

## Garlic Curls or Garlic Scapes

Garlic curls are one of those things we have to convince people to try. They are good. I promise. 20 some years ago Jed and I were not so savvy about the Google Machine. The name “garlic curls” described exactly what we were looking at. We eventually found out the proper name may be “garlic scapes”. By the time we found that out, we had spent about 10 years convincing folks to eat the curls...whatever the name, people now love them and seek them out. Someone told us at a market in the early days of spreading the good garlic word their mom would seek them out in Asian markets in San Francisco. They went for \$40/pound!!! That was in 2003!!! We were just thrilled someone knew what we were selling!

So what are these things?! We must take these off the tops of the garlic plant so the plant uses its energy to form the bulb instead of the seed head.

Use these early garden treats just like garlic. Get rid of the tapered part from the very top to right under the pale white seed head. Chop up the juicy stem and substitute for one clove of garlic in any recipe. Cut into 4” lengths and sauté’ like a green bean in stir fry’s for a yummy garlic flavor. Marinate in soy sauce, sesame oil and sea salt and throw them on the grill. Chop and freeze extras for use during winter. Curls are mild enough to eat raw in salads. The garlic flavor mellows out the longer it cooks. Put it in the blender for salad dressings. Just stop buying garlic until all your curls are used up! Curls keep for a LONG time in the fridge in a plastic bag. Cut them to the length of a green bean and add to dishes that garlic would taste great in.

Martha writes” For a couple of weeks the workshares and I are enjoying picking garlic curls, or scapes off the garlic plant. We remove the curls so the energy of the plant goes toward making the garlic bulb underground instead of producing a seed head. Not only are these curls delicious sautéed , in pesto or grill they have the same health benefits as garlic cloves. Garlic curls contain a decent amount of protein, vitamins C and B6, calcium and are an excellent source of manganese. Manganese helps maintain bone health and blood sugar levels and protect cells from damage by free radicals. Besides being antiviral, antibacterial and antifungal, garlic helps prevent heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and cancer. The curls are also known to boost you immune system and reduce inflammation. So enjoy those garlic curls over the next few weeks (they keep really well in the fridge) as we wait for Cosmic Apple’s amazing garlic bulbs in the fall”

From a 2011 Newsletter, Dale writes....

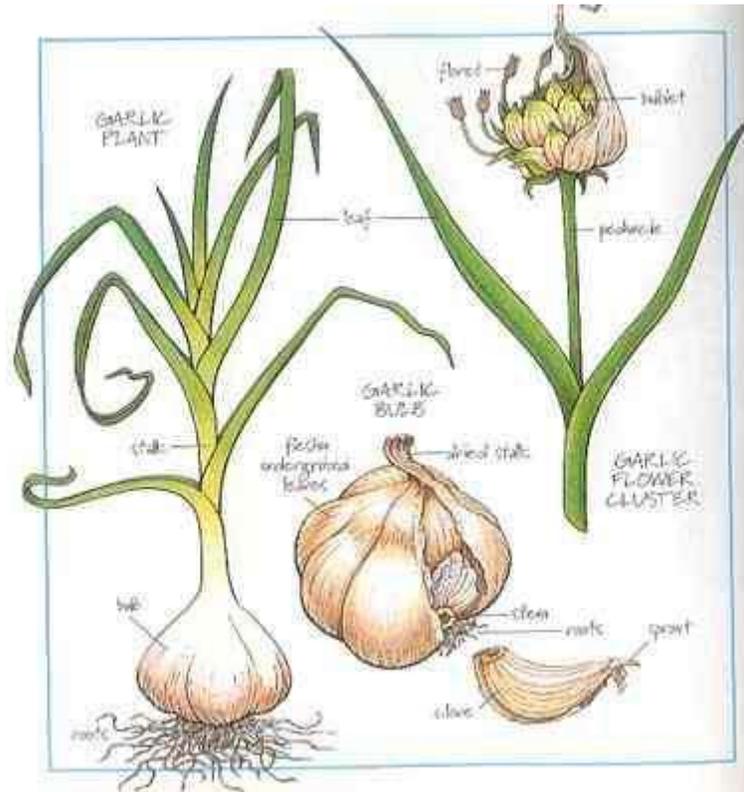
Garlic how we love you!

Cosmic’s garlic has received rave reviews from members over the years. We have been growing this same strain of Romanian Red garlic for 10 years now! Saving our own seed and watching the plant become more and more specialized to our climate.

I fell in love with garlic at Killarney Farm in Northern Idaho where I apprenticed. These folks had been saving there own seed for so long the plant evolved into its own variety now known as Killarney Red. It was originally Romanian Red. Garlic was the most important crop at Killarney. Paul, our smiling farmer, would always laugh at that fact because it was the most labor intensive crop they grew.

Garlic thrives in Teton Valley. We plant garlic in the fall, as soon as the CSA is done. It starts growing roots immediately. Garlic spends its winter in the soil while the garden is resting poised and ready for spring warmth. It loves cold winters. Think about the power of garlic. It has the ability to cure us of colds and infections. It is antiviral. It needs winters like ours to learn resistance to cold and disease. Energetically garlic gives us what we need to boost our immune system, because it gathers the ability and strength to survive in harsh elements.

