



PACIFIC COAST
FARMERS' MARKET
ASSOCIATION

THE CAULIFLOWER CRAZE



[Cauliflower](#) has recently become the trendy, go-to vegetable since keto and other low-carb diets have taken over the diet-crazed world. Its low-carb versatility is what sets it apart from other cruciferous veggies because it can be turned into any number of dishes and prepared much as a potato or other starchy vegetable would. The reason cauliflower works so well is that, even though it is very low in calories and high in fiber, it also contains its own starch, which is why it holds up well as a replacement for other carbs. You can roast, steam, fry, sautê, or grill this versatile vegetable.

Cauliflower is a cruciferous vegetable, part of the mustard family of plants. Included in this family are broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and kale. They are available in a variety of gorgeous colors, from pale orange and off-white, to purple and green. Romanesco is a stunning pale green cauliflower with a spike-like growth pattern. Even though cauliflower grows in different colors, the flavor remains basically the same, with minor nutty sweet differentiations. All varieties have a mild neutral flavor that blends with almost everything. You'll find almost every color of cauliflower at your local farmers' market, even those that are not usually available at the grocery store.

This amazing vegetable is best when harvested during the winter months, bringing out its subtle but sweet flavor. Cauliflower can get bitter when the weather warms up.

Here are some great ideas for using cauliflower:

1. Cauliflower steaks: Cut one-inch-thick slabs of cauliflower, drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper, and a bit of heat like cayenne pepper if you like, and grill or broil for about 5 to 7 minutes on each side, cook longer if you like it a bit softer.

3. [Cauliflower rice](#): Grab a ricer, grater, or process cauliflower florets in a blender or food processor until broken into small pieces about the size of rice. Microwave it to heat it up, or add any number of veggies to make fried 'rice,' Mexican 'rice,' etc.
3. Cauliflower 'potato' salad: Cook cauliflower gently until al dente and use the same way you would potatoes.
4. [Cauliflower bites](#): Batter cauliflower florets, bake. Season.
5. Roasted Mashed Cauliflower: Toss cauliflower florets with olive oil, salt, and pepper, roast at 450 for 20 minutes. Then mash with a potato masher or blender. Add butter, and voila! You have mashed "potatoes!"

Purchase cauliflower at the farmers' market to ensure just-picked freshness. Look for white or cream-colored heads that feel heavy for their size. The deeply ribbed green leaves that envelop a head of cauliflower should look fresh, not wilted or yellowing or dry. Keep it loosely wrapped in the refrigerator and it can last up to 2 weeks. Be sure not to wash your cauliflower until you're ready to prepare and cook it.

You'll find cauliflower at almost all of your farmers' market vegetable growers like J&M Farms, Happy Boy Farms, Fifth Crow Farms, Blue House Farms, and many others. They offer the freshest products, straight from the farm to your table.

TAGS