



Vegetable
of the
Month
for
DECEMBER

Brussels Sprouts

Brussels Sprouts were named after the capital of Belgium where it is thought that they were first cultivated. They are also one of the few vegetables to have originated in northern Europe. They were first introduced to France and England in the nineteenth century where they continue to be a popular food. French settlers who settled in Louisiana introduced them to America.

Brussels sprouts look like miniature heads of cabbage. They are similar to cabbage in taste, but they are slightly milder in flavor and denser in texture. Brussels sprouts and cabbage are members of the cruciferous vegetable family. These vegetables contain significant amounts of the antioxidants vitamin C and beta-carotene (vitamin A), and nitrogen compounds called indoles which may reduce the risk of certain cancers.

Brussels sprouts are a good source of vegetable protein, because 31% of the calories come from protein. Do remember though that it is an incomplete source of protein and should be complemented with whole grain foods during the course of the day.

Most Brussels sprouts are grown in California. They are available all year round, but their peak-growing season is in autumn through early spring.



Brussels sprouts grow in bunches from one main stem

Brussels Sprouts

Serving Size 1/2 cup raw (49g/1 3/4 oz)

Amount Per Serving

Calories 22 **Calories from Fat** 0

% Daily Value *

Total Fat 0g 0%

Sodium 13mg <1%

Potassium 195mg 10%

Total Carbohydrate 5g 1%

Dietary Fiber 1.5g 7%

Sugars 3.5g

Protein 1.5g

Vitamin A 43% **Vitamin C** 63%

How To Select: Choose firm compact sprouts that are bright green in color. Fresh Brussels sprouts should be displayed chilled. If they are kept at room temperature, their leaves will turn yellow quickly. Yellow or wilted leaves are signs of age or mishandling. Old sprouts also have a strong, cabbage-like odor. It is best to choose sprouts individually from bulk displays rather than pint or quart tubs. Choose small, firm, compact sprouts with unblemished leaves. Select sprouts that are similar in size. This will allow them to cook more evenly. Avoid sprouts that are puffy or soft.

Storage: Do not wash or trim sprouts before storing them, but yellow or wilted outer leaves may be removed. If you have purchased sprouts that have been packaged in a cellophane-covered container, take off wrapping, examine them, remove any that are in bad condition, return them to container, re-cover with cellophane, and refrigerate. If the sprouts are not fresh, return them to the store. Place loose sprouts in perforated plastic bag. Fresh sprouts will keep for 3-5 days.

Preparation: Remove any yellow or wilted outer leaves. Trim stem ends. Be careful not to trim stems flush with the bottoms, or the outer leaves will fall off during cooking. Cut a shallow "x" in the base with a small, sharp knife. This will allow the heat to penetrate the solid core so that it cooks as quickly as the leaf.

Boil: use one-cup water for every cup of Brussels sprouts. Bring water to a rapid boil in a large pot, add sprouts, and quickly return the water to a boil. Cook sprout until just tender then drain sprouts

Microwave: Place 1/2 pound of sprouts in a microwave-safe dish; add 1/4 cup water, cover and cook. Cook medium sized sprouts 4 minutes and larger ones 8 minutes.

Steaming: Sprouts can be steamed rapidly in a small amount of water. This will minimize the odors created when Brussels sprouts are cooked too long, and will also minimize nutrient losses. There are two ways that they can be steamed. Sprouts can be added to an inch of already-boiling water or can be placed in a covered vegetable steamer. After steaming for 1-2 minutes, uncover pot for 10-15 seconds to disperse the strong-tasting sulfur compounds. Re-cover pot, and continue cooking sprouts for 5-10 minutes in boiling water or 6-12 minutes in a steamer. Check them periodically by poking them with a fork to test for doneness. Cook them until they are just tender.

Raw: Brussels sprouts can be too strong-flavored and chewy to eat raw, especially if they have been stored for a while. Steam them briefly or blanch them in boiling water, then drain them quickly, dunk them in ice water to keep them from cooking further, and drain again.



MAKE BRUSSELS SPROUTS PART OF YOUR 5 A DAY

It is easy to make Brussels sprouts part of your **5 A Day Plan**. Blanched Brussels sprouts are a great addition to salads, as snacks, or as part of vegetable trays. Brussels sprouts have a hearty flavor and tend to go better with flavorful foods such as beef, sharp cheeses, or with stronger seasoned foods. They also make a tasty addition to soups, stews, and casseroles.

Recipes



Festive Brussels Sprout Salad

Servings: 6

2-pint size packages of fresh Brussels sprouts
1 cup cherry tomatoes, cut in half
1 1/3 cup fat-free Italian salad dressing
1/4 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 Tbsp. minced green pepper
2 Tbsp. parsley, chopped
4 drops Tabasco sauce
Romaine lettuce leaves, for garnish

Boil Brussels sprouts for 15 minutes. Place drained Brussels sprouts and cherry tomatoes in a bowl; set aside. Mix remaining ingredients, and pour over Brussels sprouts and tomatoes. Toss well. Cover and chill 1 hour. Serve over lettuce leaves.
Nutritional Analysis: Calories 83, Total Fat .5g, Saturated Fat 0g, Carbohydrates 17g, Protein 5g, cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 6g, sodium 552mg.
Carbohydrates 74% Protein 21% Fat 5%

MOROCCAN STYLE QUINOA (Vegetarian)

Servings: 4 Main Dish or 8 side servings

1 can (14 Oz.) chickpeas, rinsed
3 small onions, quartered
1 cup carrots, cut in chunks
1 cup turnips, cut in chunks
Make stock by combining the following ingredients:
1/2 tsp. salt
2 garlic cloves
1 bay leaf
1/4 tsp. ground cumin

