

Eat Watercress!

Raw watercress adds a peppery yet smooth edge to dishes and is highly nutritious. Use it in salads in place of the ubiquitous rocket, or try a watercress and Marmite sandwich. It is a classic soup ingredient and when cooked has a milder flavour. It's also a great in juices and gives carrot-based drinks a lovely bite.

HISTORY - Watercress has been cultivated since Roman times. It is referred to in Irish poetry from the 12th century and has been grown in southern England since the early 1800s. Watercress was once popular as a tea, freshly made with lemon and sugar, and it has been used throughout history in Europe and Asia as a tonic for various ills.

BOLOGY - A member of the mustard family and related to garden cress. Watercress is a fast growing semi-aquatic plant that thrives in slightly alkaline water.

NUTRITION - Watercress is rich in vitamin C, calcium, iron and folic acid. It is a cruciferous plant containing anti-cancer phytochemicals such as beta-carotene and flavonoids.

BUYING TIP - Look for crisp leaves with a deep green colour.

STORAGE TIP - Watercress is very perishable but can be kept in good condition for a couple of days by refrigerating it stems-down in a glass of water, covered with a plastic bag.

COOKING TIP - Scan the code below to view and download the recipe for 'Watercress Bubble & Squeak!'

