

TATSOI



Also called spoon mustard, tatsoi has small, dark green spoon-shaped leaves that have a mild mustard flavor. The leaves make a flavorful addition to salads and can also be added at the last minute to stir fry dishes. The crunchy stalks of mature tatsoi can be used as one would use celery.

In the Yuma area, the plant is grown in support of the baby leaf packaged salad industry. Yuma County produced about 7,500 acres of baby leaf salad items in 2007. In Yuma, planting starts the beginning of October and continues until the middle of February. The convenience of pre-washed, pre-cut, bagged baby leaf salads has helped boost the bagged salads since 1998.

Bagged salads may have revolutionized the produce aisles of the supermarket as more prepared vegetables (diced onions, chopped celery) have started to appear alongside bagged salads, suggesting to consumers that they can have a wider variety of vegetables for cooking or sandwich making with very little work.

Tatsoi has a soft creamy texture and has a subtle yet distinctive flavor.

Many baby leaf varieties are heat resistant and have the capacity to regrow rapidly for multiple cuttings.

The smaller, bite-size leaves and the convenience of washed, read-to-eat produce have made baby leaf salads more attractive to consumers.

Also called spinach mustard, spoon mustard, or rosette bok choy, is an Asian variety of Brassica rapa grown for greens. This plant has become popular in North American cuisine as well, and is now grown throughout the world. Tatsoi can be harvested at almost any stage of its growth.

It takes 45-50 days to harvest and can withstand temperatures down to -15 degrees F. Tatsoi can be harvested even from under the snow, in those areas that receive it.

Tatsoi has tender, sweet tasting stalks and leaves that are commonly used in high quality dishes and in salad mixes. The plant is high in calcium and vitamin content, and the taste is a much stronger flavor than Bok Choy. However, many consider the flavor superior to Bok Choy, a close relative.

The spoon-shaped, dark green, evenly spaced leaves form a plant worthy to be grown for its decorative value. In the Yuma area, the leafy crucifers Japanese mustard, red mustard, and tatsoi can be grown in adjacent rows and harvested for use in packaged salad mixes. Flavors range from bitter to lemony to nutty to "it's hard to describe." These individual greens can be mixed in with the standard salad according to taste. With most, a little goes a long way.

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to be grown for its decorative value. This plant is high in calcium and vitamin content. It is excellent in stir-fry and in salad mixes.

Although a member of the Brassica family, tatsoi (a.k.a. tai koo choi in Asian markets) cooks and tastes like spinach. Its ruffly green leaves are tender enough to eat raw and mild enough to take on all kinds of flavor personalities.

The dark green leaves of tatsoi are very high in beta carotene and Vitamins A, C, and K. Tatsoi also provides calcium, potassium, phosphorous, and iron.

This distinctive green grows like a flat round plate-only a few inches tall but, the plant can reach over a foot in diameter! It is easily identifiable by its dark green stems and emerald, spoon-shaped leaves. The stalks are sweet and almost creamy, and the leaves taste like a slightly mustardy Swiss chard.

When very young, tatsoi is an excellent salad green and it is increasingly found in "mesclun" salad mixes. And, the young leaves also make an excellent pesto that can be used for garnishing soups or spreading on crackers.

As with the other Asian greens, tatsoi is wonderful lightly sautéed or thrown into soups.

Tatsoi is generally eaten raw, but can also be cooked. Mix with other lettuces to enhance the appearance, flavor, and nutritional value of salad. The leaves can be added to soups, add the shredded leaves at the end of cooking; the heat of the broth will cook them sufficiently.

Tatsoi is becoming popular in the U.S., but somewhat more expensive than local "greens". The leafy vegetable tastes similar to mustard or collard greens.

Simply looking at the green closely will tell you it's not spinach. The stem in spinach is green, not white as found in tatsoi. Next time you turn down a perfectly good salad because it contains spinach, look closer. It could just be tatsoi!

Salads are not a new food to the world, but their uses have broadened so much that today they are served anytime, except for breakfast. From a simple bowl of tossed greens, they can be dressed to create the finest of main entrees. Today, salads are served as a main course, as an appetizer or as a palate refresher between dinner and dessert.

A dark green Asian salad green that has a spoon like shape, a pleasant and sweet aroma flavor like a mild mustard flavor, similar to bok choi. Tatsoi is generally eaten raw, but may be added to soups at the end of the cooking period. When tatsoi is mixed with other greens it enhances the flavor and nutritional value.

Small and sturdy, tatsoi is identified by its emerald spoon-shaped leaves. Its thick leaves offer a mild flavor with a faint metallic bitter edge. Some describe it tasting like a slightly mustardy Swiss chard. Its stalks are sweet and almost creamy. This green is popular in spring mix and mesclun mixtures.

Known as "Tah Tsai" in China, tatsoi or Rosette Pak Choi is among the most popular of oriental greens. Tatsoi is an open heart oriental mustard with spoon shaped, thick, dark green leaves which are not only full of flavor, but very tender. Tatsoi is very high in calcium and vitamins and is twice as nutritious and twice as delicious as ordinary Bok Choy. Tatsoi has a wide variety of culinary uses that range from using the leaves raw in salads, in soups and in Oriental stir-fry.

Typically used like a lettuce, tatsoi is native to Japan and favored in Japanese cuisine. Loving cool weather, tatsoi has been known to be harvested in snow. The leaves are ready for harvest 45 days after planting and continue to produce.

Mix with lettuces and other greens when young and tender, tatsoi is great to add at the last minute to stir-fries and lightly sauté with favorite fresh herbs and seasonings. Tatsoi can be tossed in soups for flavor and texture or use as a garnish. Tatsoi makes an attractive bed for rice dishes. Tatsoi makes a delicious pesto with its tender young leaves; serve with crackers or crusty bread squares. Tatsoi may be eaten raw or cooked. Many prefer it cooked. To store, place in a plastic bag; refrigerate in crisper drawer.

Tatsoi is indigenous to China, where it has been cultivated since 500 A.D. Its name is quite misleading, tatsoi is closely related to turnips and rutabagas.

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