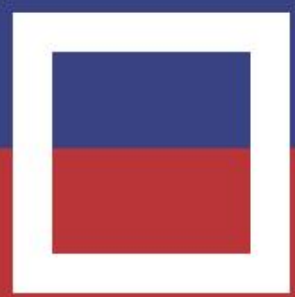




# INGREDIENT OF THE MONTH



American Culinary Federation  
Education Foundation



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# ALL ABOUT CULINARY CANNABIS

Culinary cannabis, the incorporation of cannabis into cooking and food preparation, has a storied history deeply ingrained in diverse cultures. Ancient records reveal its use in both traditional medicine and spiritual practices, with evidence of cannabis-infused foods dating back centuries, particularly in regions like India. As time progressed, cannabis found its way into various recipes, transitioning from ancient rituals to becoming an integral part of global cuisines.



The cultivation of cannabis is a meticulous and varied process geared toward ensuring optimal plant health, yield and flavor. Growers must select specific strains based on desired characteristics, carefully considering factors such as THC and CBD content and the overall profile of the plant. Because the growing environment is pivotal, close monitoring of light, temperature, humidity, and nutrient levels is required.

The timing of the harvest is critical, and the curing process following the harvest is essential for maintaining the plant's flavors and potency. Cultivating cannabis is a blend of science and art, demanding attention to detail and a deep understanding of the plant's life cycle for consistent and successful results.

Looking forward, the future of culinary cannabis holds exciting potential for ongoing innovation. Driven by increasing acceptance and legalization, chefs and culinary cannabis enthusiasts are pushing the boundaries of creativity, contributing to the ever-expanding and dynamic landscape of culinary cannabis. This relationship between cultivation practices, responsible use, and evolving cultural significance showcases the complex nature of culinary cannabis as it continues to captivate the interest of enthusiasts and professionals alike.

# HEALTHY INGREDIENT CONTRIBUTION

Culinary cannabis, when used responsibly and in moderation, can contribute to a variety of potential health benefits. It's important to note that individual reactions to culinary cannabis can vary, and the use of culinary cannabis should be approached with caution, consulting a cannabis-specialized healthcare professional when necessary. Although studies on the benefits are an evolving area of research, some of the latest findings on the health benefits of culinary cannabis include:



- **Pain Management:** THC has analgesic properties and may help alleviate chronic pain associated with conditions like arthritis, neuropathy, or injury.
- **Anti-Inflammatory:** Both THC and CBD have properties that can be beneficial for inflammation.
- **Nausea Relief:** THC has been used to alleviate nausea and vomiting, especially in cancer patients.
- **Anxiety & Stress Relief:** CBD has anxiolytic (anxiety-reducing) properties that can help manage anxiety and stress.
- **Insomnia & Sleep Disorders:** Higher levels of THC have been used to help with sleep-related issues such as insomnia.
- **Cardiovascular Benefits:** Some studies suggest that THC can help improve blood flow and reduce heart inflammation.
- **Neuroprotective Properties:** THC and CBD has been shown to have neuroprotective properties which are relevant in conditions such as Alzheimer's and multiple sclerosis.
- **Antioxidant Properties:** Cannabis contains compounds with antioxidant properties which can help protect cells from oxidative stress.

## Raw Culinary Cannabis Leaves Provide:

- Vitamin K (Blood Clotting)
- Vitamin C (Immune System Maintenance)
- Iron (Blood Oxygenation)
- Calcium (Bone Formation & Maintenance)
- Folate (DNA Repair)
- Magnesium (Nerve & Muscle Function)
- Phosphorous (Tissue & Cell Maintenance)
- Fiber (Digestive Health)

*Nutritional Information/Values from [USDA FoodData Central](#)*

# TYPES AND VARIETIES

Culinary cannabis comes in many different varieties, each with its own unique mix of tastes, smells, and effects. These strains, diverse in their genetic lineage and characteristics, can be broadly classified, offering an array of choices to culinary cannabis chefs. With each strain, the effects and flavors of the cannabis are nuanced and greatly influenced by variables like growing conditions, cultivation techniques, and individual tolerance.



