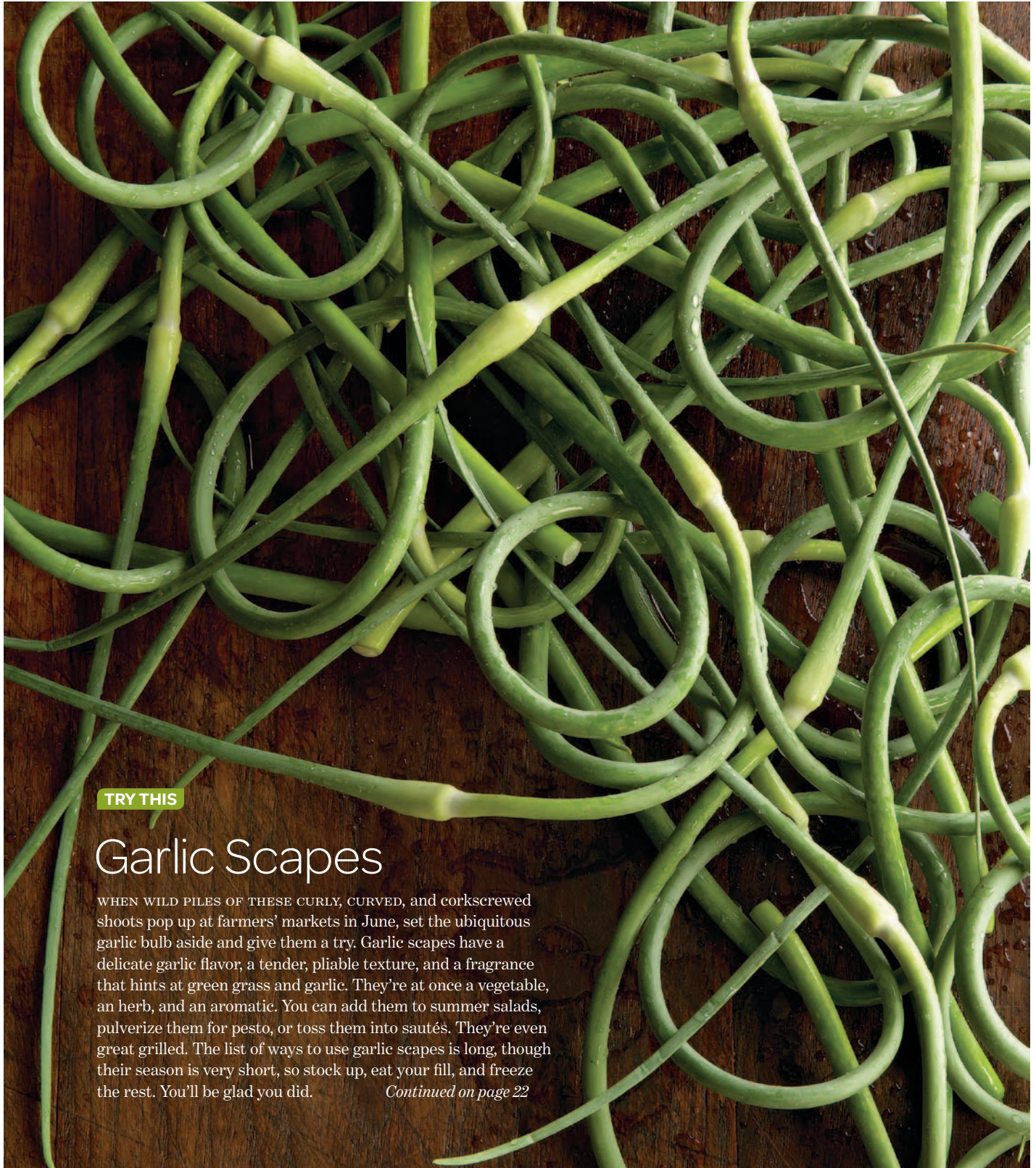




MARKETPLACE

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TRY THIS

Garlic Scapes

WHEN WILD PILES OF THESE CURLY, CURVED, and corkscrewed shoots pop up at farmers' markets in June, set the ubiquitous garlic bulb aside and give them a try. Garlic scapes have a delicate garlic flavor, a tender, pliable texture, and a fragrance that hints at green grass and garlic. They're at once a vegetable, an herb, and an aromatic. You can add them to summer salads, pulverize them for pesto, or toss them into sautés. They're even great grilled. The list of ways to use garlic scapes is long, though their season is very short, so stock up, eat your fill, and freeze the rest. You'll be glad you did.

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TRY THIS GARLIC SCAPES

A flower stem with no flower

“Scape” is a botanical term that refers to a flower-bearing stem. A garlic scape is the flower stem of the garlic plant (*Allium sativum*), which forms a pod near the top of the stem that’s full of bulbils, or tiny garlic cloves. Scapes sprout mostly from hard-neck garlic varieties like Rocambole and Purple Stripe; soft-neck types, like Artichoke, are bred not to grow stems at all.

For years, scapes were considered little more than a byproduct of the garlic plant. They were trimmed off in early summer simply to ensure that all of the plants’ energy went into forming plump bulbs underground. Today, scapes are harvested not only for that reason but also to meet growing demand for them as an ingredient.

Look for green curves and curls

Typically found at farmers’ markets, garlic scapes are making headway in supermarkets, too. Look for long, curved, or curly stalks that are firm, smooth, and a vibrant green.

You can refrigerate scapes in a paper bag for about a month. For longer storage, blanch and freeze them for up to a few months, though they’ll lose flavor over time.

