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# Garlic Mustard

*Alliaria petiolata*

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**Region of Origin:** Europe  
**Habitat:** Biennial shrub  
**Current Range:** Throughout most of the northern hemisphere  
**Life Span:** Year round



Garlic mustard is a wild, highly invasive green that is wonderful to cook with – and as the name says, it has a garlicky mustard flavor! Used for perhaps 6,000 years, garlic mustard is one of the oldest European cooking spices. It was introduced to North America in the mid-1800's, and due to a predator-free environment, it has become highly invasive. Moist forests and floodplains mark its preferred habitat where it is often the dominant plant and can form large homogeneous stands. It produces a variety of chemicals that suppress the growth of other plants and fend off herbivores, so be cautious not to consume excessively large quantities (think grazing cow quantities). In human sized portions, garlic mustard is highly nutritious and offers anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial benefits.

Recently, garlic mustard has received ample attention as a foraged food, and recipes abound. The tiny sprouts that burst up in early spring are mild and can be featured in salads and other dishes. The leaf rosettes are tender most of the spring, but will toughen and bitter as the season passes. You can also enjoy the flower stalks, adorned with the delicate clusters of white flowers. The thin triangle shaped leaves are tender, and for those of you who like a garlicky mustard bite, try them! Even the seeds can be dried and stored. Just pop them in a jar, and use for salad dressings or hot mustard anytime. Lastly, grate the roots into a horseradish-like accent – be sure to add a splash of vinegar!

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## Garlic Mustard and Cheese Ravioli Filling

Recipe by [The 3 Foragers](#)

Writer and forager Karen Monger, of The 3 Foragers, shares this note: “We like to pair the pungency of this wild edible with earthy flavors like mushrooms, plus rich textures like cheese in recipes, while still adding a good quantity of garlic mustard. This recipe is mostly about making a filling. You can fill wontons or pasta dough for ravioli, or even use it to stuff some puff pastry triangles or bread. We used some wild hen-of-the-woods maitake mushrooms, because that is what we had in the freezer, but grocery store mushrooms will work fine.”

1 Tbsp	Olive Oil	2½ cups	Garlic Mustard Leaves, roughly chopped
1 cup	Ramps or Onions, chopped	4 Tbsp	Farmer’s Cheese or Drained Ricotta
1 cup	Mushrooms, chopped	1 Tbsp	Sour Cream
2 cloves	Garlic, chopped	1 tsp	Salt

- Saute chopped ramps or onion in the olive oil over medium heat until translucent, 4 minutes.
- Add garlic and chopped mushrooms.
- Cook until the mushrooms release their juices and it evaporates, about 5 more minutes.
- Toss in 2 cups of the garlic mustard leaves and cover the pan.
- Cook 2 more minutes to wilt the leaves.
- Remove from the heat and allow the mixture to cool.
- Put the cooked onion, mushroom and garlic mustard mixture into a food processor, and pulse a few times to mix.
- Add the remaining 1/2 cup of raw garlic mustard leaves, the farmer’s cheese, sour cream and salt, and continue to pulse until the mixture is finely chopped.
- Taste and adjust salt.
- Use the filling to fill ravioli, wonton wrappers, or as a spread.
- Makes about 2 cups.



Photo courtesy of [The 3 Foragers](#)