## Indica Strains

- Known for their relaxing and sedative effects
- Earthy, musky or fruity flavors
- Popular Strains: Granddaddy Purple, Northern Lights, Bubba Kush

## Sativa Strains:

- Known for their uplifting and energizing effects
- Citrusy, fruity or floral flavors
- Popular Strains: Sour Diesel, Jack Herer, Durban Poison

## Hybrid Strains:

- Cross-breed combining characteristics of indica and sativa strains
- Wide range of flavors and effects making them versatile for culinary use
- Popular Strains: Blue Dream, Girl Scout Cookies, Wedding Cake

## High-THC Strains:

- Potent for psychoactive effects, more intense
- Popular Strains: Gorilla Glue #4, OG Kush, Bruce Banner

## High-CBD Strains:

- Potent for therapeutic effects, health benefits
- Popular Strains: Harlequin, ACDC, Charlotte's Web

## Flavorful Strains:

- Unique and pronounced flavors
- Popular Strains: Blueberry, Pineapple Express, Strawberry Cough

## Terpene-Rich Strains:

- Distinct smell and flavor
  - Limonene-Dominant (Citrusy Aroma)
  - Myrcene-Dominant (Earthy, Musky Aroma)
  - Pinene-Dominant (Piney Aroma)

# SELECTING AND STORING

## Selecting Culinary Cannabis:

- **Strains:** Culinary cannabis is much like wine in that it has distinct flavors, aromas, and effects. When developing recipes, consider the characteristics you want in your final product and choose a strain that appropriately compliments your dish.
- **Cannabinoid Content:** Understanding the cannabinoid content of the strain you are utilizing in your recipe will help achieve desired effects and dosage in culinary cannabis recipes. It's always best to start with low dosages and gradually increase as needed.
- **Inspect Quality:** Higher quality culinary cannabis should be well-trimmed, properly cured, and be free of mold. A quality cannabis selection used in the kitchen will provide a better overall culinary cannabis experience.
- **Aroma & Terpenes:** The overall aroma and terpenes (think of the tannins found in wine) will significantly impact the flavor of dishes infused with culinary cannabis. Just like wine is paired, strains with terpenes having complimentary flavors to the food you're working with should be selected.
- **Decarboxylation:** Before using culinary cannabis, it must undergo decarboxylation to activate cannabinoids like THC.



## Storing Culinary Cannabis:

- **Dark, Cool & Dry:** Excessive light and heat causes cannabinoids and terpenes to break down, reduces potency, and can degrade the overall quality of the culinary cannabis experience.
- **Airtight Containers:** Long term exposure to air causes culinary cannabis to dry out and lose its flavor. Vacuum sealed bags and glass jars tend to work best for storing cannabis.
- **Avoid Plastic:** Unwanted flavors and odors are often a culprit of improperly stored cannabis. Glass or metal containers are best for cannabis storage.
- **Temperature:** Cannabis is best stored in areas with consistent temperatures. Avoid storing culinary cannabis near ranges due to the constant temperature fluctuations.
- **Humidity:** Controlling humidity and the use of humidity packs will help prevent mold growth. Culinary cannabis is best kept at a relative humidity of 60-65%.
- **Labeling:** Culinary cannabis should always be labeled with the strain, harvest date, and any other relevant information to help keep track of freshness and potency.
- **Cold Storage:** Due to temperature fluctuations and causing buds to become brittle, cold storage is not recommended.
- **Safety:** To prevent accidental consumption, proper labeling and lockable containers are of the utmost importance.

