

Big P. presents

Recipes from the **Italian** **Winter Garden**

Cruciferous Vegetables – Part 1

Historical notes, recipes (including vegan), wine pairings,
preserves, and growing tips



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Introduction

Cruciferous vegetables, also known as Brassicaceae, represent one of the most important botanical families from a nutritional and dietary perspective. Widely consumed vegetables such as head cabbage, Savoy cabbage, black kale, cauliflower, broccoli, turnips, and radishes belong to this group. Cruciferous vegetables originate from the temperate regions of Europe and Asia, and their cultivation has very ancient roots. The Greeks and Romans were already familiar with their beneficial properties and used them both in cooking and as natural remedies.

From a nutritional standpoint, cruciferous vegetables are renowned for their high content of vitamins, especially C, K, and several B vitamins, as well as minerals such as calcium, iron, potassium, and magnesium, and dietary fiber that supports intestinal health. One of the most interesting aspects is the presence of sulfur-containing compounds, particularly glucosinolates, which give these vegetables their characteristic slightly pungent aroma. Although responsible for the strong smell during cooking, these substances are associated with antioxidant and anticancer properties and are currently the subject of numerous scientific studies.

Beyond their nutritional profile, cruciferous vegetables stand out for their versatility in the kitchen. They can be eaten raw, steamed, baked, sautéed, or transformed into soups, casseroles, preserves, and even innovative desserts. Their flavor ranges from the delicate taste of cauliflower to the bold character of black kale, passing through the slightly bitter note of Savoy cabbage.

From an agronomic point of view, these plants are cold-resistant and are therefore often grown during autumn and winter, providing a valuable supply of fresh vegetables even in the coldest months. They also adapt well both to open-field cultivation and to small home gardens.

In summary, cruciferous vegetables are not only tasty and versatile foods but also true allies for health, combining history, tradition, and modern nutrition.

HEAD CABBAGE

Head cabbage (*Brassica oleracea* var. *capitata*) is one of the most widespread vegetables in the cruciferous family.

It is recognizable by its compact shape, with smooth, tightly packed leaves forming a “head.” There are green, white, and red varieties, each with slightly different flavors and culinary uses. It is highly valued for its long storage life and versatility, from raw consumption in salads and sauerkraut to soups, stews, and baked dishes.

From a nutritional standpoint, it is a true health ally: low in calories, rich in vitamin C, fiber, and beneficial compounds that support digestion and strengthen the immune system.

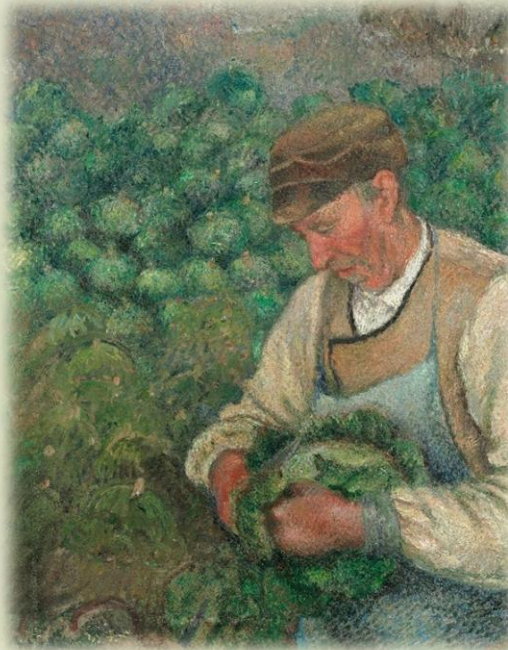
Head cabbage has accompanied human history for centuries.

Probably originating in the Mediterranean area and already known to the ancient Greeks and Romans, it was considered a food with almost miraculous properties. Pliny the Elder described it as a plant capable of curing many ailments.

In the Middle Ages, thanks to its ability to keep for long periods during cold months, it became a fundamental resource in European peasant diets, especially in northern regions, where it still plays a starring role in traditional dishes such as sauerkraut in Germany and Austria or soups in Eastern Europe.

In Italy, head cabbage spread mainly in northern and central-eastern regional cuisines, finding its place in soups, fillings, and salads.

Over time, beyond being everyday food, it has remained a symbol of simplicity and wholesomeness: a humble vegetable rich in history and surprises.



The Gardener – Old Peasant with Cabbage — Camille Pissarro

Tips for Growing Head Cabbage in the Field

1. Climate and sowing period

- Prefers a temperate-cool climate, with optimal temperatures between 15 and 20 °C.
- It dislikes excessive heat but tolerates cold well (some varieties withstand light frost).
- Sowing varies by variety:

Spring-summer: February to March in seedbeds. / Autumn-winter: July to September for harvest in the cold months.

2. Soil

- Requires fertile, deep, well-drained soil with slightly acidic to neutral pH (6 to 7).
- Before sowing, enrich the soil with well-matured manure or compost.

3. Sowing and transplanting

- Sow in seedbeds and transplant when seedlings have 4 to 6 leaves. Recommended spacing: 40 to 50 cm between plants and 50 to 60 cm between rows.

4. Irrigation

- Likes consistent moisture but not waterlogging. Water regularly, especially during dry periods, keeping the soil fresh.

5. Care and maintenance

- Hoe frequently to keep the soil loose and free of weeds. Mulching is useful to retain moisture and reduce weed growth.

6. Pests and diseases

- Watch for flea beetles, cabbage butterflies, aphids, and slugs. To prevent them, use insect nets or natural macerates (for example nettle or garlic).
- Among diseases: risk of downy mildew, alternaria, and clubroot (which affects the roots). Crop rotation is important, avoiding crucifers in the same soil for at least 3 to 4 years.

7. Harvest

- Head cabbage is ready when the head is firm and compact to the touch.
- Harvest by cutting the stem at the base, leaving some outer leaves for protection.
- In the field it can keep for weeks, while in a cellar or refrigerator it lasts 1 to 2 months.



Tips for Growing Head Cabbage in Pots

1. Choosing the container

- Use large, deep pots (at least 30 to 35 cm deep and wide).
- For multiple plants, use large boxes or planters: each plant needs about 40 cm of space.
- Good drainage is essential: place a layer of expanded clay or gravel at the bottom.

2. Potting mix

Prepare a rich, light substrate:

50% organic universal potting soil / 30% mature compost / 20% sand or perlite to improve drainage

3. Exposure

- Head cabbage requires at least 5 to 6 hours of direct sunlight per day.
- In very hot periods, an east or southeast exposure is preferable to avoid intense afternoon sun.

4. Watering

- Pots dry out faster than garden soil, so water regularly.
- Keep the soil moist but not waterlogged. Check that the saucer does not retain water.

5. Fertilization

- Every 15 days you can apply an organic liquid fertilizer rich in nitrogen to promote leaf growth.
- Kitchen compost or diluted nettle macerate also works very well.

6. Care and protection

- On balconies or terraces it is easier to protect plants with insect nets. Watch for aphids and cabbage butterflies, whose eggs are laid on the leaves. Simply check and remove any larvae manually.

7. Harvest

- Harvest in the same way as in the traditional garden, when the head is firm and compact.
- In pots, it is advisable to choose compact or early varieties that reach smaller sizes.



APPETIZERS

Head Cabbage Rolls

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 8 large head cabbage leaves
- 200 g ground meat (beef or mixed)
- 100 g sausage (optional, for extra flavor)
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp grated Parmigiano
- 2 tbsp breadcrumbs
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Salt, pepper, nutmeg, to taste
- Tomato purée/passata, as needed

Method

1. Blanch the cabbage leaves for 2 to 3 minutes in salted water, drain, and let cool.
2. Make the filling by mixing ground meat, sausage, egg, Parmigiano, breadcrumbs, garlic, and spices.
3. Place a little filling on each leaf and roll up into neat parcels.
4. Arrange in a baking dish, cover with passata and a drizzle of olive oil.
5. Bake at 180°C (356°F) for about 25 to 30 minutes.

Recommended wine

Barbera d'Asti DOCG (young)

Fresh and lively, it cuts through the richness of the tomato sauce.



Vegan Head Cabbage, Apple and Walnut Salad

Ingredients (serves 4)

- ½ head cabbage (red is best, but white works too)
- 1 green apple
- 50 g walnut halves
- 2 tbsp pumpkin or sunflower seeds (optional)
- 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp mild mustard
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Method

1. Finely slice the cabbage into thin julienne.
2. Cut the apple into thin matchsticks (julienne style).
3. Make a dressing by whisking together oil, lemon juice, mustard, salt, and pepper until emulsified.
4. Dress the cabbage and apple, then add walnuts and seeds.

Recommended wine

Gewürztraminer Alto Adige DOC (vegan)

Aromatic and floral, with fruity notes.



Crunchy Head Cabbage Crostini

Ingredients (makes 8 crostini)

- 4 slices whole-grain or rye bread
- ½ head cabbage
- 1 carrot
- 50 g spreadable cheese (or hummus for a vegan version)
- 1 tsp sesame seeds or mixed seeds
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Extra-virgin olive oil

Method

1. Thinly slice the cabbage and carrot; dress with a drizzle of oil, salt, and pepper.
2. Lightly toast the bread and spread with the cheese or hummus.
3. Layer the cabbage and carrot on top.
4. Sprinkle with seeds and finish with a little extra olive oil.

Recommended wine

Prosecco DOC Extra Dry

Light bubbles, perfect with finger food.



Vegan Crispy Head Cabbage Chips

Ingredients

- ½ head cabbage
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt, to taste
- Paprika or turmeric (optional)

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 150°C (302°F).
2. Separate the cabbage leaves and tear or cut into large pieces.
3. Massage the leaves with oil, salt, and any spices you like.
4. Arrange on a baking tray lined with parchment paper in a single layer.
5. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes until crisp, watching carefully so they don't burn.

Recommended wine

Frappato di Sicilia DOC (vegan)

Light and fragrant red, best served slightly chilled.



FIRST COURSES

Neapolitan-Style Pasta with Head Cabbage

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 320 g short pasta (mezzi tubetti, ditalini, or broken mafaldine)
- 400 g head cabbage
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 chili pepper (optional)
- 4 cherry tomatoes (or 2 tbsp passata)
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Grated Parmigiano or Pecorino, as desired

Method

1. Slice the cabbage into thin strips.
2. In a large pot, gently sauté the garlic (and chili, if using) in the oil.
3. Add the chopped cherry tomatoes and let them flavor the oil for a couple of minutes.
4. Add the cabbage, stir well, and cover with hot water (enough to cook both cabbage and pasta).
5. When the cabbage is tender, add the pasta directly to the pot and cook until al dente, stirring often.
6. Adjust salt and pepper, then serve with a sprinkle of grated cheese.

