipation, try including rhubarb in your diet!



## *Rhubarb Chutney*

MAKES ONE 1-L MASON JAR

### Ingredients:

1/2 cup	Water
1	Orange, zested and juiced
1	Lemon, zested and juiced
1/2 cup	Sugar
1/2 tbsp	Your favourite hot sauce
1/2 tbsp	Fennel seed
1/2 tbsp	Coriander seed
1/2 tsp	Cinnamon
1/2 tsp	Cloves
1	Small bay leaf
1/2 tsp	Salt
1/2 cup	Raisins
1	Red onion, thinly sliced
1 lb	Rhubarb stalks, washed, trimmed, and thickly sliced

### Directions:

1. In a saucepot, add water, orange, lemon, sugar, spices and seasonings. Bring to a boil. Add raisins and reduce to a simmer for a few minutes.
2. Add onions and cover. Simmer for 1-2 minutes then add the rhubarb. Give a quick stir.
3. Turn up the heat and without stirring, cook until chutney comes to a full boil for 2-3 minutes. Cover tightly and remove from heat.
4. Rest until cool enough to transfer to jars. Refrigerate overnight if possible to let the flavours intensify.
5. Serve at your next BBQ with meat, poultry, fish, or even grilled veggie burgers.

### Sources:

- (1) Foodland Ontario. Rhubarb. Retrieved from <https://www.ontario.ca/foodland/food/rhubarb>
- (2) Half Your Plate. Rhubarb Information Sheet. Retrieved from <https://www.halfyourplate.ca/fruits/rhubarb/>
- (3) Chef Michael Smith, 2018. Rhubarb Chutney for Grilling Season. Retrieved from <https://www.halfyourplate.ca/rhubarb-chutney-for-grilling-season/>
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