



A monthly publication for members of the Olympia Food Co-op and its surrounding communities

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Are you in the thick of the rainy winter slump?

Fill up your bellies with some tasty, filling, and nutritious brassicas!

Vegetables in the brassica family (also called cruciferous vegetables) are packed with nutrients. They are versatile, easy to prepare, and often an affordable choice that holds up well for several days. Brassicas include broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale, cauliflower, collard greens, mustard greens, romanesco, and turnips.

Below is a summary of their nutritional benefits from whfoods.org:

- Brassicas are high in vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin K, folic acid, and fiber.
- Two additional macronutrients, proteins and fats, also deserve special mention with respect to recent research ...Brassicas can contribute a surprising amount of protein to the diet — over 25% of the Daily Value in 3 cups — and at a very low calorie cost...(additionally), 100 calories worth typically gives us somewhere between one-third and one-half of a gram of omega-3 fat (333-500 milligrams).
- As impressive as they are in terms of their conventional nutrient content, cruciferous vegetables are even more renowned for their phytonutrients. During the past five years, cruciferous vegetables have largely taken over the



world of research in the area of glucosinolates...what's so special about glucosinolates is their potential for cancer-prevention.

-Erin, OFC Produce Manager

What is Romanesco?

From thespruceeats.com:

With its pale green spikes, romanesco broccoli can give kohlrabi a run for its money for the vegetable that most looks like it comes from outer space. Its soft flavor and just barely crunchy texture are less aggressive than its appearance indicates, and it's a favorite among those who know it.

Romanesco Broccoli

Romanesco broccoli's other

names—broccoflower and Roman cauliflower—are less common but somewhat more accurate, since Romanesco broccoli is botanically and culinarily much more like cauliflower than it is like broccoli. It is a member of the cruciferous family, along with broccoli, cauliflower, kale, and cabbage.

While many people assume that it is a modern hybrid of broccoli and cauliflower, Romanesco broccoli dates back to 16th-century Italy.

That said, it behaves a lot like cauliflower and you can use it as such in most recipes knowing they will carry its green tinge with it.

Taste

Romanesco broccoli has a much milder,

continued on back

continued from front

sweeter flavor than either broccoli or cauliflower. Its florets are dense, like cauliflower, with a slightly softer texture. They cook up wonderfully tender while also holding their shape.

Cooking It

You can cook romanesco broccoli pretty much like cauliflower, keeping in mind that in some dishes its light green may be less welcome than the white of cauliflower. Since its flavor is a bit sweeter and less harsh, you may find that you don't need or want to cook it as much as cauliflower." ■



Erin's Easy Cozy Pasta Dinner for Two

This is a super easy dish I like to make with ingredients I usually have on hand. Use whatever quantity of pasta & brassica that suits your fancy (or appetite!)

Ingredients:

- Whole Wheat Penne
- Broccoli (or Romanesco or Cauliflower)
- Olive Oil
- Walnuts
- Salt & Pepper
- Red Pepper Flakes
- Parmesan (if desired)

Method:

Put on a big pot of water to boil and preheat oven to 400°F. Chop the broccoli into little, bite-sized florets. Toss with a little olive oil and spread in a single layer on a baking sheet. Put a generous handful of walnuts on a separate baking sheet (I like to use a little pie tin for this). Put both in the oven and set the timer for 8 minutes. Meanwhile, once the water has boiled, cook pasta according to package directions (usually 11-12min). Remove walnuts from oven and set aside to cool. Give broccoli a stir and put back in the oven for 10 more

minutes. Drain pasta and toss with a generous splash of olive oil in a large bowl. Season to taste with salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes (note: go light on the salt if you're adding parmesan. You can always add more salt later if needed). Check the broccoli, it should be very soft and browned on the edges. If it's done, take it out and toss with the pasta. Add walnuts and a sprinkle of parmesan if desired. So easy and tasty! ■

Green Cabbage Soup

Adapted from Vegetable Soups by Deborah Madison

Ingredients:

- 1 small green cabbage
- 3-4 tbs butter
- 2 large leeks, white and light green part only, quartered lengthwise and then chopped
- 3 hefty potatoes, cubed (I used red, but any type is fine)
- 4 No Chicken broth cubes dissolved in 8 cups water or 8 cups good quality stock
- two 15oz cans butter beans, drained and rinsed
- Small bundle of thyme
- Salt and pepper
- Minced parsley or dill (optional)
- Grated parmesan (optional)

Method:

1. Quarter the cabbage, remove the cores, and thinly slice the cabbage. You should have 5-6 cups. Bring 3 quarts water to a boil, add the cabbage and cook for 1 minute, then drain.
2. Melt the butter in a soup pot. Add the leek and potato, give them a stir, and cook for a minute or two, then add the cabbage, thyme bundle, and broth (add 1 tsp salt if your broth is unsalted). Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer covered for 20 minutes or until the potato is tender.
3. Remove the thyme bundle. Stir in the butter beans and continue simmering until they are warm.
4. Ladle the soup into bowls and top with minced parsley or dill and grated parmesan if desired. ■

