

# Dandelion

*Taraxacum officinale*

**Region of Origin:** Eurasia  
**Habitat:** Perennial forb  
**Current Range:** Throughout most of the northern hemisphere  
**Life Span:** Year round



Dandelion seeds can float for several miles, and often land in someone's lawn where they burst into hundreds. Named for their leaf shape after the French for "lion's tooth", dandelions are pests and can out-compete native plants in natural settings, and vehemently hated by many gardeners. Dandelion is one of the first flowers of spring, and the last flowers of autumn, which is good news for bees. All parts of the plant will emit a milky sap when broken. But the delicious news is that all parts of this plant are edible too! The most common use is of young leaves in a variety of lovely green dishes. But dandelions make an exquisite golden jelly too! Older leaves can be used too – simply blanch them to remove some of the bitter flavor, and sauté. Dandelions are also drinkable. The roots can be used to make root beer and tea, and the flowers are used in dandelion wine (what a great way to prevent the plants from going to seed!). Dandelions are high in nutrition, filled with vitamins A, C, K and B complex. They are used in herbal medicine, especially as a tonic for the liver. A special thank you to author and ecologist Corinne Duncan for her content contributions to this Dandelion Introduction.

## Dandelion Chicken Noodle Soup

*Recipe by Unknown*

2 Tbsp	Extra Virgin Olive Oil, divided	1½ cups	Egg Noodles
2 Tbsp	Butter, Divided	2 cups	Dandelion Greens, blanched and chopped
4 cloves	Garlic, minced	1 cup	Dandelion Flowers, blanched
1 cup	Carrots, diced	½ tsp	Salt
½ cup	Onion, diced	1 tsp	Black Pepper
2 ea	Red Potatoes, peeled and diced	1 tsp	Oregano
4 cans	Chicken Broth (14.5 oz)	1 tsp	Basil
1 can	Vegetable Broth (14.5 oz)	1 ea	Bay Leaf

- Add 1 Tbsp olive oil and 1 Tbsp butter to skillet over medium heat.
- Add chicken to pot and cook until lightly browned. Season chicken as desired. Set chicken aside when done.
- Add remaining olive oil and butter to same pan over medium heat.
- Saute garlic, potatoes, carrots, and onion until carrots are tender on the outside.
- Turn heat off, add chicken back to pan, and mix well.
- Place soup pot on the stove on high heat.
- Pour chicken broth and vegetable broth into pot.
- Stir in chicken, vegetable mix, noodles, basil, oregano, salt, black pepper, bay leaf, and dandelion greens and flowers.
- Bring to a boil.
- Reduce heat and simmer 30 minutes before serving.

