

# All About Edible Seaweed

**EDIBLE SEAWEED** or sea vegetables, are seaweeds that can be eaten and used in the preparation of food. They typically contain high amounts of fiber. They may belong to one of several groups of multicellular algae: the red algae, green algae, and brown algae. Most edible seaweeds are marine algae whereas most freshwater algae are toxic. Edible seaweed has an umami flavor- a pleasant savory taste, which results from a high level of the amino acid, glutamate.

## HEALTH BENEFITS

In general, eating edible seaweed is a simple way to boost a person's intake of vitamins and minerals without adding many calories. Edible seaweed typically contains a high amount of fiber. Edible Seaweed can also be a good source of manganese, which plays an important role in the normal functioning of the nervous system, and helps break down proteins and fat.

## STORING EDIBLE SEAWEED

**SHEETS:** Keep sheets of edible seaweed such as Nori fresh by keeping it sealed in a zip-lock bag or a tightly sealed glass jar. Consider adding a "do not eat" package of silica gel to absorb the moisture so that the seaweed will stay dry. In humid environments, you may want to freeze your nori for extended shelf life. Foods freeze indefinitely, but the quality declines over time.

**FRESH:** Storing fresh seaweed can vary depending on the variety. However, it is always best to use fresh seaweed as soon as possible. It will keep in the fridge for only a few days. Some varieties freeze well. Do wash fresh seaweed before storing.

## CULINARY USES

- Edible seaweed is most notably found in Japanese dishes such as sushi rolls, miso soup and onigiri.
- Edible seaweed is now being added to a variety of food such as slaw, pesto, salads, seasoning, and dressing.
- Pan-frying dried Dulse seaweed with oil is said to create a "bacon-like" flavor.



## INTERESTING FACTS

The dish often served in western Chinese restaurants as 'Crispy Seaweed' is not seaweed but cabbage that has been dried and then fried.

Seaweed oil is also used for biofuel, massage oil, soaps, and lotions.

Agar or agar-agar is a colorless, flavorless substance extracted from various red algae. It is used as an alternative to gelatin.

About 70% of the world's oxygen comes from seaweeds and other marine algae.