Eat them raw or cooked

Although the entire scape is edible, the pod and tip above it can be fibrous and are best discarded. Use garlic scapes as you would scallions or shallots, or in any dish that could use a garlicky note. Blend raw scapes into hummus, bean dips, salad dressing, or even softened butter to spread over grilled vegetables or baked potatoes. Purée them with pine nuts, lemon juice, olive oil, parmesan, salt, and pepper for pesto. You can also add them to scrambled eggs or use them as a garnish.

Scapes are more delicately flavored and sweeter when cooked. Slice them into ½-inch pieces and sauté them with olive oil, salt, pepper, and a spritz of lemon juice for an easy side dish, or grill whole scapes as you would scallions. Like green beans, they’re great steamed, added to stir-fries, or blanched and tossed into salads (see the recipe at right).

With their mellow garlicky flavor, scapes pair well with summer produce like zucchini, chard, and spinach; herbs like cilantro and lemongrass; rich ingredients like bacon, cream, eggs, mayonnaise, butter, and cheese; and bold flavors like lemon juice, soy sauce, and mustard.

—Melissa Denchak

potato salad with garlic scapes, snap peas, and scallions

In this creamy potato salad, the scapes’ gentle garlic notes enhance the subtle sweetness of the potatoes and peas. Serves 6 to 8

3 lb. small to medium yellow potatoes, such as Yukon Gold, scrubbed

Kosher salt

¼ lb. garlic scapes, pods and tips removed

6½ oz. sugar snap peas, trimmed and cut on the diagonal into ½-inch pieces (1½ cups)

½ cup mayonnaise

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 large lemon, finely grated to yield 2 tsp. zest, squeezed to yield 2 Tbs. juice

Freshly ground black pepper

2 Tbs. plain rice vinegar

½ cup thinly sliced scallions

¼ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

¼ cup chopped fresh mint

Put the potatoes in a 6-quart pot; add 2 Tbs. salt and enough water to cover by 1 inch. Put the scapes on the potatoes.

Bring to a boil over high heat, then lower the heat to medium, and

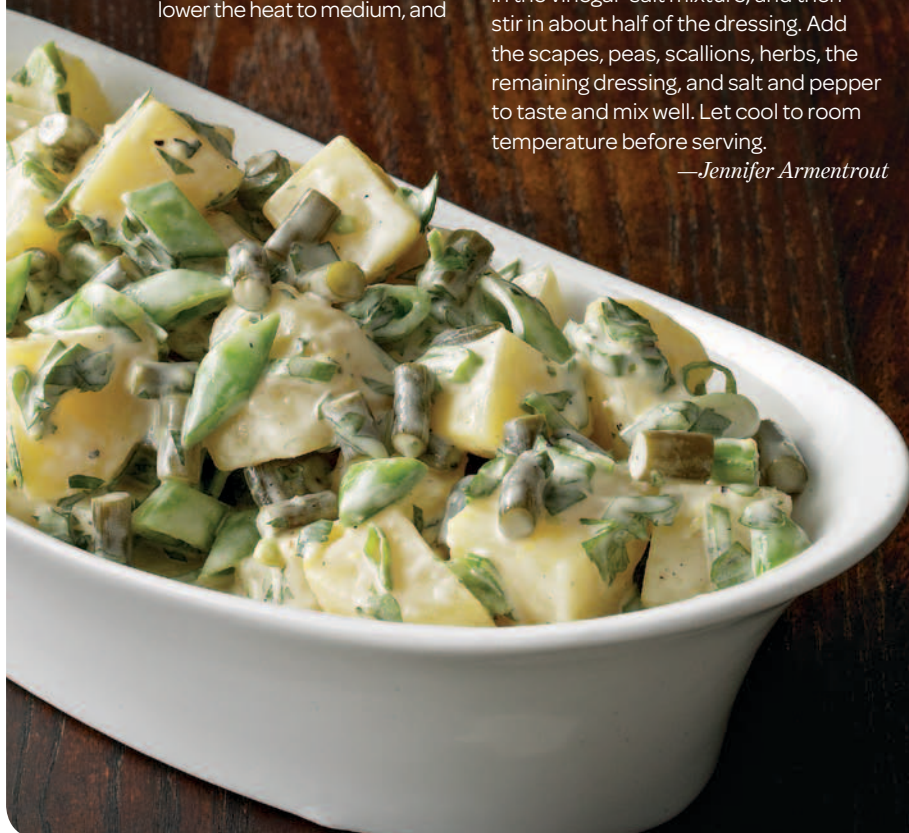
simmer vigorously until the scapes are just tender, about 5 minutes after the water boils. With tongs, transfer the scapes to a cutting board and cut into ½-inch pieces.

Continue to simmer the potatoes until just tender when pierced with a fork, about 15 minutes more. Add the peas and simmer until crisp-tender, 1 to 2 minutes. Drain the potatoes and peas in a colander. With tongs, transfer the potatoes to a cutting board. Rinse the peas under cold water to stop the cooking, and let drain.

While the potatoes cool, whisk the mayonnaise, oil, lemon zest and juice, and ½ tsp. each salt and pepper in a small bowl. In a large bowl, mix the vinegar with 2 tsp. salt and stir to dissolve.

When the potatoes are just cool enough to handle, scrape their skins off with a paring knife and cut them into ¾- to 1-inch pieces. Toss them in the vinegar-salt mixture, and then stir in about half of the dressing. Add the scapes, peas, scallions, herbs, the remaining dressing, and salt and pepper to taste and mix well. Let cool to room temperature before serving.

—Jennifer Armentrout



Photographs by Scott Phillips; food styling by Samantha Seneviratne