# CULINARY USES

Over the past decade, culinary cannabis has seamlessly integrated itself into mainstream culture, finding its place not only in casual conversations amongst chefs but also on dining tables across the US. The art of cooking with cannabis has emerged as a culinary frontier, creatively utilizing the diverse psychoactive and non-psychoactive chemical compounds present in the plant. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), known for its euphoric properties, takes center stage, while hemp, cultivated globally, contributes its fiber, seed oil, and impressive durability in cooking. As an increasing number of culinary cannabis chefs and visionary entrepreneurs join the evolving movement, a continuous exploration of the plant's multifaceted flavors will surely continue to unfold.



## Culinary Forms of Cannabis:

- **Flower & Dried Buds**
  - Strong aroma & sweet taste
  - Crushed & mixed with other ingredients
  - Different ratios of THC/CBD available
- **Dissolvable Cannabinoid Powder**
  - Water soluble
  - More versatile than flower and buds
- **Cannabis Oils**
  - Olive oil or coconut oil based
  - Additional flavorings can be added
  - Great for both savory and sweet dishes
- **Tinctures**
  - Alcohol or glycerin based
  - Alcohol extracts THC (more potent)
  - Glycerin dilutes THC (less potent)
- **Hemp**
  - Hemp seed can be used as is to add a mild, nutty flavor, used as an extract oil or ground into flour.

## Culinary Uses of Cannabis:

- **Infused Oils & Butters:** These oils can be used in both cooking and baking and can easily replace regular oils and butters in most recipes. Commonly used in brownies, cookies, and other baked goods.
- **Teas & Beverages:** Cannabis can be infused into hot and cold beverages such as tea, coffee, or lemonade.
- **Sauces & Dressings:** Cannabis-infused oils or tinctures can be incorporated into sauces and dressings. This allows for a customizable and discreet way to add culinary cannabis to meals.
- **Sous Vide Cooking:** Cannabis-infused oils or butters can be added to the vacuum-sealed bags to infuse the flavors into food during the cooking process.
- **Cannabis Salt & Flour:** Cannabis can be infused into salt or ground into a flour-like consistency adding a unique twist to savory dishes and baked goods.
- **Edibles:** Infused edibles can be made in variety of forms including gummies, chocolates, cookies and savory snacks.

# FUN FACTS



- A study by Nature Neuroscience found that THC, the active ingredient in culinary cannabis, makes food smell better by stimulating the olfactory bulb.
- Eating naturally increases dopamine, the pleasure hormone, but when THC is present, the body receives an extra jolt of dopamine from what you're eating.
- The feeling of hunger after consuming culinary cannabis is caused by ghrelin, one of the hormones responsible for creating the sensation of hunger and helps metabolize carbohydrates.
- Culinary cannabis can be compared to wine as the growing and cultivation of different strains imparts distinct flavors and aromas often described as earthy, citrusy, fruity, and spicy.
- Experts warn those who are partaking in a culinary cannabis dinner to skip the wine as both act as depressants and users can experience “cross-fading”, the term for melding the effects of alcohol and cannabis.
- CBD, a non-psychoactive ingredient also found in the cannabis plant, allows culinary cannabis chefs to relax the mind and body of dining patrons without giving them the feeling of disorientation.
- The glitterati of Hollywood, including big names like Busy Phillips, Olivia Wade, Emma Stone, and Rihanna have all given the thumbs up to culinary cannabis.



# RECIPE

## Culinary Cannabis Infused Beef Stew

Yield: 6 Servings

### Ingredients:

2 T. Olive Oil  
1.5 Lbs. Beef Stew Meat, Cubed  
1 Large Onion, Diced  
3 Cloves Garlic, Minced  
2 Carrots, Peeled & Chopped  
2 Celery Stalks, Chopped  
4 Potatoes, Peeled & Cubed  
14oz Canned Diced Tomatoes  
4 C. Beef Stock  
1 C. Red Wine  
1 T. Tomato Paste  
1 T. Worcestershire Sauce  
2 T. Culinary Cannabis-Infused Olive Oil  
1 t. Thyme, Chopped  
1 t. Rosemary, Chopped  
Kosher Salt, To Taste  
Black Pepper, To Taste



