

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.

Curried Dandelions

Recipe by [Wild Man Steve Brill](#)

2 Tbsp	Cooking Oil of choice	¾ cup	Silken Tofu (the softest variety)
9 cups	Dandelion Leaves	2 Tbsp	Mellow Miso (light colored)
4½ tsp	Garlic, minced	1½ Tbsp	Lime Juice
1½ cups	Water	1½ Tbsp	Curry Powder (or to taste)

- Sauté the common dandelion leaves and garlic in the oil 10 minutes.
- Meanwhile, puree the remaining ingredients in a blender.
- Add the puree to the dandelions.
- Bring to a boil.
- Reduce the heat to low and cover.
- Simmer 10 minutes.
- Serves 6.

