

Garlic — the “Stinking Rose”

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The list of ailments with which garlic is thought to help is long and the simple bulb has been used for medicinal purposes for thousands of years, with reports going back to ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome. The term “stinking rose” apparently goes back to Greek and Roman times.

Garlic is well known for its beneficial effects on the cardiovascular system. Regular consumption of garlic has been shown to lower cholesterol levels and high blood pressure. It also appears to “thin” the blood, reducing the risk of the formation of blood clots which can lead to heart attacks and strokes.

Garlic has a long tradition of use to prevent colds and flu's. One of the active ingredients, allicin, which is released when crushing or cutting garlic and which gives it its characteristic pungent odour has indeed been shown to have anti-viral, anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties.



The sulphur compounds of garlic, as well as onions, are thought to have anti-cancer properties, by protecting the body from carcinogenic (cancer-forming) substances.

Apart from its many health benefits garlic of course adds its characteristic flavour to many dishes.

Recipes

Pesto

This is a delicious vegan, dairy-free version of the traditional pesto sauce. Prepared with fresh basil and garlic it has a lot more flavour than ready made jars of pesto and it is quick to prepare. Serve with pasta, salads, fish or meat. Although it keeps in the fridge for a few days, it is at its best when eaten soon after preparation.

1 large pot of basil, leaves washed and gently patted dry with a kitchen towel
1-2 garlic cloves, crushed
100ml extra virgin olive oil
100g pine kernels
Extra olive oil for storage

Put all ingredients into a blender and process to a smooth paste. Serve at once or store in an airtight container covered with a bit of extra olive oil in the fridge until needed.

Warm Broccoli and Red Pepper Salad

This is a great immune boosting salad. Broccoli and red peppers are excellent sources of vitamin C and pine nuts provide zinc, two crucial nutrients for the immune system. The garlic not only adds to the taste but is said to have anti-viral, anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties.

Serves 4

1 medium head of broccoli, broken into small florets

2 large red peppers, deseeded and quartered

Olive oil for roasting

2 large cloves of garlic, crushed

3 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp balsamic vinegar

Salt and pepper to taste

3 tbsp pine kernels

Coat baking tray and peppers with olive oil and roast at 200°C for 20-25 minute, until the skin of the peppers begins to show bubbles. Set aside to cool. Once cool remove the skin of the peppers and cut them into strips.

Meanwhile steam the broccoli florets for 4-5 min, they should still have some bite.

Roast the pine kernels in a dry pan for about 3 min until they start to turn golden, take care not to burn them.

For the dressing mix garlic, oil, vinegar and spices.

Carefully mix the dressing with the broccoli and red pepper, and sprinkle with the pine kernels.