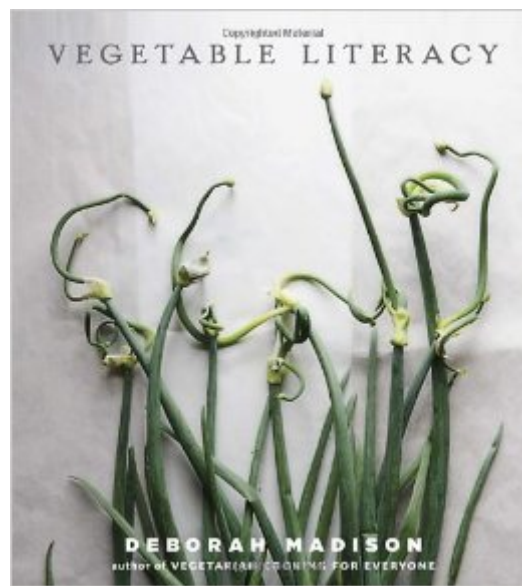


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# Vegetable Literacy: Cooking And Gardening With Twelve Families From The Edible Plant Kingdom, With Over 300 Deliciously Simple Recipes



## Synopsis

In her latest cookbook, Deborah Madison, America's leading authority on vegetarian cooking and author of *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*, reveals the surprising relationships between vegetables, edible flowers, and herbs within the same botanical families, and how understanding these connections can help home cooks see everyday vegetables in new light. For over three decades, Deborah Madison has been at the vanguard of the vegetarian cooking movement, authoring classic books on the subject and emboldening millions of readers to cook simple, elegant, plant-based food. This groundbreaking new cookbook is Madison's crowning achievement: a celebration of the diversity of the plant kingdom, and an exploration of the fascinating relationships between vegetables, edible flowers, herbs, and familiar wild plants within the same botanical families. Destined to become the new standard reference for cooking vegetables, *Vegetable Literacy* shows cooks that, because of their shared characteristics, vegetables within the same family can be used interchangeably in cooking. It presents an entirely new way of looking at vegetables, drawing on Madison's deep knowledge of cooking, gardening, and botany. For example, knowing that dill, chervil, cumin, parsley, coriander, anise, lovage, and caraway come from the umbellifer family makes it clear why they're such good matches for carrots, also a member of that family. With more than 300 classic and exquisitely simple recipes, Madison brings this wealth of information together in dishes that highlight a world of complementary flavors. Griddled Artichokes with Tarragon Mayonnaise, Tomato Soup and Cilantro with Black Quinoa, Tuscan Kale Salad with Slivered Brussels Sprouts and Sesame Dressing, Kohlrabi Slaw with Frizzy Mustard Greens, and Fresh Peas with Sage on Baked Ricotta showcase combinations that are simultaneously familiar and revelatory. Inspiring improvisation in the kitchen and curiosity in the garden, *Vegetable Literacy* "an unparalleled look at culinary vegetables and plants" will forever change the way we eat and cook.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Some of my favorite cookbooks are not those that the newest or most interesting recipes, but those that make me think differently about a whole class or category of food (think James Peterson's *Sauces: Classical and Contemporary Sauce Making* or Diane Morgan's *Roots: The Definitive Compendium with more than 225 Recipes*). *Vegetable Literacy* does just that. Deborah Madison translates her years of experience with vegetarian cooking into a beautiful homage to vegetables. One of the key premises of this book is that understanding the relationships between vegetables may influence the way you think about and use them. For example, the Knotweed family includes buckwheat, sorrel, and rhubarb. Knowing the relationship between these ingredients may inform your use of them. Thus, you may choose to add rhubarb to buckwheat muffins, knowing that the two share a phylogenetic family and thus have a natural affinity. *Vegetable Literacy* is organized by vegetable family. Each member of the family is described in detail, with great information about appearance, history, and nutrients. The entry also includes excellent varieties to look for, information about using other portions of the plant, "kitchen wisdom," and other foods with which the vegetable pairs well. In addition to all of this fantastic information about vegetables (both common and uncommon -- how much did I know about salsify before this book?

I have long been a fan of Deborah Madison. I once had the opportunity to learn from her before the publication of *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*, my favorite cookbook until today. Her recipes are nothing short of brilliant, and she is a genuinely nice person to boot. Her recipes turn the humble vegetable into sparkling masterpieces. Her ingredients are well thought out, and each one serves to add an important flavor component to the dish. I have been making some of her recipes for 12 or so years, from Greens, etc. and they do not seem dated, they still stun with their uniqueness and freshness. Therefore I could not wait to get my hands on this book, and I am totally thrilled with it. It is, in my opinion, a master work, and is her most gorgeous book to date. The Broccoli Bites with Curried Mayonnaise for example are quick to make, taste wonderful, and left me wondering why I had not thought of doing that before! Ditto the tomato and cilantro soup with black quinoa. Besides being an absolutely fabulous cookbook, this is a great reference book. Instead of going from A-Z (A

is for Asparagus, etc.) as so many authors have done with vegetables, Madison does something pretty astounding, and classifies vegetables by family. Deborah, through years of cooking and gardening experience, has observed that vegetables in the same family can be used interchangeably in cooking, due to shared botanical characteristics. So it greatly helps with the mystery of why some substitutions work beautifully and why some leave your family saying eeeek! She consulted with Botanist to bring us a book that is fun to read and learn from. The book has beautiful photography as well as formatting, and as usual Madison has some truly inventive and delicious recipes.

If you have created a vegetable garden, and worked it even just one year or worked it more years than you care to count, you will be hooked on this book by the second page of the introduction. It contains a wealth of information; so much information, that you should not wait for your local library to get a copy: You need it NOW, and you will refer to it way too often to have to rely on the library's copy. If you are considering putting in your first vegetable garden, or if you often buy from a farmers' market or a local produce stand, you need to order this book, too. You will love it and, not only will you cook its recipes; you will be able to create your own favorites from all the tips included. If you buy your produce from the grocery store, you will find a lot of great recipes and a lot of information on unfamiliar edible plants, grains, grasses, herbs, beans and vegetables. But (I'd roughly estimate that) a fifth of the information provided will not be of value to the grocery-store-buyer, since the book provides information on varieties available and how to make use of all parts of the plant: From seedlings that you weed out, to leaf tops of edible roots, to roots of edible tops, to bolted stems and flowers, etc. In other words, parts of the plant that grocery-store-buyers don't often see. But, I'd bet good money that anyone who reads this book and doesn't have a garden, will be hurriedly searching for a sunny piece of earth in which to pitch a shovel! I won't go into the great information that you can find by reading this product page on . Definitely take advantage of the "Look Inside" feature. And definitely take a look at Deborah Madison's other published books.

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