Recommended wine

Aglianico del Taburno DOCG

Structure and freshness for a flavorful dish.



Vegan Stir-Fried Spaghetti with Head Cabbage and Ginger

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 320 g whole-wheat spaghetti or rice noodles
- 300 g head cabbage (red is best for color)
- 1 carrot
- 1 spring onion
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp freshly grated ginger
- 2 tbsp sesame oil or extra-virgin olive oil
- Toasted sesame seeds, to taste
- Fresh or dried chili (optional)

Method

1. Slice the cabbage into thin julienne, cut the carrot into matchsticks, and slice the spring onion.
2. Heat the oil in a wok or large pan with the ginger (and chili if you like).
3. Add the vegetables and stir-fry over high heat for about 5 minutes: they should stay crisp.
4. Cook the spaghetti, drain, and toss in the wok with soy sauce.
5. Serve with toasted sesame seeds.

Recommended wine

Rhein Riesling (vegan)

Mineral and citrusy, it pairs well with Asian-inspired flavors.



Risotto with Head Cabbage and Speck

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 320 g Carnaroli rice
- 200 g head cabbage (red or white)
- 80 g speck, cut into strips
- 1 shallot
- 1 glass of white wine
- 1 liter vegetable stock
- 30 g butter
- 40 g grated Parmigiano
- Extra-virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Method

1. Finely chop the shallot and sauté in a little oil.
2. Add the speck and brown it lightly.
3. Add the cabbage sliced into thin strips and let it soften.
4. Add the rice, toast it, then deglaze with white wine.
5. Cook, adding hot stock a ladleful at a time.
6. Finish by stirring in the butter and Parmigiano.

Recommended wine

Lagrein DOC

A smooth Alto Adige red, perfect with speck and cabbage.



Vegan Tagliatelle with Head Cabbage, Mushrooms and Cashew Cream

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 300 g tagliatelle (whole-wheat is fine)
- 200 g head cabbage
- 150 g button mushrooms or mixed mushrooms
- 60 g plain cashews (soaked in water for 3 to 4 hours)
- ½ garlic clove
- 2 tbsp nutritional yeast (optional)
- Extra-virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Method

1. Blend the soaked cashews with a little water until smooth and creamy.
2. In a pan, sauté the garlic in a little oil; add sliced mushrooms and the cabbage cut into thin strips. Cook until tender.
3. Cook the tagliatelle and toss them in the pan with the vegetables.
4. Add the cashew cream, mix well, and adjust salt and pepper.
5. If you like, add nutritional yeast for a Parmigiano-like note.

Recommended wine

Young Pinot Noir (vegan)

Elegant and delicate, it complements the creaminess without overpowering it.



MAIN COURSES

Meatloaf with Head Cabbage

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 400 g mixed ground meat
- 200 g braised head cabbage (well drained and squeezed)
- 1 egg
- 50 g grated Parmigiano
- 2 tbsp breadcrumbs
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Salt, pepper, nutmeg
- Extra-virgin olive oil

Method

1. Braise the cabbage in a pan with a little oil and garlic, then let it cool.
2. In a bowl, mix the meat, cabbage, egg, Parmigiano, and breadcrumbs.
3. Shape into a loaf, brush with a drizzle of oil, and place in a baking dish.
4. Bake at 180°C (356°F) for about 40 minutes.

Recommended wine

Chianti Classico DOCG

A versatile Tuscan red with balanced tannins.



Vegan Head Cabbage and Chickpea Balls

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 250 g cooked chickpeas
- 150 g head cabbage
- 2 tbsp chickpea flour
- 1 tsp curry or paprika
- Salt, pepper
- Extra-virgin olive oil

Method

1. Lightly braise the cabbage and chop it finely.
2. Blend chickpeas, cabbage, chickpea flour, and spices until you get a smooth mixture.
3. Shape into small balls, place on a baking tray lined with parchment paper, and drizzle with a little oil.
4. Bake at 190°C (374°F) for 20 to 25 minutes.

Recommended wine

Vermentino di Sardegna DOC (vegan)

Fresh and citrusy, ideal with legumes.



Veal Rolls with Head Cabbage

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 8 thin veal slices
- 200 g head cabbage
- 1 shallot
- ½ glass white wine
- Extra-virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Method

1. Cut the cabbage into thin strips and braise it with oil and shallot.
2. Place a little cabbage on each veal slice, roll up, and secure with a toothpick.
3. Brown the rolls in a pan, deglaze with white wine, then cook covered until done.

Recommended wine

Dolcetto d'Alba DOC

A light, fruity red that won't overpower delicate veal.



Vegan Braised Head Cabbage with Smoked Tofu

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 300 g head cabbage
- 200 g smoked tofu
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp freshly grated ginger
- Sesame oil or extra-virgin olive oil
- Toasted sesame seeds

Method

1. Slice the cabbage into strips and dice the tofu.
2. Heat the oil in a pan with the ginger, then add cabbage and tofu.
3. Deglaze with soy sauce and vinegar; cook over medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes.
4. Serve topped with toasted sesame seeds.

Recommended wine

Oaked Chardonnay (vegan)

Soft, with subtle smoky notes that echo the tofu.



ONE-DISH MEALS

Beef Goulash with Head Cabbage and Potatoes

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 600 g beef stew meat, cubed
- 300 g green head cabbage
- 300 g potatoes
- 1 large onion
- 1 tbsp sweet paprika
- ½ tsp ground cumin (optional)
- 400 ml beef broth
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- Extra-virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Method

1. Brown the beef cubes in a little oil, remove, and set aside.
2. In the same pot, sauté the onion, then add paprika and cumin.
3. Return the meat to the pot, add tomato paste, and pour in the broth. Cover and cook for about 1 hour.
4. Add diced potatoes and shredded cabbage; cook for another 30 minutes.

Recommended wine

Montepulciano d'Abruzzo DOCG

Full-bodied and spicy, perfect with stews.



Vegan Buddha Bowl with Purple Head Cabbage, Quinoa and Falafel

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 250 g quinoa
- 200 g purple head cabbage
- 12 falafel (store-bought or homemade)
- 1 carrot
- 1 avocado
- 2 tbsp pumpkin or sunflower seeds
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- Juice of ½ lemon
- Tahini sauce or hummus, to dress

Method

1. Cook the quinoa and let it cool.
2. Slice the purple cabbage into thin julienne and dress with oil and lemon juice.
3. Prepare the falafel (or heat the ready-made ones).
4. Assemble the bowl: quinoa as the base, then cabbage, julienned carrot, sliced avocado, falafel, and seeds.
5. Finish with tahini sauce or hummus.

Recommended wine

Etna Bianco DOC (vegan)

Mineral and savory, great with the mix of vegetables and legumes.



DESSERTS

Sweet Head Cabbage Cream with Vanilla and Honey

Ingredients (makes 4 servings)

- 200 g red head cabbage (or mild green cabbage)
- 200 ml heavy cream (or plant-based cream)
- 2 tbsp honey (or maple syrup)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tsp cornstarch (optional, to thicken)

Method

1. Boil the cabbage in water until soft.
2. Drain and blend with honey and sugar.
3. Warm the cream with vanilla, add the cabbage mixture, and stir well.
4. For a thicker texture, add cornstarch dissolved in a tablespoon of water and cook until it thickens.
5. Pour into small cups and chill in the fridge for 2 to 3 hours.

Recommended wine

Moscato d'Asti DOCG

Aromatic, sweet, with very light bubbles.



Vegan Red Head Cabbage and Cocoa Muffins

Ingredients (makes 12 muffins)

- 200 g red head cabbage
- 200 g all-purpose flour (or half whole-wheat)
- 50 g unsweetened cocoa powder
- 120 g brown sugar
- 1 packet baking powder
- 200 ml plant milk (soy or oat)
- 60 ml seed oil
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- A pinch of salt

Method

1. Slice the red cabbage into strips and boil in a little water until soft (5 to 6 minutes).
2. Drain and blend with the plant milk until smooth and brightly colored.
3. In a bowl, mix flour, cocoa, sugar, baking powder, and salt.
4. Add the cabbage cream and oil, mixing just until combined (do not overmix).
5. Pour into muffin cups.
6. Bake at 180°C (356°F) for 20 to 25 minutes.

Recommended wine

Recioto della Valpolicella DOCG (vegan)

Sweet red wine, fruity and enveloping.



Savory-Sweet Head Cabbage Cheesecake

Ingredients (20 cm pan)

Base

- 200 g whole-grain savory biscuits (crackers or lightly sweet biscuits)
- 80 g melted butter (or margarine for vegan)

Cream

- 300 g spreadable cheese (or plant-based alternative)
- 150 g Greek yogurt (or soy yogurt)
- 3 tbsp honey (or agave syrup)
- 1 tsp lemon juice

Head cabbage jelly layer

- 200 g red head cabbage
- 50 g sugar
- 200 ml water
- 2 g agar-agar

Method

1. Blitz the biscuits and mix with melted butter. Press into the base of the pan and compact well. Chill in the fridge.
2. Make the cream by mixing cheese, yogurt, honey, and lemon. Pour over the base and chill.
3. Jelly: boil the red cabbage in water with sugar for 10 minutes. Strain the liquid (it will be an intense purple).
4. Add the agar-agar and boil again for 2 minutes. Let it cool slightly, then pour over the cheesecake.
5. Chill for at least 4 hours to set.

Recommended wine

Passito di Pantelleria DOC

Elegant sweetness that pairs with the honeyed notes and the savory contrast.



Savory-Sweet Head Cabbage Cheesecake (Coconut Custard Style)

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 200 g red head cabbage
- 400 ml coconut milk
- 60 g brown sugar
- 2 tbsp cornstarch
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Grated lemon zest
- Chopped pistachios, to decorate

Method

1. Blanch the red cabbage for 5 minutes, drain, then blend very finely with half of the coconut milk.
2. In a saucepan, combine sugar, cornstarch, and lemon zest. Slowly whisk in the cabbage mixture and remaining coconut milk.
3. Bring to a simmer, stirring constantly, until the cream thickens.
4. Pour into individual molds and let cool at room temperature.
5. Chill for at least 2 hours.
6. Unmold and serve topped with chopped pistachios.

Recommended wine

Passito di Pantelleria DOC (vegan)

Aromatic, with apricot, citrus, and honey notes, bringing freshness and intensity that balance the coconut sweetness and the distinct character of red cabbage.



