

Try Me!

Winter Squash

Banana

This squash comes in three varieties: blue, orange, and pink. Among the three varieties, the pink banana is the most common in the United States. It is grown commercially in Florida. This large, thick-skinned cylindrical squash averages 20 inches long and weighs around 12 pounds. It is so large that it is usually sold in chunks instead of whole. Its creamy textured orange flesh offers a fruity and buttery delight to your palate. Although both baking and steaming are great ways to prepare this tasty squash, steaming produces a slightly sweeter, yet mild flavor.



Hubbard

This tear-shaped squash comes in several varieties: green (true), golden, blue, and baby blue. It ranges from dark green to orange and weighs from 5 to 50 pounds. Because of its size, hubbard's popularity has decreased over the years. However, pre-cut portions of green and orange hubbard can be found in markets. Green hubbards are thick, sweet, and dry. Golden hubbards—a smaller squash than the green or blue—are fairly sweet, but have a bitter aftertaste.

The shell for each type of squash has a distinct shape and color, but the meat inside is similar enough to be used interchangeably in recipes.

Buttercup

A turban shaped, dark green shell that is streaked with grey. This stocky squash is 6 to 8 inches in diameter, averaging 2 to 4 pounds. It has sweet and creamy orange flesh but it tends to be a bit dry. Baking or steaming can solve this problem; the dry flesh becomes smooth and tastes similar to a mixture of honey, roasted chestnuts, and sweet potato. Even more than baking, steaming softens the flesh and creates a thick puree.

Spaghetti

This oval-shaped yellow squash is also called the vegetable spaghetti. It averages 9 inches in length and may weigh 2 to 3 pounds. When cooked, the crisp, tender, spaghetti-like strands yield a mild lightly sweet and fresh taste. Keep in mind that the larger the vegetable, the thicker the strands and the more flavorful the taste.

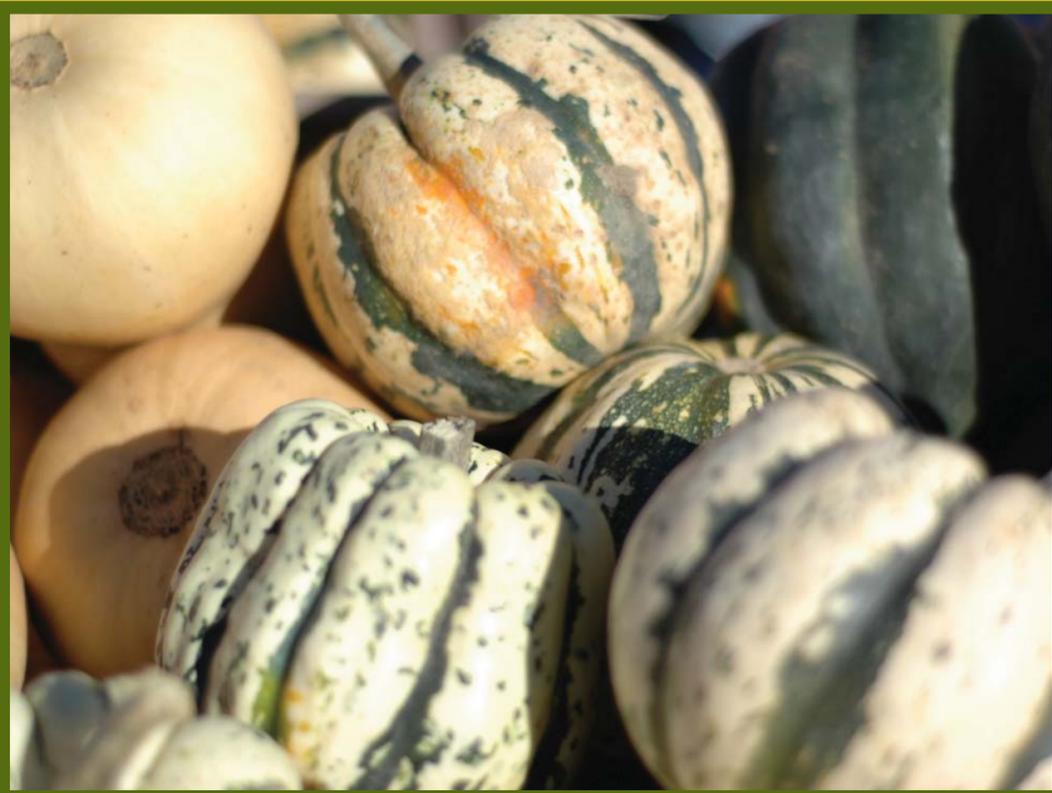
The yellow and orange flesh of the winter squash is more nutritious and richer in complex carbohydrates, such as beta-carotene, than summer squash.

Butternut

This elongated bell-shaped squash measures about a foot long and weighs an average of 2 to 4 pounds. Its popularity is due to its meaty, yet moderately sweet golden orange flesh. Because of its thin skin, this squash can easily be skinned with a vegetable peeler, which makes it easy to cut and prepare. Baking enhances its sweet, moist, and nutty flavors. Butternut squash is usually available from August through March.

Delicata

Ivory colored shell with green and orange streaks. The yellow flesh is mild tasting, moist and creamy



Acorn

This acorn-shaped squash is one of the most widely available among the small winter squash. It measures about 6 inches around and weighs 1 to 2 pounds. Cut in half cross-wise, they form attractive scalloped bowls. Acorn squash is a good source of calcium. Baking is an excellent way to bring out the flavors of this squash.

Sweet Dumpling

Resembles a round, squatty version of Delicata. This solid round squash, formerly known as the vegetable gourd, is a perfect serving for one person. It is about the size of an apple and weighs up to 1 pound. The skin is a warm cream color striped with ivy green, and it changes to butter color and orange during storage. The skin is relatively tender and can be eaten. The pale-yellow flesh is smooth, fine, and dry as a potato and produces a rich starchy, light to mild sweetness, with a slight corn flavor.