### Directions:

1. Heat the regular olive oil in a heavy bottom pot over medium-high heat. Add the beef stew meat and brown on all sides. Remove the beef from the pot and set aside.
2. In the same pot, add the onion and garlic. Sauté until the onion becomes translucent. Add the carrots, celery, and potatoes. Cook for an additional 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Return the beef to the pot, add the remaining ingredients, and stir well to combine.
4. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat to low. Cover the pot and let simmer for 1.5 to 2 hours, or until the beef is tender and the flavors have melded.
5. Check for seasoning and adjust as needed before serving.
6. Serve warm accompanied by a loaf of crusty bread if desired.

### Tips:

- For a stronger culinary cannabis flavor, you can increase the amount of culinary cannabis-infused olive oil.
- Be cautious to adjust the dosage based on your desired potency.
- Remember to start with a small portion of stew, especially if you are new to culinary cannabis.
- Wait for 1-2 hours before deciding to consume more as the effects take time to kick in.
- It is important to consume culinary cannabis responsibly and avoid driving or operating machinery after consumption.

# QUIZ



After you read through this month's Ingredient of the Month, take this quiz to test your knowledge. In order to earn continuing education hours (CEHs) from the American Culinary Federation (ACF), the test must be completed through the ACF's Online Learning Center. Seventy-five percent accuracy is required to earn one hour of continuing education credits toward professional certification.

# QUIZ

## Question #1

Why is close monitoring of light, temperature, humidity, and nutrient levels important in the cultivation of culinary cannabis?

- A. To determine the age of the plant
- B. To ensure optimal plant health, yield, and flavor
- C. To avoid pest infestations
- D. To reduce water consumption



# QUIZ

## Question #2

What is the general function of antioxidant properties found in culinary cannabis?

- A. Boosting metabolism
- B. Enhancing cognitive function
- C. Protecting cells from oxidative stress
- D. Promoting muscle growth



# QUIZ

## Question #3

What strains of culinary cannabis are known for their therapeutic effects and health benefits?

- A. High-THC strains
- B. Hybrid strains
- C. Terpene-rich strains
- D. High-CBD strains



# QUIZ

## Question #4

Indica strains of culinary cannabis are commonly associated with citrusy and floral flavors.

- A. True
- B. False



# QUIZ

## Question #5

What process must culinary cannabis undergo to activate cannabinoids like THC before it is used in a recipe?

- A. Fermentation
- B. Drying
- C. Decarboxylation
- D. Curing



# QUIZ

## Question #6

Why is understanding the cannabinoid content of the strain important in culinary cannabis recipes?

- A. It enhances the aroma
- B. It ensures proper curing
- C. It helps achieve the desired effects and dosage
- D. It prevents mold growth





# QUIZ

## Question #7



Culinary cannabis tinctures can be alcohol or glycerin based, with glycerin-based tinctures known to have less potency due to THC dilution.

- A. True
- B. False

# QUIZ

## Question #8

Which form of culinary cannabis is water-soluble and more versatile than cannabis flower and buds?

- A. Cannabinoid powder
- B. Cannabis oil
- C. Cannabinoid tincture
- D. Cannabis edible



# QUIZ

## Question #9

The \_\_\_\_\_ hormone is responsible for the feeling of hunger after consuming cannabis.

- A. insulin
- B. ghrelin
- C. serotonin
- D. melatonin



# QUIZ

## Question #10

How long is it suggested to wait before consuming more of a food product that has been infused with culinary cannabis?

- A. 15-20 minutes
- B. 30-60 minutes
- C. 45-90 minutes
- D. 60-120 minutes



# JOIN US NEXT MONTH!

Stay tuned for the next ACF Ingredient of the Month! Be sure to visit the Online Learning Center (OLC) to download a copy of each month's ingredient presentation. Don't forget to take the official IOTM quiz through the OLC to earn one hour of continuing education credits toward professional certification.

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