PRESERVES

White Head Cabbage Sauerkraut (Traditional Fermentation)

Ingredients

- 1 kg white head cabbage
- 20 g whole sea salt
- Juniper berries or caraway seeds (optional)

Method

1. Slice the cabbage very thinly and mix it with the salt.
2. Massage well until it releases its liquid.
3. Pack into a glass jar, pressing firmly to eliminate air. Weigh it down so the liquid always covers the cabbage.
4. Cover with a cloth and let ferment at room temperature for 1 to 3 weeks (taste occasionally).
5. Store in the refrigerator or in a cool cellar.



Pickled Giardiniera with Red Cabbage

Ingredients

- 500 g red head cabbage
- 2 carrots
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 onion
- 1 liter white wine vinegar
- 200 ml water
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp salt
- Spices to taste (bay leaf, peppercorns, cloves)

Method

1. Cut all vegetables into thin strips or small pieces.
2. Bring vinegar, water, sugar, salt, and spices to a boil.
3. Blanch the vegetables for 3 to 4 minutes, then drain.
4. Fill sterilized jars with the vegetables and cover with the hot liquid.
5. Seal tightly and let rest at least 15 days before eating.



Spicy Green Head Cabbage in Oil

Ingredients

- 1 kg green head cabbage
- 500 ml white wine vinegar
- 2 garlic cloves
- Dried chili peppers, to taste
- Oregano or thyme
- Extra-virgin olive oil, as needed
- Coarse salt, as needed

Method

1. Cut the cabbage into strips and leave it under coarse salt for 12 hours.
2. Rinse and blanch for 3 to 4 minutes in boiling vinegar.
3. Dry thoroughly with a clean cloth.
4. Pack into jars, alternating cabbage, garlic, chili, and herbs.
5. Cover completely with extra-virgin olive oil.
6. Sterilize the jars in boiling water for 20 minutes.



Comparative Table of Head Cabbage Preserves

Preserve	Cabbage variety	Preservation method	Storage time	Suggested pairings	Special notes
Sauerkraut	White head cabbage	Natural lactic fermentation in brine	Up to 6 months in the fridge or cool cellar	Sausages, hot dogs, pork dishes, winter salads	Very rich in probiotics; excellent also as a detox side dish
Pickled giardiniera with red cabbage	Red head cabbage	Blanching and immersion in vinegar	6 to 8 months in a dark pantry	Mixed appetizers, aged cheeses, gourmet sandwiches	Bright color, well-balanced sweet-and-sour flavor
Spicy green head cabbage in oil	Green head cabbage	Blanching in vinegar and preservation in oil	6 to 12 months if properly sterilized	Bruschetta, cured meats, pecorino cheeses, aperitifs	Bold and savory, excellent with full-bodied red wine

SAVOY CABBAGE

Savoy cabbage (*Brassica oleracea* var. *sabauda*) is a vegetable belonging to the large Cruciferous (Brassicaceae) family, the same as cauliflower, broccoli, head cabbage, and black kale.

It is distinguished by its large, crinkled, blistered leaves, deep green in color with lighter shades toward the center. It forms a looser head than white cabbage and is highly resistant to cold.

From a nutritional standpoint, it is a true “green powerhouse”:

- rich in vitamins (C, K, and B group)
- contains important minerals (iron, potassium, calcium, magnesium)
- an excellent source of fiber and antioxidants (especially glucosinolates, protective compounds for the body)

In the kitchen it is extremely versatile: ideal for soups, stews, stuffings, rolls, braises, risottos, and also lighter preparations such as raw salads (very finely sliced). Its flavor is sweeter and more delicate than head cabbage, yet also more aromatic.

Savoy cabbage (*Brassica oleracea* var. *sabauda*) has very ancient origins linked to the Mediterranean and Asia Minor. The Greeks and Romans already knew it and considered it a plant with medicinal properties. Pliny the Elder, for example, mentioned it in his writings as a remedy for various ailments.

The name *sabauda* refers to the historic region of Savoy. In this area, between France, Switzerland, and Piedmont, Savoy cabbage had been cultivated and consumed for centuries as a quintessential winter food. Even today it is a key ingredient in traditional dishes from Piedmont, Lombardy, and the Aosta Valley.

During the Middle Ages, Savoy cabbage was valued both in peasant kitchens, thanks to its hardiness and frost resistance, and in monastery kitchens, where it was grown in gardens alongside other medicinal and food plants.

Symbolically, Savoy cabbage, like other crucifers, has long been associated with health and protection. Eating it in winter was believed to help ward off seasonal illnesses and better endure the cold months.

Today it is widespread throughout Europe, especially in colder climates, and has entered many culinary traditions: from Polish *gotȧbki* (stuffed cabbage rolls) to German *Kohlrouladen*, and to rustic Italian soups such as Lombardy's *cassoeula*.



James Peale, Still Life: Balsam Apple and Vegetables

Growing Savoy Cabbage in Open Ground

Savoy cabbage is a hardy and very resilient plant, ideal for autumn and winter gardens.

1. Soil

- Prefers well-drained, fertile soils rich in organic matter.
- Slightly clayey, cool soils are ideal.

2. Sowing and Transplanting

- Sow in seedbeds from April to June, with transplanting after about 40 to 50 days.
- Autumn-winter varieties are harvested from October to February.
- Spacing: 40 to 50 cm between plants and 50 to 60 cm between rows.

3. Exposure

- Prefers full sun but tolerates partial shade.
- Highly cold-resistant, even to frost, which actually improves flavor by making it sweeter.

4. Crop Care

- Water regularly without excess.
- Remove weeds.
- Mulching is recommended to retain moisture and limit weeds.
- Rotation: avoid planting after other crucifers (broccoli, cauliflower, cabbages).

5. Harvest

- Harvest when the head is firm and compact.
- It can remain in the field during frost without damage; in fact, flavor improves.



Growing Savoy Cabbage in Pots (Balcony or Terrace)

This is possible, although it requires some space and suitable containers.

1. Pot

- Minimum 40 cm in diameter and depth; rectangular containers are better for multiple plants.

2. Growing Medium

- Well-drained universal potting soil enriched with compost or well-rotted manure.
- Place expanded clay or gravel at the bottom for drainage.

3. Sowing/Transplanting

- It is best to purchase young plants and transplant them.
- In pots, grow 1 or 2 plants per large container.

4. Care

- Place in a sunny position.
- Water regularly, avoiding waterlogging.
- Fertilize every 15 to 20 days with a nitrogen-rich organic fertilizer.

5. Harvest

- Pot-grown Savoy cabbages remain smaller but still flavorful.
- Harvest by cutting the compact head at the base.



APPETIZERS

Crostini with Braised Savoy Cabbage and Sausage

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 8 slices rustic country bread
- 200 g fresh sausage
- 250 g Savoy cabbage
- 1 small onion
- Extra-virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Method

1. Cut the Savoy cabbage into thin strips.
2. In a pan, soften the chopped onion with a drizzle of oil.
3. Add the crumbled sausage and cook until browned.
4. Add the cabbage and braise over medium heat with a splash of water for 10 minutes.
5. Toast the bread slices in the oven or on a grill.
6. Top the crostini with the cabbage and sausage mixture, a drizzle of oil, and black pepper.

Recommended wine

Lambrusco Grasparossa di Castelvetro DOC

Sparkling, dry, and fruity, it cuts through the richness of the sausage and complements the cabbage.



Vegan Savoy Cabbage and Hummus Finger Rolls

Ingredients (for 8 rolls)

- 8 Savoy cabbage leaves
- 150 g chickpea hummus
- 1 carrot
- 1 small cucumber
- Toasted sesame seeds
- Extra-virgin olive oil, as needed

Method

1. Blanch the cabbage leaves for 1 minute and cool them in cold water.
2. Cut the carrot and cucumber into thin julienne strips.
3. Spread a spoonful of hummus on each leaf, add the raw vegetables and some sesame seeds.
4. Roll up to form small finger-food rolls.
5. Arrange on a plate and finish with a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil.

Recommended wine

Vermentino di Sardegna DOC (vegan)

Fresh and citrusy, perfect with hummus and the crisp texture of the cabbage.



Savoy Cabbage and Cheese Mini Frittatas

Ingredients (serves 4, about 8 mini frittatas)

- 4 eggs
- 200 g Savoy cabbage
- 80 g cheese (Fontina, scamorza, or similar)
- 1 tbsp grated Parmesan
- Salt, pepper, oil as needed

Method

1. Blanch the cabbage cut into strips for 5 minutes and drain well.
2. In a bowl, beat the eggs with Parmesan, salt, and pepper.
3. Add the cabbage and diced cheese.
4. Pour the mixture into lightly oiled muffin molds.
5. Bake at 180°C (350°F) for 20 minutes, until golden.

Recommended wine

Soave Classico DOC

A delicate, floral white from Veneto that balances the richness of the cheese and the aroma of the cabbage.



Vegan Spiced Baked Savoy Cabbage Chips

Ingredients

- 200 g Savoy cabbage leaves
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- Sweet paprika or turmeric, to taste
- Fine salt

Method

1. Wash and dry the cabbage leaves well, remove the central rib, and cut into large pieces.
2. In a bowl, season with oil, salt, and spices.
3. Arrange on a baking tray lined with parchment paper without overlapping.
4. Bake at 140 to 150°C (285 to 300°F) for 15 to 20 minutes, until crispy.
5. Serve immediately as a snack or light appetizer.

Recommended wine

Prosecco DOC Brut (vegan)

Dry, lively bubbles that pair nicely with the crunch and spices.



FIRST COURSES

Baked Rice and Savoy Cabbage

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 280 g Carnaroli rice
- 300 g Savoy cabbage
- 1 small onion
- 40 g butter
- 50 g grated Parmesan
- 100 g smoked scamorza or Fontina
- Vegetable broth as needed
- Salt, pepper, nutmeg

Method

1. Cut the cabbage into thin strips and blanch for 5 minutes in salted water. Drain and set aside.
2. In a saucepan, sauté the onion with half the butter, add the rice and toast it.
3. Add the cabbage and cook the rice with vegetable broth as you would a risotto, keeping it al dente.
4. Stir in the remaining butter, Parmesan, pepper, and nutmeg.
5. Transfer half the rice to a baking dish, add the diced scamorza, then cover with the remaining rice.
6. Sprinkle with Parmesan and bake at 200°C (390°F) for 10 to 15 minutes until gratinated.

Recommended wine

Lugana DOC

A structured, smooth white that stands up to the gratin and creaminess of the dish.



