

Eating Local & Seasonal: Bok Choy

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Bok choy is one of the more commonly known Asian vegetables making a regular presence in farmers' markets and grocery stores. It has a fairly long season in Ontario and can be found between the months of June to November. Try it in your recipes this month with our tips below!

Types of Bok Choy

A couple of different varieties of bok choy can be found in stores. Classic bok choy that most people know has its signature white stems with dark green leaves. However, the Ontario grown variety is Shanghai bok choy, which has a similar appearance with the exception of light green coloured stems instead of white. This variety has a more tender texture and a milder taste. Perhaps because of its local availability, it is usually lower in price than the white-stemmed variety.

How to Buy and Store Bok Choy

When buying bok choy, look for smooth, unbruised stems and unwilted leaves. If the bok choy comes in a plastic bag, keep it in the bag and store it in the crisper drawer in the fridge. For fridges with drawers that offer different settings, choose the vegetable drawer or set the humidity level to high. Loose bok choy purchased directly at farms and farmers' markets can be transferred to a plastic bag at home before refrigerating. This will help keep the bok choy fresh for up to 3-6 days.



Shanghai Bok Choy



Bok Choy

How to Use Bok Choy

The easiest way to wash bok choy is to soak it in a large bowl of water for 15-20 minutes before draining. The dirt that is trapped in between the ends of the stems will fall out to the bottom of the bowl of water. Alternatively, the vegetable can also be rinsed under cold running water with extra care to wash between the base of the stems.

Traditionally in Asian cuisines, bok choy is usually boiled, stir-fried or added to braised meat dishes. Our recipe of this month (see next page) features a grilled bok choy recipe that is perfect for Ontario summers.



Grilled Bok Choy

MAKES 4 HEADS OF BOK CHOY

Ingredients:

- 4 Heads of Ontario grown bok choy
- 2 tbsp Sesame oil
- 1 tbsp Low sodium soy sauce
- 2 Garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp Red pepper flakes

Directions:

1. Preheat the grill to medium and lightly oil the grate.
2. Cut each head of bok choy in half, lengthwise. Then wash as per instructions on previous page.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together sesame oil, soy sauce, garlic and red pepper flakes. Brush the mixture onto the bok choy.
4. Place the bok choy cut side down on the grill and close the lid. Cook for 3-4 minutes, or until grill marks begin to form and the edges of the leaves get crispy.
5. Brush with more of the oil mixture, then turn the bok choy and cook for another 3-4 minutes, until the stems are softened and leaves are slightly charred.

Cooking Tip: For preference of a more tender texture and less crispy leaves, microwave bok choy covered for a couple minutes before grilling for 1-2 minutes per side.

Sources:

- (1) Images (in respective order) by Cup of Couple and Sarah Chai from Pexels.
- (2) Recipe by Hayley MacLean from Mashed. Retrieved from <https://www.mashed.com/631563/grilled-bok-choy-recipe/>