



2820 East 44th Street, Vernon, CA 90058 * Tel. (323) 588-1127 Fax. (323) 588-7723
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Menu Planning for May 2016

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.

Plan for May:

Full Moon on May 20th is called the Flower Moon.
May is National BBQ, Egg, Strawberry and Salad Month!!

- May 1st – May Day
- May 5th – Cinco de Mayo

- May 7th – 142nd Kentucky Derby
- May 8th – Mother's Day
- May 21st – 24th – National Restaurant Show, Chicago, IL
- May 30th – Memorial Day observed

Plan ahead for June:

Full Moon on June 20th is 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 6th – Ramadan starts (30 days)
- June 13th - Weed Your Garden Day
- June 14th - Flag Day
- June 17th - Eat Your Vegetables Day
- June 18th – International Picnic Day
- June 19th – Father's Day
- June 21st - First day of Summer (Solstice is celebrated, the longest day of the year!)

Mid-month, wild strawberries (*frais de bois*) 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.

There is a commercial hybrid called Mare de Bois that is an adequate substitute and a bit more durable. 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!



Crystallized Viola

Mother's day is mid-month this year – on Sunday, May 8th.

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). Most of the other

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Monthly seasonality calendar based on harvest histories, some items may not be available because of weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

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commonly thought of *drupes* begin at the end of this month: apricots, plums, peaches, nectarines, pluots, apriums and almonds.

Other growing 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 most commonly seen fruit.

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, sanguinilla 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	Corn	Peas - English
Apples	Cucumber	Peppers - padron/shishito
Apples – New Zealand	Endive, Belgian	Peppers – Bell
Artichokes	Feijoa	Peppers – Chile
Artichokes, Baby	Fennel	Persimmon - Chile
Asparagus	Fiddlehead Fern (Eastern)	Pineapple
Avocados	Grapes – Perlette (new crop)	Potatoes - Purple
Bananas	Horseradish	Potatoes – Red
Beans - Fava	Kale	Potatoes – White
Beans - Green new crop	Kiwano (Horned Melon)	Potatoes-Yukon Gold
Beets	Kiwifruit	Quince
Berry - Blackberry	Kohl Rabi, Green	Radicchio
Berry - Blueberry	Kohl Rabi, Purple	Radish
Berry - Raspberry	Citrus - Kumquats	Rhubarb
Berry - Strawberries	Leeks	Salanova
Broccoli	Lychee	Shallots
Broccoli Rabe	Mangoes	Spinach
Broccolini	Melon - Cantaloupe	Spinach - Baby
Cabbage	Melon - Honeydew	Squash
Cabbage - Napa	Melon - Pepino	Squash - Chayote (Merlition)
Cactus Leaves	Melon - Watermelon	Squash - Summer
Cactus Pear (Tuna)	Mushroom - Maitake	Star Fruit
Cauliflower	Mushroom - Morels	Stinging Nettle
Celery	Mushroom - Mousseron	Stonefruit - Apricots
Celery Root (celeriac)	Mushroom - Porcini	Stonefruit - Cherries
Chard	Okra	Stonefruit - Nectarines – new crop
Cherimoya	Onions - Spring	Stonefruit - Peaches – new crop
Citrus – Blood Oranges	Onions – Spring Sweet	Tamarillo
Citrus - Grapefruit	Onions - Vidalia	Turnips
Citrus - Lemon, Meyer	Papaya	Walnuts, green
Citrus - Oranges	Pears – Packham (imports)	
Collards	Peas	

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