Vegan Creamy Risotto with Savoy Cabbage and Turmeric

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 280 g Carnaroli rice
- 250 g Savoy cabbage
- 1 onion
- ½ tsp ground turmeric
- Vegetable broth as needed
- 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper

Method

1. Cut the cabbage into thin strips.
2. Sauté the chopped onion in a little oil, add the rice and toast it.
3. Add the cabbage and begin cooking, adding broth gradually.
4. Halfway through cooking, add the turmeric.
5. Finish cooking the risotto, adjust salt and pepper, and finish with a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil.

Recommended wine

Falaghina del Sannio DOC (vegan friendly)

Fresh and mineral with fruity notes that pair well with turmeric.



White Lasagnetta with Savoy Cabbage and Sausage

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 250 g fresh lasagna sheets
- 300 g Savoy cabbage
- 200 g sausage
- 400 ml béchamel sauce
- 100 g Parmesan
- Extra-virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Method

1. Blanch the cabbage cut into strips and drain.
2. Brown the crumbled sausage in a pan without added fat.
3. Add the cabbage and let it flavor.
4. In a baking dish, layer pasta, béchamel, cabbage with sausage, and Parmesan.
5. Finish with plenty of béchamel and Parmesan.
6. Bake at 180°C (350°F) for 30 minutes, gratinating at the end.

Recommended wine

Chianti Classico DOCG

A Tuscan red with good acidity and tannins, perfect for rich dishes with meat and cheese.



Vegan Potato Gnocchi with Savoy Cabbage and Walnut Pesto

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 600 g potato gnocchi
- 200 g Savoy cabbage
- 60 g walnut kernels
- 1 garlic clove
- 50 ml extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper

Method

1. Blanch the cabbage in salted water, drain, and blend with walnuts, garlic, and oil until creamy.
2. Adjust salt and pepper.
3. Cook the gnocchi in salted water and drain when they float.
4. Toss with the cabbage and walnut pesto, adding a little cooking water if needed.

Recommended wine

Greco di Tufo DOCG (vegan certified)

A structured white with fruity and almond notes that pair beautifully with the walnuts and creamy pesto.



MAIN COURSES

Savoy Cabbage and Beef Stew with Beer

Ingredients

- 800 g beef stew meat, cubed (shoulder or chuck)
- 400 g Savoy cabbage, sliced
- 1 large onion, 1 garlic clove
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 330 ml dark beer (stout or dunkel)
- All-purpose flour as needed (optional, for dredging)
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, 1 bay leaf, salt, pepper

Method (about 2 hours)

1. Pat the meat dry, lightly flour if desired, and brown it in a casserole with oil until well browned; set aside.
2. In the same pot, sauté the chopped onion and garlic for 2 to 3 minutes; add the tomato paste and toast for 30 seconds.
3. Return the meat, add the bay leaf, deglaze with the beer, cover, and cook gently for 60 to 75 minutes.
4. Add the cabbage, adjust salt and pepper, and continue cooking for 25 to 30 minutes until the meat is tender and the cabbage silky.
5. Turn off the heat and let rest 10 minutes so the sauce settles and becomes glossy.

Recommended wine

Barbera d'Alba DOC

A fresh, acidic Piedmont red with good body, perfect for rich braised dishes.



Vegan Savoy Cabbage and Potato Bake

Ingredients

- 700 g yellow-fleshed potatoes, boiled and sliced
- 400 g Savoy cabbage, sliced
- 1 small onion
- 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for brushing
- 3 tbsp breadcrumbs plus 1 tbsp nutritional yeast (optional)
- Rosemary or thyme, salt, pepper

Method (45 to 50 minutes)

1. **Cabbage:** In a pan, cook oil and onion for 2 minutes; add cabbage, salt, herbs, and 3 to 4 tbsp water. Braise 8 to 10 minutes until soft and dry.
2. **Layering:** Oil a baking dish and sprinkle with breadcrumbs. Layer potatoes → cabbage → breadcrumb and nutritional yeast mix → drizzle of oil. Repeat, finishing with potatoes and a sprinkle.
3. **Baking:** Bake at 190°C (375°F) for 25 to 30 minutes, finishing under the grill for the last 3 to 4 minutes to brown.
4. **Rest:** Let stand 10 minutes before slicing so it sets better.

Recommended wine

Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi DOC (vegan)

A dry, mineral white that pairs well with the delicacy of the potatoes and the herbal notes of the cabbage.



Rustic Savoy Cabbage and Pancetta Frittata

Ingredients

- 6 large eggs
- 250 g Savoy cabbage, thinly sliced
- 120 g pancetta, diced
- 40 g grated Parmesan
- 1 spring onion
- Extra-virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Method (30 to 35 minutes)

1. In a pan: drizzle oil, cook sliced spring onion 1 to 2 minutes; add pancetta and brown.
2. Add cabbage with 2 tbsp water, cover and braise 6 to 8 minutes; let dry.
3. Beat the eggs with Parmesan, light salt, and pepper; fold in the pan mixture.
4. Pour into a hot nonstick pan with a little oil; cook over medium-low heat 6 to 7 minutes. Flip (using a lid or plate) and cook another 3 to 4 minutes.
5. Rest 5 minutes and serve in wedges.

Recommended wine

Franciacorta Satèn DOCG

Elegant bubbles that cut through the pancetta and refresh the egg.



Vegan Savoy Cabbage Stuffed with Quinoa and Mushrooms

Ingredients

- 1 small whole Savoy cabbage (about 800 to 900 g)
- 180 g quinoa, well rinsed
- 300 g mushrooms (button or mixed), diced
- 1 shallot, 1 garlic clove
- 40 g chopped walnuts (optional)
- 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, salt, pepper, nutmeg
- 300 ml hot vegetable broth

Method (60 to 70 minutes)

1. Remove the core from the cabbage; blanch the whole head for 5 minutes, drain, and gently open 8 to 10 outer leaves.
2. Cook the quinoa in twice its volume of salted water (or broth) for 12 to 14 minutes; fluff and drain.
3. Sauté shallot and garlic in oil, add mushrooms, salt, and pepper; cook until dry. Mix with quinoa, walnuts, nutmeg, and adjust seasoning.
4. Line a bowl with overlapping cabbage leaves; fill with the mixture and close with more leaves.
5. Turn out onto a baking tray, drizzle with oil and ½ cup broth; bake at 180°C (350°F) for 25 to 30 minutes (covered for the first 15 minutes).
6. Rest 10 minutes, then slice thickly.

Recommended wine

Pinot Nero vinified as rosé (vegan)

Delicate, fruity, and light, it complements mushrooms and grains without overpowering.



ONE-POT / ONE-DISH MEALS

Light Cassoeula with Savoy Cabbage and Pork

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 800 g pork ribs
- 2 fresh sausages
- 1 large Savoy cabbage (about 800 g)
- 1 onion, 1 carrot, 1 celery stalk
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 glass dry white wine
- 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- Vegetable broth as needed
- Salt, pepper

Method

1. Wash and cut the cabbage into strips; blanch for 5 minutes in salted water and drain.
2. In a large casserole, sauté chopped onion, carrot, and celery in oil.
3. Add ribs and sausages in pieces, brown well, then deglaze with white wine.
4. Stir in the tomato paste.
5. Add the cabbage, cover with a ladle of broth, lower the heat, and cook covered for 1 hour, stirring occasionally.
6. Adjust salt and pepper and serve piping hot with rustic bread or polenta.

Recommended wine

Valtellina Superiore DOCG (Nebbiolo from Valtellina)

Tannic and alpine in character, the traditional pairing for Lombard dishes.



Vegan Autumn Buddha Bowl with Savoy Cabbage, Farro, and Crispy Chickpeas

Ingredients (2 large bowls)

- 150 g pearled farro
- 200 g cooked chickpeas (drained if canned)
- 200 g Savoy cabbage, sliced
- 200 g pumpkin, diced
- 2 tbsp pumpkin seeds
- Paprika, turmeric, salt, pepper
- Extra-virgin olive oil as needed
- Lemon juice

Method

1. Cook the farro in salted water for about 25 minutes; drain and set aside.
2. Season the pumpkin cubes with oil, salt, and pepper and roast at 200°C (390°F) for 20 minutes.
3. In a pan, sauté the chickpeas with a drizzle of oil, paprika, and turmeric until crispy.
4. Quickly sauté the cabbage with a drizzle of oil and salt (3 to 4 minutes; it should remain crisp).
5. Toast the pumpkin seeds in a dry pan.
6. Assemble the bowl: farro base → sautéed cabbage → roasted pumpkin → crispy chickpeas → pumpkin seeds.
7. Finish with a drizzle of olive oil and a few drops of lemon juice.

Recommended wine

Grillo di Sicilia DOC (vegan-friendly)

Fresh and aromatic, it pairs beautifully with grains and spiced legumes.



DESSERTS

Soft Savoy Cabbage and Apple Cake

Ingredients (24 cm pan)

- 250 g all-purpose flour
- 2 large apples
- 120 g Savoy cabbage (only the tender leaves, blanched and very finely chopped)
- 150 g sugar
- 2 eggs
- 80 ml vegetable oil
- 80 ml milk
- 1 packet baking powder
- Cinnamon to taste

Method

1. Blanch the cabbage for 5 minutes, cool, and chop very finely.
2. Beat the eggs with the sugar, then add oil and milk.
3. Fold in the sifted flour and baking powder.
4. Add the cabbage and diced apples, flavor with cinnamon.
5. Pour into a buttered and floured cake pan and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 35 to 40 minutes.

Recommended wine

Moscato d'Asti DOCG

Sweet, lightly sparkling, and aromatic, it enhances the apples and softens the cabbage hidden in the batter.



Vegan Savoy Cabbage and Dark Chocolate Brownies

Ingredients

- 200 g dark chocolate
- 150 g brown sugar
- 100 g all-purpose flour
- 100 g blanched and blended Savoy cabbage
- 80 ml vegetable oil
- 200 ml plant-based milk
- 1 packet baking powder

Method

1. Melt the chocolate with the oil.
2. Mix sugar, flour, and baking powder.
3. Add the melted chocolate, plant milk, and cabbage purée.
4. Pour into a square pan lined with parchment paper.
5. Bake at 180°C (350°F) for 25 to 30 minutes.

Recommended wine

Recioto della Valpolicella DCG (vegan)

A rich, velvety dessert red, perfect with chocolate.



Tart with Savoy Cabbage and Ricotta Cream

Ingredients

- 1 roll shortcrust pastry (or homemade)
- 250 g ricotta
- 80 g honey
- 100 g blanched and blended Savoy cabbage
- 1 egg
- Lemon zest

Method

1. Line a baking pan with the shortcrust pastry.
2. In a bowl, mix ricotta, honey, egg, cabbage purée, and lemon zest.
3. Pour the filling onto the base and level it.
4. Bake at 180°C (350°F) for about 35 minutes.
5. Cool and dust with powdered sugar.

