

Storage Tips:

Mangoes: If a mango is ripe, it will give slightly when you press on it. If the mango is ripe, place in a plastic bag and refrigerate. Keep unripe mangoes at room temperature & then refrigerate in plastic bag once ripe. To speed up ripening, place mangoes in a paper bag at room temperature.

Grapes: Store them unwashed in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Grapes usually keep well for about 1 to 2 weeks in the fridge. You can also freeze grapes for future snacking or use in cooking.

Watermelon: A ripe watermelon will have a yellowish-white resting spot, opposed to a white or pale green spot (where the melon rested on the ground). If it is not yet ripe, give it a few days. Also, a soft "give" when you press the blossom end of the melon (opposite the stem end), indicated ripeness. Store watermelon in the refrigerator & once cut, be sure to wrap in plastic or foil & store in refrigerator.

Cauliflower - Store, stem-side down in a plastic bag in the refrigerator (stem-side down prevents moisture from collecting in the florets & possibly causing the head to spoil).

Mushrooms - Prepackaged mushrooms should stay in the package, but loose mushrooms or those in an open package should be stored in a paper bag or in a damp cloth bag in the refrigerator. Do not place in plastic bag.

Kale - Refrigerate in plastic bag; do not wash until ready to use.

Artichokes: Sprinkle artichokes with a few drops of water and store in a perforated plastic bag in the coldest part of the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

A Great Way to Cook & Eat an Artichoke

*1 or more artichokes *1-2 cloves of garlic, cut in half *1 bay leaf *1 slice of lemon

Cut off the tips of the leaves: If the artichokes have little thorns on the ends of their leaves, take a kitchen scissors and cut off the tips. Slice about 3/4 inch to an inch off the tip of the artichoke. A serrated bread knife works great for this. Pull off any smaller leaves towards the base and on the stem. Cut off excess stem, leaving up to an inch on the artichoke. Rinse the artichokes in running cold water. In a large pot, put a couple inches of water, the garlic, a slice of lemon & a bay leaf (this adds wonderful flavor to the artichokes). Insert a steaming basket. Add artichokes. Cover the pot. Bring to a boil & reduce heat to simmer. Cook for 25 to 35 minutes or longer, until the outer leaves can easily be pulled off. To eat an artichoke: Artichokes may be eaten cold or hot. They are great served with a dip, either melted butter or mayonnaise. A favorite dip is mayo with a little bit of balsamic vinegar mixed in. Pull off the outer leaves, one at a time. Dip the white fleshy end in melted butter, a vinaigrette or sauce. Tightly grip the other end of the petal. Place in mouth, dip side down & pull through teeth to remove soft, pulpy, delicious portion of the petal. Discard remaining petal. Continue until all of the petals are removed. When you get to the tender inner leaves with the purple tips, you can remove them all at once. Dip & eat just the light colored parts of these leaves. With a knife or spoon, scrape out & discard the inedible fuzzy part (called the "choke") covering the artichoke heart. Underneath the artichoke choke is the heart. Cut the heart into pieces & dip into melted butter, a vinaigrette or a sauce to eat.

Artichoke & Kale Dip

*1/2 cup chopped onion *3 cloves garlic *2 cups chopped kale *12 oz. chopped artichoke hearts *8 ozs. cream cheese, room temp. *1 cup plain Greek yogurt *1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese *1/2 tsp. salt *1/4 tsp. pepper *1/4 cup grated mozzarella cheese (This is great with wonton chips. If desired, *12 wonton wrappers *olive oil spray *salt)

Preheat oven 400° F. In the bowl of a food processor, blend onion, garlic, kale & artichoke hearts until finely chopped. Add cream cheese, yogurt & half of the parmesan. Blend to combine. Spread mixture into an 8x8" baking dish. Top with remaining 1/4 cup parmesan & mozzarella. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until bubbly & top is lightly browned. Serve hot with wonton chips.

To make chips: Stack wonton wrappers & cut in half on the diagonal to make triangles. Spread wrappers on a baking sheet in a single layer & spray with olive oil. Bake in the same oven as the dip for 5-8 minutes flipping chips halfway through. Salt if desired.

Cauliflower Mushroom Alfredo Pasta Bake

*1 batch cauliflower alfredo sauce (see recipe below) *1 # penne pasta *16 oz. sliced mushrooms *1 large onion, diced *1 cup grated Parmesan cheese *1 Tbsp. dried parsley *1 tsp. salt *1 cup mozzarella cheese
Make cauliflower alfredo sauce according to instructions in the recipe below. Sauté mushrooms & onion in 1 Tbsp. of olive oil. Cook for 10-15 minutes, or until mushrooms release liquid & cook down. Cook penne to al dente. Mix cooked penne, parmesan cheese, mushrooms, onions, parsley, & cauliflower alfredo sauce together in a large 13 X 9 baking dish. Salt to taste. Top with mozzarella cheese. Bake at 400 degrees for 10-15 minutes, or until cheese is bubbly & begins to brown.

Cauliflower Alfredo Sauce for the recipe above

*1 head cauliflower, cut into florets *10 cloves garlic, left whole *3 cups milk *1 1/2 tsp. salt *1 tsp. pepper *3 Tbsp. cornstarch *1 1/2 cup parmesan
Steam cauliflower florets & whole garlic cloves together until fork tender. Once soft, add cauliflower & garlic to a high speed blender. Add milk & puree until smooth. Transfer sauce to a large skillet or pot. Heat to medium high & add cornstarch. Whisk until thickened; about 5 minutes. Stir in parmesan, salt & pepper.

Melon Mango Smoothie

*2 cups torn kale *2 cups coconut water *1 1/2 cups diced mango *1 1/2 cups diced watermelon
Blend spinach and coconut water until smooth. Add remaining ingredients, and blend until smooth. Enjoy!

Parmesan Garlic Kale Chips

*1 bunch kale *1 tsp. olive oil *2 cloves garlic, minced *salt *1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
Preheat oven to 375. Rinse kale in a salad spinner. Remove dark ribs & chop kale roughly. Put leaves in a big bowl, toss with olive oil, garlic & salt. Spread leaves on a one large rimmed baking sheet. Kale does not need to be in a single layer as it will shrink in volume as it cooks. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring once or twice while it's cooking & until leaves are tender, crisp on edges & slightly browned. Optional if dairy-free: Sprinkle with sesame seeds before serving.

Note: for the parmesan, you can add it before or after baking. If you add it before baking, toss the kale with the olive oil, garlic, salt & parmesan together – then bake (the parmesan will get slightly browned and crispy with the chip). If adding it after baking, add it right after you pull the kale chips out of the oven so the cheese will melt a bit on the chips (but the cheese will stay creamy & moist).

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