



*Because Life Should Be Beautiful™*

## Leeks

Leeks are very versatile, having their own distinct, subtle flavor. They are excellent in pies and casseroles with other ingredients, braised in cream and served by themselves, or simmered in butter as an accompanying vegetable.

Leeks are also wonderful in soups and broths and have rightly earned the title, "king of the soup onions" Cock-a-leekie (This soup is my all time favorite) from Scotland and Creme Vichyssoise, invented by the chef of New York's Ritz Carlton, are two classic leek soups, but many other soups call for leeks.

Leeks can be steamed or boiled and then added to your recipe, or you can fry sliced leeks gently in butter for a minute or so and then cover with a lid to sweat so they cook without browning. Unlike onions, leeks shouldn't be allowed to brown, they become tough and unappetizing. They can be stir fried, however, with a little garlic and ginger. if they begin to cook too fiercely, splash in a little stock and soy sauce and simmer until tender. So now you don't need to be intimidated when you see them at your local farmers market.

Commercially grown leeks tend to be about 10 inches and 3/4" in diameter. Leeks nurtured in home gardens can be left to grow to an enormous size, but these may develop a woody center.

Leeks grow in full sun. Provide fertile, well drained soil. Do not allow the soil to dry out too much. Mulch is recommended. Harvest as needed.

Harvest when they are about a 1" in diameter. If you need to store them, trim away the top of the leaves and keep them in the salad drawer of the fridge or in a cool place. After several days they begin to shrivel.

Be sure to check out local farmers markets because most of the time that is where you'll see the best looking leeks. In France, the classic leeks there were incredible; some of those varieties have started to pop up at our specialized markets.