Recommended wine

Vin Santo del Chianti DOC

Sweet, with notes of honey and dried fruit that enhance the ricotta and honey.



Vegan Cocoa, Savoy Cabbage, and Hazelnut Muffins

Ingredients (12 muffins)

- 200 g whole wheat flour
- 40 g unsweetened cocoa powder
- 100 g brown sugar
- 1 packet baking powder
- 200 ml plant-based milk
- 80 ml vegetable oil
- 100 g blanched and chopped Savoy cabbage
- 50 g toasted chopped hazelnuts

Method

1. Mix flour, cocoa, sugar, and baking powder.
2. Add plant milk and oil.
3. Fold in the cabbage and hazelnuts.
4. Pour into muffin molds and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 20 to 22 minutes.

Recommended wine

Brachetto d'Acqui DOCG (vegan)

Sweet, sparkling, and aromatic, it pairs with cocoa and nuts without weighing the palate down.



PRESERVES

Korean-Style Fermented Savoy Cabbage (Simplified Kimchi)

Ingredients

- 1 medium Savoy cabbage
- 3 tbsp coarse salt
- 2 carrots, julienned
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tbsp chili flakes
- 1 cm fresh ginger root, grated

Method

1. Cut the cabbage into large pieces, sprinkle with salt, and let sit 2 to 3 hours to release water.
2. Rinse and squeeze well.
3. Prepare a paste with garlic, ginger, and chili flakes.
4. Mix the cabbage with the carrots and spicy paste.
5. Pack into glass jars, pressing well, and ferment at room temperature for 3 to 5 days. Then refrigerate.



Savoy Cabbage in Oil with Chili and Garlic

Ingredients

- 1 kg Savoy cabbage
- 500 ml white vinegar
- 2 to 3 dried chilies
- 3 garlic cloves
- Extra-virgin olive oil as needed
- Coarse salt

Method

1. Slice the cabbage and salt it for 12 hours.
2. Blanch in vinegar for 3 minutes, drain, and dry thoroughly.
3. Pack into jars alternating with garlic and chili.
4. Cover completely with oil, seal, and sterilize for 20 minutes in boiling water.



Sweet-and-Sour Savoy Cabbage (Pickled)

Ingredients

- 800 g Savoy cabbage, sliced
- 500 ml white wine vinegar
- 150 g sugar
- 2 bay leaves
- Peppercorns

Method

1. Bring vinegar, sugar, bay leaves, and pepper to a boil.
2. Blanch the cabbage in the liquid for 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Jar while hot and cover with the same liquid.
4. Seal tightly and let rest at least 15 days before using.
- 5.



Comparative Table of Savoy Cabbage Preserves

Preserve	Cabbage Variety	Preservation Method	Shelf Life	Recommended Pairings	Special Notes
Korean-style fermented Savoy cabbage (simplified kimchi)	Green Savoy cabbage	Natural fermentation with salt, spices, and vegetables	3 to 4 weeks in the refrigerator	Excellent with white rice, noodles, ramen, grilled meats	Probiotic fermented food, spicy and pungent flavor
Savoy cabbage in oil with chili and garlic	Green Savoy cabbage	Blanching, vinegar treatment, drying, preserved in oil	6 to 8 months in the pantry (sterilized jars)	Perfect with cured meats, aged cheeses, toasted bread	Careful drying required to prevent mold
Sweet and sour Savoy cabbage (sweet pickled)	Green or red Savoy cabbage	Blanching in vinegar and sugar solution	5 to 6 months in the pantry	Ideal as an appetizer, with roasted or boiled meats	Bright color, well-balanced sweet and savory flavor

BLACK KALE

Black kale (*Brassica oleracea* var. *acephala*) belongs to the Brassicaceae family, the same as cabbage, Savoy cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower.

Its leaves are long, narrow, and heavily crinkled, with a very dark green color that is almost black and a leathery texture.

Typical of Tuscany, it is also known as Tuscan kale or lacinato kale. Cold weather actually makes it more tender and sweeter. In Italy it is often said that “black kale needs the frost.” It is extremely rich in antioxidants (especially carotenoids and vitamin C), iron, calcium, and fiber. It is considered a true Mediterranean superfood.

In recent years it has been one of the vegetables rediscovered internationally. In English it is known as Tuscan kale or black kale and is highly popular in health-focused cuisine (kale chips, green smoothies).

Its origins are ancient: black kale has been cultivated in Tuscany since the Middle Ages. It was considered a humble but essential food for rural survival during winter, thanks to its cold resistance and nutritional value.

Although it is never completely black, its very dark, almost bluish-green leaves, which deepen in color after frost, gave rise to its common name.

A truly rustic and resilient plant, for centuries it was easily grown in Tuscan home gardens because it withstands cold and requires little care.

In the 21st century it has conquered the world as “kale” (the Tuscan variety of kale). In the United States and Northern Europe it has become a symbol of healthy cuisine, used in salads, green juices, and chips.

It is said that in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany it was considered almost a natural medicine against winter ailments. A traditional saying claimed that “black kale drives away coughs and strengthens the spirit.”



The Vegetable Gardener or Vegetables in a Bowl — Giuseppe Arcimboldo, ca. 1587–1590

Growing Black Kale in the Ground

Climate and sowing period

- Black kale prefers a cool temperate climate and tolerates winter cold very well.
- The leaves become sweeter after the first frosts.
- Sowing: April to June in seedbeds. Transplanting: June to August in open ground.

Soil

- Prefers fertile, deep, well-drained soil with a slightly alkaline pH (6.5 to 7.5).
- Enrich the soil with well-rotted manure or compost before sowing.

Sowing and transplanting

- In seedbeds, sow seeds at a depth of 1 to 2 cm.
- After 30 to 40 days, when seedlings have 4 to 5 leaves, transplant into the ground.
- Spacing: 40 to 50 cm between plants and 50 to 60 cm between rows.

Irrigation

- Requires regular watering in the first months. Avoid waterlogging.
- Once well established, it is drought tolerant, but watering during dry periods helps produce more tender leaves.

Care and maintenance

- Light hoeing to remove weeds. Hill soil around the base of plants for stability.
- Fertilize midway through the growing cycle with nitrogen (or mature compost).

Pests and diseases

- May be attacked by cabbage white butterflies (caterpillars), aphids, and flea beetles.
- Prevention: insect netting, crop rotation, natural infusions (garlic, nettle).
- Possible fungal diseases: downy mildew and alternaria. Avoid water stagnation and overly dense plantings.

Harvest

- Harvest begins in November and continues through winter until February to March.
- Harvest progressively by removing the outer leaves as needed.
- Young leaves after frost are the sweetest and best suited for soups and ribollita.



Growing Black Kale in Pots

1. Container selection

- Use a large, deep pot, at least 30 to 35 cm in diameter and depth. Ensure drainage holes at the bottom.
- It is best to grow only one plant per pot to give it adequate space.

2. Potting mix

- Use fertile universal potting soil enriched with compost or well-rotted manure.
- Add sand or perlite to improve drainage.

3. Exposure

- Black kale loves direct light. Place the pot on a sunny balcony or terrace.
- A south or southeast exposure is ideal.

4. Watering

- Keep the soil consistently slightly moist, without waterlogging.
- Water more frequently in summer and much less in winter.
- Avoid excessively wetting the leaves to prevent fungal issues.

5. Fertilization

- Add compost or organic fertilizer every 3 to 4 weeks.
- Alternatively, use a liquid vegetable fertilizer diluted in irrigation water.

6. Care and protection

- Remove old and damaged leaves at the base.
- Protect from cabbage butterflies with lightweight nets or covers.
- In winter, if the pot is exposed to severe frost, cover it with non-woven frost protection fabric.

7. Harvest

- You can begin harvesting 2 to 3 months after transplanting.
- Gradually remove the outer leaves, allowing the central ones to continue growing.
 - Continue harvesting until late winter, when frost will make the leaves sweeter.



APPETIZERS

Tuscan Bruschetta with Black Kale and Pancetta

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 8 slices rustic country bread
- 200 g black kale (leaves with tough ribs removed)
- 80 g pancetta, diced
- 1 garlic clove
- Extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Blanch the black kale leaves for 3 to 4 minutes, then drain and cut into thin strips.
2. In a pan, sauté the pancetta without adding oil until crispy.
3. Add a drizzle of oil, the garlic, and the kale; sauté for 5 minutes to combine flavors.
4. Toast the bread, rub lightly with garlic, and top with the kale and pancetta mixture.

Recommended wine

Chianti Classico DOCG

A fresh Tuscan red with light tannins that cuts through the richness of the pancetta.



Vegan Black Kale Hummus with Pita Crostini

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 250 g cooked chickpeas
- 100 g blanched black kale
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small garlic clove
- Salt, pepper, paprika
- Pita bread or pane carasau for serving

Preparation

1. Blanch the black kale and drain well.
2. Blend with chickpeas, tahini, lemon juice, garlic, and olive oil.
3. Adjust seasoning with salt, pepper, and paprika.
4. Serve with warm pita crostini or pane carasau.

Recommended wine

Vermentino di Sardegna DOC (vegan)

Fragrant, fresh, and citrusy, pairing well with the creaminess of the hummus.



Mini Quiche with Black Kale and Cheese

Ingredients (serves 4, about 8 mini quiches)

- 1 roll shortcrust pastry
- 200 g black kale (leaves without tough ribs)
- 100 g melting cheese (provola, scamorza, or fontina)
- 2 eggs
- 80 ml fresh cream
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan
- Salt, pepper, extra virgin olive oil

Preparation

1. Blanch the black kale for 3 minutes, drain, and finely chop.
2. Warm it briefly in a pan with a drizzle of oil; season with salt and pepper.
3. In a bowl, whisk eggs, cream, and Parmesan.
4. Add the kale and diced cheese.
5. Cut discs from the pastry and line muffin molds.
6. Fill with the mixture and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 20 to 25 minutes.
7. Serve warm or at room temperature as finger food.

Recommended wine

Franciacorta Satèn DOCG

A creamy sparkling wine that enhances eggs and cheese.



Vegan Crostini with Black Kale and Cannellini Cream

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 8 slices toasted rustic bread
- 250 g cooked cannellini beans
- 150 g black kale (blanched and sautéed)
- 1 garlic clove
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Lemon juice, salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Blend the cannellini with oil, garlic, and a few drops of lemon juice until smooth.
2. Blanch the black kale for 3 minutes, drain, and sauté briefly with a drizzle of oil and salt.
3. Spread the cannellini cream on the toasted bread.
4. Top with the black kale and finish with a drizzle of raw extra virgin olive oil.

