

➤ Whip up a quick dish   ➤ Great hints and tips   ➤ What's best for the season



## nectarines

Choose firm, sweetly-perfumed **yellow and white nectarines** that give slightly when pressed around the stem. Buy freestone fruit for cooking as it's easier to cut and remove the stone.

### Roasted white nectarines with ginger nut filling

Process 100g ginger nut biscuits, 1/3 cup shelled pistachios or almonds, 1 tbs brown sugar, 1 egg white and 1 tsp orange rind in a food processor. Spoon mixture into the centre of 4 large halved and stoned nectarines. Arrange in a greased medium baking dish. Drizzle with 1/3 cup orange juice. Bake at 180°C for 15 minutes or until tender. Serve with ice-cream. Serves 4.



### Easy entertaining using fresh summer fruits...



Make the most of **peaches, nectarines, cherries, lychees** and **mangoes** while they're in peak supply.

- Simply serve a fresh summer fruit salad with mascarpone whipped with icing sugar (to taste) and crushed chocolate honeycomb bars.
- Blend chopped summer fruits into a refreshing drink with crushed ice and ginger ale.
- Serve sliced fresh summer fruits with a drizzle of passionfruit pulp and sorbet.

### What's best in December

#### FRUIT

- Apricots
- Bananas
- Berries: blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, red & white currants, strawberries
- Cherries
- Grapes
- Lychees
- Mangoes
- Melons
- Nectarines
- Oranges: Valencia
- Papaya
- Passionfruit
- Pawpaw
- Peaches
- Pineapple

#### VEGETABLES

- Asparagus
- Beans: green, flat, butter
- Capsicum
- Celery
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Lettuce
- Onions: salad, green
- Peas: sugar snap
- Radish
- Sweetcorn
- Tomatoes
- Watercress
- Zucchini



# lychees

**To buy** Select plump, bright-skinned, rosy to deep pink lychees that feel heavy for their size. A small part of the stem should still be attached.

**To store** Store unpeeled lychees in a sealed plastic bag in the fridge. Use within 2 days.

**To prepare** Split the skin and peel the fruit. Leave whole or cut lengthways around the stone to halve the lychee and remove the stone if desired.

**Whip up dessert** Team peeled lychees with chopped mango and papaya, sliced banana and passionfruit pulp. Serve with vanilla ice-cream.



# mangoes

**To buy** Choose unblemished mangoes with a sweet tropical aroma that yield to gentle pressure at the stem end. Skin colour depends on the variety.

**To store** Store mangoes at room temperature out of direct sunlight. They're ripe and ready to eat when they yield to gentle pressure.

**Cook's tip** To honeycomb mango cheeks, stand the mango upright and cut down each side, slicing off the cheeks close to the stone.

Criss-cross the flesh almost through to the skin using a sharp knife, bend the skin back and enjoy the succulent flesh.

# sugar snap peas



Choose unblemished, crisp **sugar snap peas**. Store in a plastic bag in the crisper and use within 3 days of purchase.

*Crunch into sugar snap peas & green beans with herb butter...*

To make herb butter, combine 75g butter, 1/4 cup roughly chopped flat-leaf parsley and 2 tbs lemon thyme leaves in a small bowl. Steam (or boil if preferred) 200g trimmed sugar snap peas, 150g trimmed snow peas and 150g trimmed green beans until vibrant green and just crisp. Place steaming vegetables in a serving dish, top with herb butter, season and serve. Serves 4-6.

## What's best in January

### FRUIT

- Apricots
- Avocados
- Bananas
- Berries: blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, strawberries
- Cherries
- Grapes
- Limes
- Lychees
- Mangoes
- Melons
- Nectarines
- Oranges: Valencia
- Passionfruit
- Peaches
- Pears: Williams
- Pineapples
- Plums
- Rambutans

### VEGETABLES

- Asparagus
- Beans: green, flat, butter
- Capsicums
- Celery
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Lettuce
- Onions: salad, green
- Okra
- Peas: sugar snap
- Potatoes
- Radish
- Sweetcorn
- Tomatoes
- Zucchini

# Lebanese cucumber

*toss together a spicy cucumber salad...and serve with fish or chicken*

Using a vegetable peeler, thinly slice 3 Lebanese cucumbers lengthways. Place in a large bowl. Add 3 thinly sliced green onions, 1 1/2 cup coriander leaves and 1/2 cup small mint leaves. To make dressing, combine 2 tbs kecap manis, 1/4 cup mirin, 2 tbs caster sugar, 1 tbs white wine vinegar and 2 deseeded and finely chopped red Birds' eye chillies in a screw top jar. Shake until well combined. Drizzle dressing over salad and toss gently. Serve with barbecued fish or chicken and jasmine rice. Serves 4.



