

Victoria Rhubarb



Rhubarb is a versatile, tart, springtime ingredient perfect for both sweet and savory dishes. Popular recipes include classic strawberry-rhubarb crisp or pie, tangy stewed rhubarb compote, refreshing rhubarb syrup for cocktails, almond flour muffins, and savory additions like rhubarb

Rheum rhabarbarum

- **Use:** This excellent flavored rhubarb has green stalks with a slight red blush. The roots can be used for dyeing natural fibers tans, grays, and reddish browns depending on mordants and modifiers used. These are 2nd year stalks. After the plant is established, you can take root divisions in early spring for dyeing and replant the crown. Thick stalks are popular for making delicious pies, cobblers, and preserves. This variety can be harvested starting as soon as the second season.
- **Exposure/Soil:** Prefers morning sun with some afternoon shade in zone 8. Well-draining soil and appreciates slow release fertilizer. Rhubarb should be planted in a spot where it will not be disturbed for many years. While some gardeners prefer to uproot it and divide it every five years or so, we have grown it undisturbed for over ten years. It seems totally unnecessary to uproot it and divide the crown.
- **Growth:** Grows 21-26" tall.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 3-8 Perennial, protect from summer sun.
- **Foliage:** Large elephant shaped leaves. Harvest stems in summer when the beautiful red color shows up. The color may or may not take over the whole stem. This may have to do with the amount of shade the plant receives. Stems should be snapped off at ground level. A bit of twist might help with this. Only take about a third of the plant's stems each year. Even though Rhubarb stalks have "strings" like celery, it is not necessary to remove these. They cook away. To use the stalk, remove the leaves and safely discard. Wash the stems well and cut off the very end that was attached to the ground. Chop the Rhubarb according to your recipe and cook with strawberries and sugar or other sweeteners. Nothing is quite as good as Rhubarb pie. **Do not eat the leaves as they contain poisonous oxalic acid.**
- **Flowers:** Rhubarb will send up flower stalks. The flowers will yield papery seeds that you can pick as they dry on the plant.

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