Recommended wine

Orvieto Classico DOC (vegan)

A soft, delicate Umbrian white, perfect with legumes.



FIRST COURSES

Pappardelle with Wild Boar Ragù and Black Kale

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 350 g fresh pappardelle
- 400 g wild boar meat, cubed
- 200 g black kale
- 1 onion, 1 carrot, 1 celery stalk
- ½ glass red wine
- 400 g tomato purée
- Extra virgin olive oil, rosemary, bay leaf, pepper, salt

Preparation

1. Blanch the black kale for 5 minutes, drain, and cut into strips.
2. Prepare a soffritto with onion, carrot, and celery.
3. Add the wild boar meat, brown well, and deglaze with red wine.
4. Add the tomato purée and herbs; simmer gently for 1.5 to 2 hours.
5. Add the black kale during the last 20 minutes.
6. Cook the pappardelle, toss with the ragù, and finish with freshly ground black pepper.

Recommended wine

Brunello di Montalcino DOCG

A structured red with elegant tannins that stands up to wild boar.



Vegan Orecchiette with Black Kale and Almond Pesto

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 350 g orecchiette
- 200 g black kale
- 60 g toasted almonds
- 1 garlic clove
- 50 ml extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of ½ lemon
- Salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Blanch the black kale for 3 minutes, drain, and cool.
2. Blend with almonds, garlic, oil, lemon, salt, and pepper until creamy.
3. Cook the orecchiette, drain, and toss with the pesto, adding a little cooking water if needed.
4. Serve topped with chopped toasted almonds.

Recommended wine

Fiano di Avellino DOCG (vegan)

A Campanian white with floral and almond notes in harmony with the pesto.



Black Kale and Pecorino Risotto

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 280 g Carnaroli rice
- 200 g black kale
- 1 onion
- 1 L vegetable broth
- ½ glass white wine
- 50 g aged Pecorino, grated
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Blanch the black kale for 5 minutes, drain, and blend with a drizzle of oil until smooth.
2. In a saucepan sauté the chopped onion, add the rice, and toast.
3. Deglaze with white wine, then add broth gradually.
4. Halfway through cooking, incorporate the kale cream.
5. Finish cooking, then stir in Pecorino and a drizzle of oil.
6. Serve with freshly ground black pepper.

Recommended wine

Greco di Tufo DOCG

A structured, mineral white that supports the savory Pecorino.



Vegan Soup with Black Kale, Potatoes, and Farro

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 150 g pearled farro
- 250 g black kale
- 200 g potatoes
- 1 onion
- 1 carrot
- 1.2 L vegetable broth
- Extra virgin olive oil, rosemary, salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Parboil the farro for 10 minutes if hulled (or cook directly in broth if pearled).
2. In a pot sauté chopped onion and carrot with a little oil.
3. Add diced potatoes, sliced black kale, and the farro.
4. Cover with broth and simmer for 30 to 35 minutes.
5. Season with rosemary, salt, and pepper.
6. Serve hot with a drizzle of raw extra virgin olive oil.

Recommended wine

Chianti Colli Senesi DOCG (vegan)

A young, fruity Tuscan red perfect with rustic soups.



SECOND COURSES

Sausage and Black Kale Stew

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 4 fresh sausages
- 300 g black kale (ribs removed)
- 1 onion
- 200 g crushed tomatoes
- ½ glass red wine
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Blanch the black kale for 5 minutes and drain.
2. In a casserole, sauté the chopped onion in oil.
3. Add the sausages (whole or in pieces) and brown well.
4. Deglaze with red wine.
5. Add the crushed tomatoes and the kale.
6. Cover and cook on low heat for 25 to 30 minutes.
7. Adjust seasoning and serve hot with rustic bread.

Recommended wine

Montepulciano d'Abruzzo DOC

A full-bodied red with spicy notes that complement the meat sauce.



Black Kale and Pecorino Frittata

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 6 eggs
- 200 g stewed black kale
- 60 g grated Pecorino
- 1 spring onion
- Extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Stew the black kale with the spring onion and a drizzle of oil until soft.
2. Beat the eggs with Pecorino, salt, and pepper.
3. Fold in the kale.
4. Pour into a lightly oiled nonstick pan and cook 6 to 7 minutes over medium-low heat.
5. Flip and cook another 3 to 4 minutes.
6. Serve hot or warm, cut into wedges.

Recommended wine

Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico DOC

A fresh, savory white ideal with eggs and cheese.



Vegan Lentil and Black Kale Loaf

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 250 g cooked lentils
- 200 g blanched and chopped black kale
- 100 g whole wheat breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons ground flaxseed + 6 tablespoons water (vegan egg)
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Spices: nutmeg, pepper, herbs
- Salt

Preparation

1. Prepare the vegan “egg” by mixing flaxseed and water; rest 10 minutes.
2. Coarsely blend the lentils.
3. Mix lentils, kale, breadcrumbs, spices, oil, and the vegan egg.
4. Shape into a loaf and wrap in oiled parchment.
5. Bake at 180°C (350°F) for 30 to 35 minutes.
6. Slice and serve with vegetables or potatoes.

Recommended wine

Cerasuolo d’Abruzzo DOC (vegan)

A structured rosé that pairs well with legumes and greens.



Vegan Sautéed Black Kale with Chickpeas and Cherry Tomatoes

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 250 g black kale, sliced
- 200 g cooked chickpeas
- 150 g confit cherry tomatoes (or oven-roasted fresh)
- 1 garlic clove
- Extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper, chili flakes

Preparation

1. Blanch the black kale for 3 to 4 minutes and drain.
2. Heat oil with garlic and chili in a pan.
3. Add kale, chickpeas, and cherry tomatoes.
4. Sauté over high heat for 5 to 6 minutes; season to taste.
5. Serve hot as a main or light one-dish meal.

Recommended wine

Lambrusco Grasparossa di Castelvetro DOC (vegan)

A lively sparkling red that refreshes the palate with chickpeas.



ONE-DISH MEALS

Tuscan Black Kale Soup with Bread and Cannellini Beans

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 300 g black kale (leaves cut into strips)
- 250 g cooked cannellini beans
- 200 g stale Tuscan bread
- 1 carrot, 1 onion, 1 celery stalk
- 300 g potatoes
- 400 g tomato purée
- 1.2 L vegetable broth
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Prepare a soffritto with onion, carrot, and celery in olive oil.
2. Add the diced potatoes and tomato purée; cook for 5 minutes.
3. Add the hot broth, beans, and sliced black kale.
4. Simmer gently for 40 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. In a soup tureen, alternate layers of soup and sliced stale bread.
6. Let rest a few minutes, then serve hot with a drizzle of raw olive oil and pepper.

Recommended wine

Morellino di Scansano DOCG

A soft, fruity red that complements the rustic character of ribollita-style soups.



Vegan Black Kale, Quinoa, and Roasted Pumpkin Bowl

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 250 g quinoa
- 200 g black kale
- 300 g pumpkin, diced
- 200 g cooked chickpeas
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper, smoked paprika

Preparation

1. Cook the quinoa in salted water (ratio 1:2) for 12 to 15 minutes, then fluff with a fork.
2. Season the pumpkin with oil, salt, and paprika; roast at 200°C (400°F) for 20 to 25 minutes.
3. Blanch the black kale for 3 minutes, drain, and sauté briefly with oil and salt.
4. Sauté the chickpeas with a drizzle of oil and pepper until crispy.
5. Prepare a sauce by mixing tahini, lemon juice, salt, and enough water to thin.
6. Assemble the bowl: quinoa base, black kale, roasted pumpkin, chickpeas, and drizzle with tahini sauce.

Recommended wine

Rosato del Salento IGT (vegan)

A fresh, fruity rosé that balances the sweetness of the pumpkin.



DESSERTS

Black Kale and Lemon Loaf Cake

Ingredients (serves 8)

- 200 g all-purpose flour
- 150 g sugar
- 2 eggs
- 100 ml milk
- 70 ml seed oil
- 100 g blanched black kale
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- 1 packet baking powder

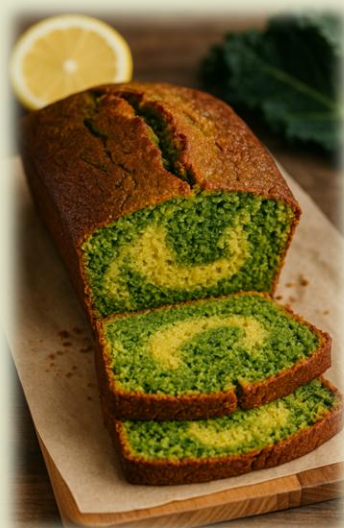
Preparation

1. Blanch the black kale for 3 to 4 minutes and blend with the milk until smooth.
2. Beat the eggs with the sugar.
3. Add the oil, kale cream with milk, lemon juice, and zest.
4. Fold in the sifted flour and baking powder.
5. Pour into a buttered loaf pan.
6. Bake at 180°C (350°F) for 35 to 40 minutes.

Recommended wine

Moscato d'Asti DOCG

Sweet, lightly sparkling and aromatic, perfect with lemon.



Tart with Sweet Black Kale and Ricotta Cream

Ingredients (serves 6 to 8)

- 250 g all-purpose flour
- 120 g butter
- 100 g sugar
- 1 egg plus 1 yolk
- 250 g ricotta
- 80 g powdered sugar
- 80 g blanched black kale
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preparation

1. Prepare the shortcrust pastry by mixing flour, butter, sugar, and eggs. Chill for 30 minutes.
2. Blanch the kale for 3 minutes and blend with ricotta, powdered sugar, and vanilla.
3. Roll out the pastry in a tart pan and fill with the ricotta-kale cream.
4. Decorate with pastry strips.
5. Bake at 180°C (350°F) for 35 to 40 minutes.

Recommended wine

Vin Santo del Chianti DOC

A meditation wine, ideal with ricotta and shortcrust pastry.



Vegan Black Kale and Coconut Panna Cotta

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 200 ml coconut milk
- 150 ml almond milk (or soy)
- 60 g light brown sugar
- 2 g agar agar powder (about 1 level teaspoon)
- 80 g blanched and blended black kale
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Topping: coconut flakes, berries, or chocolate sauce

Preparation

1. Blanch the kale for 3 minutes, drain, and blend very finely with a little plant milk.
2. In a saucepan combine coconut milk, almond milk, sugar, and vanilla. Bring to a gentle boil.
3. Add agar agar, whisk well, and cook for 2 minutes.
4. Incorporate the kale cream and mix until smooth.
5. Pour into molds, let cool, then refrigerate for at least 3 hours.
6. Unmold and decorate with coconut and fresh berries.

