



2820 East 44th Street, Vernon, CA 90058 * Tel. (323) 588-1127 Fax. (323) 588-7723
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Menu Planning for May 2015

If you're planning a menu for May, there are a few holidays to consider and many fresh fruits and vegetables making their entrance for the summer.

May:

Full Moon on May 3rd is called the Flower Moon.

May is National BBQ, Egg, Strawberry and Salad Month!!

- May 1st – May Day
- May 1st and 2nd – 141st Kentucky Derby
- May 5th – Cinco de Mayo
- May 10th – Mother's Day
- May 16th – 19th – National Restaurant Show, Chicago, IL
- May 25th – Memorial Day observed

Plan ahead for June:

Full Moon on June 2nd, called the Strawberry Moon because it indicated when the berries were ready for harvest (called the Rose Moon in Europe where strawberries were not indigenous).

June is National Dairy Month, Get Outdoors Month and National Fruit and Vegetable Month!

- June 13th - Weed Your Garden Day
- June 14th - Flag Day
- June 17th - Eat Your Vegetables Day
- June 17th – Ramadan starts
- June 18th – International Picnic Day
- June 21st - First day of Summer (Solstice is celebrated, the longest day of the year!)
- June 21st – Father's Day

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- Mid-month, wild strawberries start becoming available, depending on the heat. Purchase wild strawberries from your local farmer's market or strawberry stand because they are too delicate to ship – the aroma from *frais de bois* seems almost manufactured in it's strength and perfume.
 - Crystallized flowers are another plate freshener and they are becoming readily available from wholesale suppliers. Mother's Day is a great time to decorate with any edible flowers!

Mother's day is mid-month this year – on Sunday, May 10th. Remember that this is the busiest restaurant day of the year so a *weekend* of specials may be advantageous to guarantee a book full of reservations.

May availability becomes a bit more predictable towards the end of the month as the weather mellows and crops take hold of their landscapes. Ramps, fiddleheads and other harbingers of spring fade by mid - May to make room for stonefruit, their decline may be a little later this year – because of the late spring. Apricots and the first of the good Peaches will come in at the end of the month and provide a great treat to herald in June!

Plan on cherries, the first of the domestic stonefruit, to be best between Mother's Day and Father's Day (these holidays are a great way to remember the fresh cherry season in California). All of the other *drupes* begin at the end of this month: apricots, plums, peaches, nectarines, pluots, apriums and almonds.



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Other regions may start their cherry harvest a bit later to carry the sugar through the early part of the summer. The early cherries are the Burlatt, followed by the Bings in June, with Brooks in the middle; there are other, lesser known varieties, but these are the predominant types.

Lychee and Mangosteen are two international fruits that become more available in May and they are delicious bursts of tropical flavor. Late citrus should be available through almost the end of June: Meyers lemons, tangelos, sanguenille bloods and mandarins. Think of mixing some delicious late harvest citrus with some beautiful spring greens, baby roasted beets and some beautiful candied nuts and pansies.

All the flowering herbs are in full swing from mid-May through June – Sage, thyme and chive blossoms are beautiful additions to salads and tabletops. Lemon verbena makes a killer simple syrup for cocktails.



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Remember that the items in **BOLD** will prove to usually be better values as they are in their peak harvest or storage period.

Planning for May:

Almonds, Green

Apples

Apples – New Zealand

Artichokes

Artichokes, Baby

Asparagus

Avocados

Bananas

Beans - Fava

Beans - Green new crop

Beets

Berry - Blackberry

Berry - Blueberry

Berry - Raspberry

Berry - Strawberries

Broccoli

Broccoli Rabe

Broccolini

Cabbage

Cabbage - Napa

Cactus Leaves

Cactus Pear (Tuna)

Cauliflower

Celery

Celery Root (celeriac)

Chard

Cherimoya

Citrus – Blood Oranges

Citrus - Grapefruit

Citrus - Lemon, Meyer

Citrus - Oranges

Collards

Corn

Cucumber

Endive, Belgian

Feijoa

Fennel

Fiddlehead Fern (Eastern)

Grapes – Perlette (new crop)

Horseradish

Kale

Kiwano (Horned Melon)

Kiwifruit

Kohl Rabi, Green

Kohl Rabi, Purple

Citrus - Kumquats

Leeks

Lychee

Mangoes

Melon - Cantaloupe

Melon - Honeydew

Melon - Pepino

Melon - Watermelon

Mushroom - Maitake

Mushroom - Morels

Mushroom - Mouseron

Mushroom - Porcini

Okra

Onions - Spring

Onions – Spring Sweet

Onions - Vidalia

Papaya

Pears – Packham (imports)

Peas

Peas - English

Peppers - padron/shishito

Peppers – Bell

Peppers – Chile

Persimmon - Chile

Pineapple

Potatoes - Purple

Potatoes – Red

Potatoes – White

Potatoes-Yukon Gold

Quince

Radicchio

Radish

Rhubarb

Salanova

Shallots

Spinach

Spinach - Baby

Squash

Squash - Chayote (Merlito)

Squash - Summer

Star Fruit

Stinging Nettle

Stonefruit - Apricots

Stonefruit - Cherries

Stonefruit - Nectarines – new crop

Stonefruit - Peaches – new crop

Tamarillo

Turnips

Walnuts, green