It makes me chuckle to see the “Garlic Capital of The World” is Gilroy, California. I have also grown garlic in California. It is awful. Little weak bulbs, no robust flavor, we had to baby it so it would not rot as it was drying. It never had a cold winter to learn the lessons it needed to be strong. We could not even save seed in CA. They had to order new seed every year! In the spring the garlic is the first sprout to pop out of the ground. Little green shoots surrounded by dark brown soil, blue skies and white mountains, it is always a welcome sight. By the end of June we can usually give out baby garlic. These treats are tender and look like little leeks. Mid-July yields garlic curls. We have to get these attempted seed heads (pictured at right, the “garlic flower cluster” is what happens if we leave the curl on the plant) off the plant so the energy goes to forming the bulb instead of the “seeds”. By mid-August it is usually time to get the garlic out of the field and into the shed to dry. We stack it so air can circulate and the leaves die. As the leaves die, all the plant’s remaining energy is drawn down into the bulb. When the tops are completely dried, we can cut the top off without fear of disease or fungus crawling in thru the stem. The workshares also rub off any large chunks of soil before we deliver it. This is what makes storage garlic.



When the tops are completely dried, we can cut the top off without fear of disease or fungus crawling in thru the stem. The workshares also rub off any large chunks of soil before we deliver it. This is what makes storage garlic. When we are done with the CSA we will sit in front of the shed, (or in the greenhouse if the weather is unpleasant) on buckets with coffee cups nearby chatting as the bulbs are broken into individual cloves. As we do this we grade the garlic. We look for the largest cloves to save, for the largest crop next year. We also look for any cloves with not enough paper, or bruises. These “imperfect” cloves are planted in the culled section. The smaller ones and culls are the ones dug as baby garlic. The best ones are saved for storage garlic and seed. About a third of our crop is saved every year to be replanted. We joyfully get to ride the transplanter to get the garlic in the ground. We used to plant it on our hands and knees in cold and wet fall soil, the transplanter has been a welcome improvement! In ten months it will be ready for harvest!

Garlic takes a lot more handling than most crops we grow, but considering the results, I’d say it is well worth it. If you start feeling worn down this winter, try mincing some garlic and spreading it on toast with honey. Your body will thank you!

## Recipes:

**Garlic Curl Tip: Use garlic curls just like you would any other form garlic, fresh or bulb. One curl equals one clove.**

**Substitute garlic curls in ANY recipe which calls for garlic.**

### Roasted Garlic Curl Hummus

- ¾ cup cooked (or canned) garbanzo beans
- 1 cup garlic curls cut into 1” long pieces
- 1 ¼ t. salt
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- ¼ cup tahini
- 1 ½ T. water
- 1/8 t. cayenne
- 1/8 cup olive oil + enough to coat garlic curls

Put garlic curls in an oven proof pan, drizzle until coated with olive oil. Cover pan with tin foil and roast at 375° until blistered brown. Put all other ingredients, except beans in a food processor and process until smooth. Add garlic process, add beans and process. If needed add olive oil to smooth it out. This can also be made with garlic cloves.

### **Garlic Scape and Bok Choy**

1 T. vegetable oil 3 garlic scapes, cut into 1" pieces

1 T. minced fresh ginger

Salt and Pepper

2 bok choy, halved lengthwise, then cut into 1" pieces

¼ c. lightly toasted cashews

1 cup water (approximate)

Heat the oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the garlic scapes and ginger and stir-fry 1 minute, until fragrant. Add the bok choy, and stir a few times as it tenders and browns, about 2 minutes. Add enough water to cover— about a cup. Sprinkle in salt and pepper. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer until tender, about 5 minutes. While that's simmering, heat a nonstick pan over medium heat, and lightly toast cashews. Serve bok choy topped with cashews.

**Dale's Burrito Sauce** (Workshare Lunch) The perfect spring topping to any burrito!!

1 cup Lime Juice

4 garlic curls, tops removed

Bunch of cilantro

Olive oil (about ¼ to ½ cup)

Put lime juice, garlic curls and cilantro in a blender. Puree.

Add olive oil to adjust texture until you like it!



### **GRILLED GARLIC CURLS 2 WAYS** (Farm Family Favorite)

Option A:

½ C. Sesame oil

¼ C. Rice wine Vinegar

¼ C. Soy sauce

Healthy dash of red pepper flakes OR

Option B:

½ C. Olive oil

1 ½ C. Balsamic Vinegar

Healthy dash of black pepper

Put all the ingredients for either "option" in a jar and shake. Pour over whole curls and marinate for a few Hours. Use tongs and put curls on grill until they start to brown. Flip, brown 2<sup>nd</sup> side, brown and serve!

**Garlic Curl "Pesto"** Of course, it's not a pesto in the classic sense, because it contains no basil, but it's got a fresh, zippy flavor and is a great condiment for virtually everything, and makes an excellent spread for garlic bread, instead of that old powdered, salty stuff! It also freezes great and can be spread on just about anything all winter!

In a food processor or blender, combine:

1 cup chopped up garlic curl

2/3 cup olive oil

Dashes of salt and pepper

Juice of one lemon

½ cup chopped fresh herbs, or a combination, like chives, parsley, thyme, oregano, etc....

¼ to 1/3 chopped toasted nuts, like walnuts, pistachios, filberts

Process all ingredients together until the mixture resembles a thick paste. Remember, the flavor is very strong, very garlicky, and very delicious. Use sparingly (or indulgently, depending on your love for garlic!) on everything from bruschetta and canapés to sandwiches and wraps. Also makes an excellent sauce to baste with on the bar-be-que. It's got a savory enough flavor to go with beef, venison, sausages, and pork, but when mixed down with some additional lemon juice and olive oil, can also make a great marinade for chicken and seafood, too.