Look for firm, deep green **Lebanese cucumbers** with unwrinkled skin. Store them in the vegetable crisper in the fridge.



# Mango, Peach & Raspberry Pops



## Fresh for Kids®

1. Peel, deseed and chop 2 mangoes and 2 peaches. Process chopped fruit and 2/3 cup light cream in a food processor until smooth.
2. Place 150g raspberries into the base of 12 paddle-pop moulds. Pour fruit mixture over raspberries.
3. Insert a paddle-pop stick into each. Freeze overnight. Remove from moulds and serve.



Best tasting **mangoes** and **peaches** have a fragrant aroma. Keep them at room temperature until just soft and ready to eat.

## Smart salads with fresh beans...

### green beans >

Toss steamed baby **green beans** in a salad with shaved baby fennel, parmesan cheese and halved cherry tomatoes. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice. Season to taste and serve with fish.



### < flat beans

Cook trimmed, sliced **flat beans** in a large pot of boiling water until just crisp. Refresh in cold water. Toss with chopped barbecued pancetta or bacon, small black olives, baby rocket leaves and shredded barbecued chicken. Drizzle with Caesar salad dressing, toss gently and serve.



### butter beans >

Combine steamed or boiled trimmed **butter beans** with chopped roasted walnuts, crumbled feta cheese and baby spinach leaves. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil, season to taste and serve with barbecued steak.



## eggplant

### Whip up a delicious barbecued eggplant & garlic dip

Pierce 4 medium (1.2kg) eggplants all over with a skewer and wrap each in foil. Brush 1 bulb garlic with oil and wrap in foil. Place eggplants and garlic on a preheated barbecue grill and cook, turning often, for 30 minutes or until tender. Cool. Scrape flesh from eggplants and garlic into a food processor. Add 1 tbs olive oil, 1/3 cup lemon juice and 1/3 cup tahini, 1 tbs ground cumin, 1/3 cup thick natural yoghurt and season to taste. Process until smooth. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and serve with crispbreads. Serves 6-8.



Choose firm, glossy-skinned **eggplants** with a green stem attached.



## lychees

Select plump, rosy skinned lychees that feel heavy for their size. Store lychees in an airtight container in the fridge; use within 2 days of purchase.

### Chill out with lychees and mangoes in lime & mint syrup...

To make syrup, stir 1/2 cup caster sugar, 1/2 cup water and the juice of 2 limes in a small saucepan over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Bring to the boil, reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Chill until cold. Stir through 1/4 cup small mint leaves. Combine 500g peeled lychees and the sliced flesh of 2 mangoes in a large bowl. Drizzle with chilled lime syrup. Toss gently and serve. Serves 4.



## basil



### Whip up a basil, feta & tomato pesto to serve with drinks...

Roast 1/2 cup unsalted cashews in a pan over medium-high heat for 2 minutes until golden. Process cashews until roughly chopped. Add 1 cup firmly-packed basil leaves and 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil. Process until finely chopped. Place mixture in a bowl. Stir in 50g crumbled Greek feta and 100g finely chopped semi-dried tomatoes. Serve with crispbreads. Serves 6.



In abundance in summer, fragrant **basil** teams well with ripe tomatoes, fresh cheese like bocconcini or ricotta and pasta. Choose vibrant basil with firm leaves and a distinct fresh aroma.

### What's best in February

#### FRUIT

- Avocados
- Berries: blueberries, raspberries, strawberries
- Figs
- Grapes
- Limes
- Lychees
- Mangosteens
- Melons
- Nectarines
- Oranges: Valencia
- Passionfruit
- Peaches
- Pears: Howell, Williams
- Pineapples
- Plums
- Prickly Pears
- Rambutans

#### VEGETABLES

- Beans: butter, flat, green, snake
- Capsicums
- Celery
- Chillies
- Chokos
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Lettuce
- Onions: salad, green
- Okra
- Peas: sugar snap
- Radish
- Squash
- Sweet corn
- Tomatoes
- Zucchini