

Carrot Top Soup

1 bunch (6 small to medium) carrots, tops and the roots
2 thyme or lemon thyme sprigs
2 Tbsp olive oil
2 Tbsp chopped dill, parsley, celery leaves, or lovage
3 Tbsp brown rice
sea salt and freshly ground pepper
2 large leeks, white parts only
6 cups Vegetable Stock

1. Pull or pluck the lacy leaves of the carrot greens off their stems. You should have between 2 and 3 cups, loosely packed. Wash, then chop finely. Grate the carrots, or if you want a more refined-looking soup, finely chop them.
2. Heat olive oil over moderate heat in a soup pot. Add the carrot tops and carrots, rice, leeks, thyme, and dill. Cook for several minutes, turning everything a few times, then season with 1 ½ teaspoons of salt and add the stock. Bring to a boil and simmer until the rice is cooked 20 to 25 minutes.
3. Taste for salt, season, with pepper, and serve.

Dandelion Greens

Some say that dandelions are the most nutritious of all greens. Some of its healing properties include: digestion aid, laxative/ diuretic, reduces swelling and inflammation, treats viruses, jaundice, edema, gout, eczema and acne. As for enjoying your greens, I, being a bit of a purist, enjoy my dandelion greens raw in a salad, either solo or combined with another, milder green. They are also very good braised in a bit of olive oil with sliced garlic, then dressed with sherry vinegar/honey/raisins/toasted almonds. Here are a few more simple recipe ideas for cooked dandelions.

Sauteed Dandelion Greens

3 pound dandelion greens, tough lower stems discarded and leaves cut crosswise into 2-inch pieces
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
5 large garlic cloves, smashed
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon dried hot red-pepper flakes
1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt

Cook greens in a 10-to 12-quart pot of boiling salted water (3 tablespoons salt for 8 quarts water), uncovered, until ribs are tender, about 10 minutes. Drain in a colander, then rinse under cold water to stop cooking and drain well, gently pressing out excess water.

Heat oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium heat until it shimmers, then cook garlic and red-pepper flakes, stirring, until pale golden, about 45 seconds. Increase heat to medium-high, then add greens and sea salt and sauté until coated with oil and heated through, about 4 minutes.

Dandelion Salad with Warm Pecan Vinaigrette

adapted from *The Gourmet Cookbook* by Reichl et al

2 bunches dandelion greens, tough stems discarded
3 T extra virgin olive oil
4 stalks green garlic or 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1/4 cup pecans, coarsely chopped
1.5 T balsamic vinegar
1 t salt
1/4 t pepper

Cut top 5 inches from greens and transfer to a large heatproof serving bowl. Cut remaining greens into 3/4 inch slices and add to bowl.

Heat oil in a small heavy skillet over moderate heat. Add garlic and nuts and cook, stirring, until garlic is golden. Stir in vinegar, salt, and pepper. Pour hot vinaigrette over greens and toss to combine.

DANDELION SALAD WITH ANCHOVY DRESSING

adapted from the *San Francisco Chronicle* Serves 4

2 bunches Dandelion Greens
6 Anchovy Filets
5 stalks green garlic, cleaned as you would a leek and chopped
1/4 cup cooking oil, such as olive
2 T dark vinegar, such as balsamic
S & P to taste

Wash and dry dandelion greens. Cut into 2" long slivers. Mash anchovy filets with garlic; blend in olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Toss leaves with dressing, then divide among 4 plates. Season with S & P and serve at room temperature with thick slices of chewy bread.

Per serving: Calories: 165, Protein: 5g, Carbohydrates: 13g, Fat: 10g, Saturated Fat: 1g, Cholesterol: 6mg, Sodium: 221mg, Fiber: 2g.