Pepper, to taste
2 Tbsp. olive oil
2 cups whole Brussels sprouts
2 cups water
1 Tbsp. olive oil
1 Tbsp. lemon or lime juice
2 cups quinoa

In a 3-qt. pot, place onions, carrots and turnips on top of the chickpeas and add enough water or stock to just cover vegetables. Add salt, garlic, bay, cumin, pepper and 2 Tbsp. olive oil. Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce to light boil and cook for 40 minutes. Add Brussels sprouts and cook an additional 10 minutes. Adjust seasoning to taste. While vegetables and chickpeas continue to cook, add 4 cups water and salt to a 2-qt. pot and bring to a boil. In a frying pan heat the remaining Tbsp. of oil. Add quinoa; stir quinoa continuously to toast (about 10 minutes). Add to boiling stock, cover and simmer 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from heat. Allow to sit for 5 to 10 minutes. Gently mix vegetable/chickpea mixture. Cover pot, and allow to rest for another 5 to 10 minutes. **Serve** by placing a large mound of quinoa on each individual plate. Flatten the mound in the center and fill with vegetables/chickpea mixture. Pour 1/2 c. of hot stock over all and serve hot. Nutritional Analysis for main dish serving (4): Calories 579, Total Fat 16g, Saturated Fat 2g, Carbohydrates 94g, Protein 19g, cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 16g, sodium 563mg.
Carbohydrates 63% Protein 13% Fat 24%

SPICY BRUSSEL SPROUTS

Servings: 6

1 1/2 tsp. vegetable oil
1/8 cup slivered almonds
1/2 tsp. mustard seeds, crushed
1/8 tsp. cumin, ground
1/4 tsp. fennel seeds
3 cups cooked Brussels sprouts, halved
1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper
1 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh ginger
1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
1/2 tsp. salt

In a large, heavy, skillet, heat oil over moderately high heat for about 30 seconds. Add almonds, mustard, cumin, and fennel seeds. Cook, stirring, until nuts and spices are fragrant and dark (about 15 seconds). Reduce heat to moderate, and add Brussels sprouts, cayenne, and ginger. Cook; stirring until vegetables are heated through and spices are well distributed (about 4 minutes). Add a few tablespoons of water if vegetables become dry. Season to taste with up to 1 tablespoon of lime juice and salt. Serve hot.

Nutritional Analysis: Calories 74, Total Fat 3g, Saturated Fat 0g, Carbohydrates 10g, Protein 4g, cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 5g, sodium 220mg.
Carbohydrates 48% Protein 19% Fat 32%

AROMATIC GREEN CASSEROLE (Vegetarian)

Servings: 4 Main Dish or 8 side servings

6 oz. snap beans, cut into bite-size pieces
6 oz. Brussels sprouts, halved
6 oz. broccoli, cut into bite-size pieces
1 Tbsp. chopped walnuts
1 tsp. vegetable oil
1 tsp. fresh dill, chopped
1/2 tsp. sage
1/2 tsp. salt
Juice of 1/2 lemon
Pinch cayenne

Steam beans, Brussels sprouts, and broccoli for 8 minutes. In a blender or food processor, combine walnuts with remaining ingredients and 2 ounces water. Puree mixture until smooth. Pour sauce over vegetables. Can be served hot or cold.

Nutritional Analysis per serving for main dish serving (4): Calories 69, Total Fat 3g, Saturated Fat 0g, Carbohydrates 10g, Protein 4g, cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 5g, sodium 24mg.

Carbohydrates 51% Protein 20% Fat 29%

Chicken Italiano (Crock-pot recipe)

Servings: 8 (about 3 quarts)

3 pounds chicken fryer, cut into serving pieces with skin removed

1/3 cup fat-free Italian salad dressing
1 1/2 cups long-grain rice
2 cups (16 oz. can) stewed tomatoes, chopped
1/2 cup dry, white wine
1 tsp. Italian seasoning
1/8 tsp. celery seed
1 tsp. salt
2 cups Brussels sprouts

Rinse chicken pieces; pat dry. In a large skillet, sauté chicken in Italian salad dressing over medium heat. In a crock-pot, mix rice, tomatoes, wine, seasonings, and Brussels sprouts. Place chicken on top of rice mixture. Cover and cook on low setting for 4 to 6 hours.

Nutritional Analysis: Calories 474, Total Fat 10g, Saturated Fat 3g, Carbohydrates 38g, Protein 53g, cholesterol 158mg, Fiber 3g, sodium 688mg.
Carbohydrates 35% Protein 46% Fat 19%

Baby Carrots & Brussels Sprouts

Servings: 6

1/2 pound Brussels sprouts, trimmed and cut in half lengthwise
2 1/2 tsp. vegetable oil
3/4 cup fat-free chicken broth
Juice of 1/2 lemon
Pepper to taste
1 bag (16 ounces), baby-cut carrots
2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill

Heat oil in a skillet. Add carrots and Brussels sprouts, and cook for 1 minute over medium heat. Add chicken broth and dill; cover and simmer for about 7 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Boil liquid until reduced to 1/4 cup liquid remains. Add lemon juice; season with pepper and cook for 1 minute more.

Nutritional Analysis: Calories 67, Total Fat 2g, Saturated Fat 0g, Carbohydrates 9g, Protein 3g, cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 3g, sodium 57mg.
Carbohydrates 57% Protein 15% Fat 28%