

MINUTE NUTRITION NEWS

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Eating Local and Seasonal: Bok Choy

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Ontario is home to many locally grown ethnic vegetables that help meet the needs of its diverse population. One of these vegetables is bok choy, a vegetable that originated in Asia and has long been used in the cuisines of China, Philippines, Korea, and other neighbouring countries. Learn more about this vegetable and add some Asian inspiration to your cooking this month!

Bok Choy Basics

The name of this vegetable comes phonetically from its Cantonese name. Bok choy in Cantonese directly translates to “white vegetable,” which is a description of the white stems on this vegetable. A walk through an Asian grocery store will often showcase a least a couple different types of bok choy.



Large Bok Choy

Bok choy has signature white stems that are firm and crunchy, and dark green leaves that resemble spinach but are just slightly tougher.



Baby Bok Choy

As its name implies, this is the smaller version of the vegetable (you would easily be able to hold 2 to 3 baby bok choy in your hand). This type of bok choy is harvested earlier for a more tender texture and is often used over the larger variety.



Shanghai Bok Choy

Shanghai bok choy has a tender texture, and also a sweeter and milder taste. The main distinction between this variety versus the others is the light green coloured stems instead of the signature white stems in regular bok choy. Its leaves are also flatter compared to the more ruffled look in regular bok choy.

Nutritional Goodness

Bok choy contains high levels of vitamins A, C and K. In smaller amounts, it also contains fibre, calcium, folate and B vitamins.

Buying and Preparing

When buying bok choy, look for smooth, unbruised stems and unwilted leaves. Store it wrapped in plastic in the fridge. They will keep well for about a week.

When preparing bok choy for cooking, trim off the base of the stem if dirty. Rinse the entire vegetable under running water to remove any dirt, particularly in the centre of the bok choy and near the bottom of the stems. Another option is to let the bok choy soak in a large bowl of water. Move it around occasionally to let the dirt fall out of the vegetable to the bottom of the bowl.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

September 2017

Korean-Inspired Bok Choy Salad

In a classic Korean bok choy salad, the recipe would call for red chili paste which is a signature ingredient in many spicy Korean recipes. This recipe takes the heat level down slightly but for heat lovers, you can still add in the optional chili red pepper flakes and perhaps your own favourite chili sauce.



Makes 1 Serving (one cup of cooked bok choy)

Ingredients:

1 lb	Baby Bok Choy, stalks separated
½ tsp	Sesame oil
1 clove	Garlic, finely chopped
1 tsp	Low sodium soy sauce
½ tsp	Honey
1 small	Scallion, finely chopped
1 tsp	Toasted sesame seeds
¼ tsp	Chili red pepper flakes (optional)

Directions:

1. Bring a pot of water to a boil. Blanch bok choy until white stalks just begin to soften. Drain and rinse under cold running water to stop bok choy from cooking further.
2. With your hands, squeeze out excess water in bok choy and set aside in a bowl.
3. In a small saucepan, heat sesame oil over medium-low heat. Add garlic, soy sauce and honey and heat until warmed. Drizzle over bok choy.
4. Add chopped scallion, sesame seeds and red pepper flakes (optional) into bok boy. Toss until all ingredients are evenly combined.

Nutrition information (Per Serving):

90 calories, Carbohydrate 10 g (4% DV), Fibre 3 g (11%), Sugars 5 g (includes 3 g added sugars), Fat 4.5 g (6% DV), Protein 4 g, Sodium 220 mg (10% DV), Calcium 15%, Iron 10%, Potassium 15%