

Try Me!

# Arugula

## Basic Facts:

These members of the cabbage family derive their name from their four-petaled flowers, which look like a crucifer or cross. The leafy greens fill a plate with few calories and essentially no fat (except what's added with dressing). It has a rich, peppery taste, and is exceptionally strongly flavored for a leafy green. It is generally used in salads but also cooked as a vegetable with pastas or meats and in coastal Slovenia (especially Koper), it is added in the squeaky cheese burek. In Italy, it is often used in pizzas, added just before the baking period ends or immediately afterwards, so that it can wilt in the heat. It is sometimes used as an ingredient in pesto, either in addition to basil or as a (non-traditional) substitute.

Dark green arugula leaves provide some of the same nutritional benefits as broccoli and cabbage.

## Special Fact:

**Arugula seed has been used as an ingredient in aphrodisiac concoctions dating back to the first century, AD.**

## Nutrients:

Experts believe that cruciferous vegetables contain nutrients and compounds with cancer-fighting components: beta-carotene, fiber and vitamin C, among others. As an added bonus, cruciferous vegetables supply calcium, iron and folate. The darker the leaves, the more nutrient-rich the lettuce. (Romaine has seven times more vitamin A and C than iceberg lettuce.)



## Food Handling:

When buying arugula, avoid bunches with yellow spots, as the leaves will wilt rapidly. Use arugula as soon as possible.

To prepare arugula, wash it in cool water and pat it dry with paper towels. Here's another hint: only use the leaves, not the stems, which can be high in soil nitrates.

Proper food handling enhances the flavor of these vegetables:

- Eat them soon after you buy them, either raw or cooked.
- Cook them quickly, just until tender-crisp.
- Don't keep leftovers more than one day.

## NUTRITION

Arugula/1/2 cup raw	
Calories	2.5
Total fat (g)	0.066
Saturated fat (g)	--
Monounsaturated fat (g)	--
Polyunsaturated fat (g)	--
Dietary fiber (g)	--
Protein (g)	0.258
Carbohydrate (g)	0.365
Cholesterol (mg)	0
Sodium (mg)	2.700
Vitamin C (mg)	1.500