

# Eat Rhubarb!

The outlandishly coloured vegetable that thinks it's a fruit. Rhubarb makes deliciously comforting puddings but its sharpness works extremely well with meat and oily fish dishes (the duck recipe below is a resounding success).

Forced rhubarb (grown in the dark) has yellowish leaves and usually appears in January. The field-grown variety replaces it around April and is less tender but often more flavourful.

**HISTORY** - Rhubarb was used as a medicine in ancient China. It was brought to Europe by Marco Polo and has been eaten as a food since the eighteenth century. Its pink blossoms that appear in the spring resemble the head and bill of a Sandhill crane.

**BIOLOGY** - Rhubarb is a member of the family *Polygonaceae* and is related to sorrel. It grows best in cool climates and the effect of forcing was discovered by accident at the Chelsea Physic Garden early in the 19th century.

**BUYING** - Choose crisp, firm, plump stalks with good colour.

**STORING** - Kept in the fridge, fresh rhubarb will stay in reasonable condition for 1-2 weeks. Raw and cooked rhubarb freeze well.

**COOKING** - Scan the code below to view the recipe for '*Rhubarb & custard tart*' on the seasonal recipes blog.



or visit: [qmulsustainability.wordpress.com/recipes](https://qmulsustainability.wordpress.com/recipes)