Recommended wine

Malvasia delle Lipari Passito DOC (vegan)

Sweet and aromatic with tropical notes that echo the coconut.



Vegan Black Kale, Banana, and Cocoa Smoothie Bowl

Ingredients (serves 2)

- 150 g blanched black kale
- 2 ripe bananas, frozen in slices
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 200 ml plant milk
- Topping: granola, nuts, red berries

Preparation

1. Blend bananas, kale, cocoa, and plant milk until thick and creamy.
2. Pour into two bowls.
3. Top with granola, nuts, and berries.
4. Serve immediately with a spoon.

Recommended wine

Recioto della Valpolicella DOCG (vegan)

A sweet, velvety passito red, perfect with cocoa and banana.



PRESERVES

Black Kale in Flavored Olive Oil

Ingredients

- 400 g black kale leaves
- 500 ml white wine vinegar
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 dried chili pepper
- Extra virgin olive oil, as needed
- Coarse salt

Preparation

1. Wash the leaves, remove the tough ribs, and blanch for 2 minutes in water and vinegar (1:1) with a pinch of salt.
2. Drain well and dry completely.
3. Arrange in sterilized jars with garlic and chili.
4. Cover completely with olive oil and seal tightly.
5. Let rest at least 2 weeks before consuming.



Fermented Black Kale, Rustic Sauerkraut Style

Ingredients

- 1 kg black kale
- 20 g coarse sea salt
- Spices to taste: caraway seeds, juniper berries

Preparation

1. Cut the kale into thin strips.
2. Mix in a bowl with salt and spices, massaging well.
3. Transfer to an airtight jar, pressing until natural liquid is released.
4. Keep submerged with a weight (for example an inverted glass).
5. Ferment at room temperature for 5 to 7 days, then refrigerate.



Preserved Black Kale Pesto

Ingredients

- 200 g blanched black kale
- 60 g walnuts or almonds
- 1 garlic clove
- 80 ml extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper
- Lemon juice

Preparation

1. Blanch the kale, drain well, and dry.
2. Blend with nuts, garlic, oil, salt, pepper, and a splash of lemon juice.
3. Transfer to sterilized jars, cover with a thin layer of oil, and seal.
4. Store in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 weeks.



Comparative Table of Black Kale Preserves

Preserve	Kale Variety	Preservation Method	Shelf Life	Recommended Pairings	Special Notes
Flavored black kale in olive oil	Black kale	Blanching in water and vinegar, drying, preservation in oil with aromatics	6 to 8 months in the pantry (sterilized jars)	Excellent as an appetizer with bread and cured meats, in grain salads, on bruschetta	It is essential to dry the leaves very well to prevent mold
Fermented black kale, “rustic sauerkraut” style	Black kale	Natural fermentation with salt and spices	3 to 4 weeks in the refrigerator	Ideal with legumes, boiled meats, rustic sandwiches	Probiotic fermented food, tangy and spiced flavor
Preserved black kale pesto	Black kale	Blanching, blending with nuts and oil, stored in jars under oil	2 to 3 weeks in the refrigerator (kept under oil)	Perfect for dressing pasta, bruschetta, and grains	Must always be covered with a layer of oil to prevent oxidation

CAULIFLOWER

Cauliflower belongs to the Brassicaceae (or Cruciferous) family, the same as head cabbage, Savoy cabbage, black kale, and broccoli.

The white “head” (or other colors such as green, orange, or purple) is neither a fruit nor an open flower, but the immature inflorescence harvested before it blooms.

There are several types of cauliflower: classic white, Romanesco (green and geometric), orange (rich in beta-carotene), and purple (rich in anthocyanins).

From a nutritional standpoint, it is notable for its low calorie content (about 25 kcal per 100 g) and is rich in vitamins C, K, and B-complex vitamins.

It is also a source of minerals such as potassium, magnesium, and phosphorus, and contains sulfur compounds (glucosinolates), responsible for the typical cooking aroma and for its protective properties.

Among its main benefits are antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects.

Thanks to its fiber content, it supports digestion and may help prevent certain conditions due to its phytochemicals.

Cauliflower derives from wild cabbage (*Brassica oleracea*), native to the coasts of Asia Minor and the eastern Mediterranean.

It was already cultivated in Syria over 2,000 years ago, where it was called *syriaca brassica*.

It was introduced to southern Italy by the Greeks and later by the Romans, who appreciated its digestive and purifying properties.

During the Middle Ages it became especially widespread in Cyprus, hence the Latin name *caulis floris cyprius* (“flower cabbage of Cyprus”).

From the Renaissance onward, its cultivation spread throughout Europe, particularly in Italy and France.

In France it became famous at the court of Louis XIV, where it was prepared in elaborate recipes.

Today Italy is among the world’s leading producers, with strong production in regions such as Marche, Puglia, Lazio, and Campania.



Still Life of a Cauliflower di Stanley Dollimore (1975)

Tips for Growing Cauliflower in the Field

Climate and Sowing Period

- Prefers cool, temperate climates and fears heat and drought.
- Nursery sowing: June to August (for autumn–winter harvests). Transplanting: August to October.

Soil

- Fertile, deep, well drained, with pH 6.5 to 7.5.
- Fertilize with well matured manure or compost before transplanting.

Sowing and Transplanting

- In seedbeds: sow seeds at 1 cm depth. Transplant when seedlings have 4 to 5 leaves.
- Spacing: 60 to 70 cm between rows, 50 to 60 cm between plants.

Irrigation

- Regular and consistent, without waterlogging.
- Especially important during the head development phase.

Care and Maintenance

- Remove weeds and hill up soil around the plants.
- When the cauliflower head begins to form, bend some outer leaves over it to protect it from the sun and keep it pale.

Pests and Diseases

- Aphids, flea beetles, cabbage white caterpillars. Fungal diseases: downy mildew and alternaria.
- Prevention: crop rotation, insect netting, avoid excess humidity.

Harvest

- After 3 to 5 months from transplanting, depending on the variety, harvest when the head is compact and firm.



Tips for Growing Cauliflower in Pots

1. Container Choice

- Large and deep pot (at least 35 to 40 cm).
- One plant per pot.

2. Potting Mix

- Fertile soil with compost plus sand for drainage.

3. Exposure

- Sunny position, at least 6 hours of direct sunlight per day.

4. Irrigation

- Regular watering; keep the soil consistently moist but not waterlogged.

5. Fertilization

- Add organic fertilizer or compost every 3 to 4 weeks.

6. Care and Protection

- Cover the developing head by folding the outer leaves over it, as in field cultivation.
- In winter, protect the pot from frost with nonwoven fabric.

7. Harvest

- After 4 to 5 months from transplanting, harvest when the cauliflower is well formed and compact.



APPETIZERS

Crispy Cauliflower Fritters

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 400 g cauliflower
- 2 eggs
- 50 g grated Parmesan
- 60 g breadcrumbs
- Seed oil for frying
- Salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Boil the cauliflower florets in salted water for 8 to 10 minutes.
2. Mash them with a fork.
3. Add eggs, Parmesan, breadcrumbs, salt, and pepper.
4. Shape into flattened patties.
5. Fry in hot oil until golden.
6. Drain on paper towels and serve hot.

Recommended wine

Greco di Tufo DOCG

A structured, fresh white that balances fried foods.



Cauliflower Gratin in Cocotte

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 400 g cauliflower
- 250 ml béchamel sauce
- 60 g grated Parmesan
- Butter as needed for the cocottes
- Nutmeg, salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Boil the cauliflower for 6 to 7 minutes, drain, and divide into florets.
2. Butter the cocottes and arrange the cauliflower inside.
3. Cover with béchamel, sprinkle with Parmesan and nutmeg.
4. Bake at 190°C (375°F) for 15 to 20 minutes until golden.

Recommended wine

Chardonnay Alto Adige DOC

An elegant, smooth white that complements the creaminess of the gratin.



Vegan Roasted Cauliflower Hummus

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 300 g cauliflower
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Cut the cauliflower into florets, season with oil, salt, and pepper, and roast at 200°C (400°F) for 20 minutes.
2. Blend with tahini, lemon juice, garlic, cumin, and oil until smooth.
3. Serve with crostini or raw vegetables.

Recommended wine

Vermentino di Sardegna DOC (vegan)

Fresh and citrusy, ideal with the hummus' creaminess and spices.



Vegan Purple Cauliflower Carpaccio with Citrus and Seeds

Ingredients (serves 4)

- ½ purple cauliflower
- 1 orange
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 2 tablespoons pumpkin seeds
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Slice the raw cauliflower very thinly with a mandoline.
2. Arrange the slices on a plate.
3. Season with orange segments, lemon juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper.
4. Finish with toasted pumpkin seeds.

Recommended wine

Prosecco DOC Brut (vegan)

A fresh, mineral sparkling wine that enhances crunch and citrus notes.



FIRST COURSES

Pasta with Cauliflower, Anchovies, and Breadcrumbs

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 350 g short pasta (mezze maniche or orecchiette)
- 400 g cauliflower
- 4 anchovy fillets in oil
- 2 tablespoons raisins
- 2 tablespoons pine nuts
- 2 garlic cloves
- 50 g breadcrumbs
- Extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Boil the cauliflower florets in salted water and drain while still firm.
2. In a pan heat oil and garlic, add the anchovies and let them melt.
3. Add raisins, pine nuts, and cauliflower; sauté to flavor.
4. Cook the pasta in the same cauliflower water, drain, and toss in the pan.
5. Toast the breadcrumbs separately in a pan with a drizzle of oil.
6. Serve the pasta topped with crispy breadcrumbs.

Recommended wine

Etna Bianco DOC

A mineral, citrusy Sicilian white, perfect with the anchovies' savoriness.



Cauliflower and Speck Risotto

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 320 g Carnaroli rice
- 300 g cauliflower
- 100 g speck, diced
- 1 small onion
- 1 L vegetable broth
- 50 g Parmesan
- 30 g butter
- Extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Sauté the chopped onion with a drizzle of oil.
2. Add the rice and toast for 2 minutes.
3. Add cauliflower florets and begin cooking with hot broth.
4. Meanwhile, sauté the speck until crispy.
5. Halfway through cooking, blend half of the cauliflower and add to the risotto for creaminess.
6. Finish with butter and Parmesan.
7. Serve topped with crispy speck.

Recommended wine

Pinot Nero Alto Adige DOC

An elegant, light red with freshness that balances the creaminess and smoky notes.



Vegan Spaghetti with Cauliflower and Almond Pesto

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 350 g spaghetti
- 300 g cauliflower
- 50 g blanched almonds
- 1 garlic clove
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Blanch the cauliflower in salted water for 7 to 8 minutes.
2. Blend with almonds, garlic, oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper until creamy.
3. Cook the spaghetti, reserving some cooking water.
4. Toss the pasta with the pesto, adding pasta water if needed.
5. Serve with toasted almonds on top.

Recommended wine

Fiano di Avellino DOCG (vegan)

A structured white with floral and almond notes that echo the pesto.



Vegan Creamy Cauliflower and Leek Soup

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 400 g cauliflower
- 2 leeks
- 2 medium potatoes
- 800 ml vegetable broth
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper, nutmeg
- Bread croutons

Preparation

1. Clean the leeks, slice into rounds, and sauté in olive oil.
2. Add diced potatoes and cauliflower florets.
3. Cover with broth and cook for 25 to 30 minutes.
4. Blend until smooth and creamy.
5. Adjust salt, pepper, and nutmeg.
6. Serve with crispy croutons.

Recommended wine

Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi DOC (vegan)

A fresh, mineral white perfect for vegetable soups and veloutés.



MAIN COURSES

Cauliflower Gratin with Ham and Cheese

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 600 g cauliflower
- 150 g cooked ham, sliced
- 200 g melting cheese (scamorza or fontina)
- 250 ml béchamel sauce
- 40 g grated Parmesan
- Salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Boil the cauliflower florets for 8 to 10 minutes.
2. Wrap some florets in slices of ham and place them in a buttered baking dish.
3. Cover with diced cheese and béchamel.
4. Sprinkle with Parmesan.
5. Bake at 190°C (375°F) for 20 to 25 minutes until golden.

Recommended wine

Soave Classico DOC

A fresh yet smooth Veneto white that balances the dish's creaminess and savoriness.



Chicken and Cauliflower Meatballs

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 300 g boiled cauliflower
- 300 g ground chicken
- 1 egg
- 40 g Parmesan
- Breadcrumbs as needed
- Chopped parsley
- Salt, pepper, extra virgin olive oil

Preparation

1. Finely chop the cooked cauliflower and combine with the ground chicken.
2. Add egg, Parmesan, parsley, salt, and pepper.
3. Shape into meatballs and coat with breadcrumbs.
4. Place on a baking tray with a drizzle of oil and bake at 190°C (375°F) for 20 minutes (or fry in hot oil).

Recommended wine

Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi DOC

An elegant Marche white whose freshness complements the lightness of the chicken.



Vegan Cauliflower and Chickpea Burgers

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 250 g cooked cauliflower
- 200 g cooked chickpeas
- 2 tablespoons chickpea flour (or breadcrumbs)
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- Spices: paprika, turmeric
- Extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Blend cauliflower and chickpeas until a compact mixture forms.
2. Add chickpea flour, minced garlic, parsley, and spices.
3. Shape into burgers and place on parchment paper.
4. Cook in a nonstick pan with a drizzle of oil for 3 to 4 minutes per side.

Recommended wine

Lambrusco di Sorbara DOC (vegan)

A fresh, fruity sparkling rosé that cleanses the palate and pairs well with legumes.



Vegan Cauliflower Curry with Coconut Milk

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 400 g cauliflower
- 1 onion
- 1 garlic clove
- 200 ml coconut milk
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, pepper
- Fresh cilantro (optional)

Preparation

1. Sauté chopped onion and garlic in olive oil.
2. Add cauliflower florets and sauté briefly.
3. Stir in curry, salt, and pepper.
4. Add coconut milk and cook gently for 15 to 20 minutes.
5. Serve with basmati rice and fresh cilantro.

Recommended wine

Gewürztraminer Alto Adige DOC (vegan)

Aromatic, with spicy exotic notes that harmonize with curry and coconut.



ONE-DISH MEALS

Baked Cauliflower Pasta with Sausage

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 400 g short pasta (mezze maniche style)
- 300 g cauliflower
- 200 g fresh sausage
- 200 ml béchamel
- 50 g grated Parmesan
- Extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Boil the cauliflower florets for 5 to 6 minutes.
2. Brown the crumbled sausage in a pan.
3. Drain the pasta very al dente and combine with cauliflower and sausage.
4. Add the béchamel and half of the Parmesan, mixing well.
5. Transfer to a baking dish and sprinkle with the remaining Parmesan.
6. Bake at 190°C (375°F) for 20 minutes until golden.

Recommended wine

Chianti Classico DOCG

A full-bodied Tuscan red whose tannins match the richness of the sausage and gratin.



Vegan Buddha Bowl with Spiced Cauliflower, Brown Rice, and Legumes

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 300 g cauliflower
- 200 g cooked brown rice
- 200 g cooked chickpeas
- 1 avocado
- 1 tablespoon turmeric
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Sesame seeds
- Salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Cut the cauliflower into florets and season with oil, turmeric, salt, and pepper.
2. Roast at 200°C (400°F) for 20 minutes until golden.
3. Assemble the bowls with rice as the base, then add roasted cauliflower, chickpeas, and sliced avocado.
4. Finish with sesame seeds and a drizzle of olive oil.

Recommended wine

Grillo Sicilia DOC (vegan)

A fresh, citrusy, lightly aromatic white, perfect with gentle spices and roasted vegetables.



DESSERTS

Cauliflower and Apple Muffins

Ingredients (12 muffins)

- 200 g boiled cauliflower
- 200 g all-purpose flour
- 100 g sugar
- 2 eggs
- 80 ml vegetable oil
- 1 apple, diced
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Cinnamon to taste

Preparation

1. Boil the cauliflower, drain, and blend until smooth.
2. In a bowl, beat eggs and sugar until fluffy.
3. Add oil, cauliflower purée, flour, baking powder, and cinnamon.
4. Fold in the diced apple.
5. Fill the muffin liners and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 20 to 25 minutes.

Recommended wine

Moscato d'Asti DOCG

Aromatic and lightly sparkling, perfect with the sweetness of apple and the softness of the muffins.



Cauliflower and White Chocolate Cheesecake

Ingredients (20 cm / 8-inch pan)

- 150 g dry biscuits
- 70 g melted butter
- 200 g cooked and puréed cauliflower
- 250 g cream cheese
- 150 g ricotta
- 100 g melted white chocolate
- 80 g sugar
- 2 eggs

Preparation

1. Crush the biscuits, mix with butter, and press into the bottom of a springform pan.
2. Beat cream cheese, ricotta, sugar, and eggs.
3. Add cauliflower purée and melted white chocolate.
4. Pour over the base and bake at 160°C (320°F) for 45 to 50 minutes.
5. Cool and serve with red berries.

Recommended wine

Passito di Pantelleria DOC

A rich dessert wine with honeyed and dried fruit notes that complement the white chocolate.



Vegan Cauliflower and Cocoa Cookies

Ingredients (15 cookies)

- 150 g boiled and puréed cauliflower
- 150 g oat flour
- 40 g unsweetened cocoa powder
- 80 g brown sugar
- 60 ml vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 50 g dark chocolate chips

Preparation

1. Combine cauliflower purée with oil and sugar.
2. Add flour, cocoa, and baking powder, mixing into a soft dough.
3. Fold in the chocolate chips.
4. Shape into balls and flatten on baking paper.
5. Bake at 180°C (350°F) for 15 to 18 minutes.

Recommended wine

Recioto della Valpolicella DOCG (vegan)

A velvety sweet red with cherry and cocoa notes that enhance the cookies.



Vegan Cauliflower and Vanilla Ice Cream

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 250 g cooked and cooled cauliflower
- 200 ml almond milk
- 70 g brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preparation

1. Blend cauliflower with almond milk, sugar, and vanilla until smooth.
2. Churn in an ice cream maker for 25 to 30 minutes (or freeze, stirring every hour for 3 to 4 hours).
3. Serve with chopped hazelnuts or chocolate shavings.

Recommended wine

Malvasia delle Lipari DOC (vegan)

Sweet and aromatic, with floral and fruity notes that complement the creamy vanilla profile.



PRESERVES

Classic Pickled Cauliflower (Pantry Standard)

Ingredients

- 1 kg cauliflower florets
- 500 ml white wine vinegar
- 500 ml water
- 2 tablespoons coarse salt
- Spices to taste (bay leaf, black peppercorns, mustard seeds)

Preparation

1. Blanch the cauliflower florets for 3 to 4 minutes in salted water and drain.
2. Bring vinegar, water, and spices to a boil.
3. Pack the hot cauliflower into sterilized jars.
4. Cover with the hot liquid and seal tightly.
5. Store in the pantry for 6 to 8 months.



Spiced Cauliflower in Oil (Rustic Aromatic Recipe)

Ingredients

- 1 kg cauliflower
- 500 ml white wine vinegar
- 500 ml water
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 dried chili pepper
- Oregano, thyme, or rosemary
- Extra virgin olive oil as needed

Preparation

1. Blanch the cauliflower florets for 4 to 5 minutes in water and vinegar.
2. Dry thoroughly on a clean cloth for 12 hours.
3. Arrange in jars alternating with garlic, chili, and herbs.
4. Cover completely with olive oil, removing air bubbles.
5. Seal sterilized jars and store for 6 to 8 months.



Sweet and Sour Cauliflower and Onion Relish (Excellent with Cheese)

Ingredients

- 500 g cauliflower
- 300 g red onions
- 200 g brown sugar
- 150 ml apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
- Salt, pepper

Preparation

1. Finely chop cauliflower and onions.
2. Place in a pot with sugar, vinegar, mustard seeds, salt, and pepper.
3. Cook over low heat for 40 to 50 minutes, stirring, until jam-like.
4. Jar while hot in sterilized jars and seal well.
5. Store in the pantry for up to 6 months.



Comparative Table of Cauliflower Preserves

Preserve	Cauliflower Variety	Preservation Method	Shelf Life	Recommended Pairings	Special Notes
Classic Pickled Cauliflower	White cauliflower	Blanching and storage in vinegar with spices	6 to 8 months in pantry	Excellent as an appetizer, in salads, or with cured meats and cheeses	Bright, tangy flavor; retains crunch
Spiced Cauliflower in Oil	White cauliflower	Blanching in vinegar, thorough drying, then preserved in oil with spices and herbs	6 to 8 months in pantry (sterilized jars)	Perfect on crostini, bruschetta, and for aperitivo platters	Requires very careful drying to prevent mold
Sweet and Sour Cauliflower and Onion Relish	White cauliflower plus red onions	Slow cooking with sugar, vinegar, and spices	5 to 6 months in pantry	Excellent with aged cheeses, cured meats, and rustic bread	Unusual recipe with a gourmet sweet and sour profile