



# Leeks

## What are they?

Leeks are root vegetables that look quite similar to onions. Their flavor is onion-like but much milder. People who avoid this vegetable because they don't like onions should try them — their flavor is mellow, not overpowering, and often “sweet” when cooked. Unlike onions, leeks don't form much of a bulb on the end of the root. Instead, they remain cylindrical. The part that is underground remains tender & white, while the part exposed to the sunlight becomes tough and not very good for eating. To maximize the edible part of the plant, farmers mound the dirt up around the sprouting plant; this keeps more of it underground and white, but also means that dirt often gets between the layers, so leeks need careful cleaning before cooking.

## Storage Tips

Store leeks in the crisper drawer of the fridge. To easily clean leeks, slice into 1/2 inch pieces and place in a bowl of water. Swish the leeks in the water. The dirt and silt will sink to the bottom of the bowl and the leeks will float to the top. You may also freeze raw slices of leeks for use in winter soups and stews.

## Usage Tips

Leeks are most commonly used in soup. Cooks who have a favorite potato soup recipe might want to try adding some sliced leeks next time they prepare it, since the flavors go well together. A combination of leeks, potatoes, and carrots in a chicken broth makes a dish that many people enjoy. The vegetable is also edible raw, and it can impart a great crunchy flavor to salads or when eaten with a dip.

A Vegetable E-booklet



# RECIPES

## Potato Leek Soup

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tablespoons butter
- 3 large leeks, finely chopped (white & light green parts only)
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 lbs. of potatoes, scrubbed clean, chopped into 1/2 inch chunks
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 cups vegetable stock
- Salt + pepper to taste

Adapted from [www.dishingupthedirt.com](http://www.dishingupthedirt.com)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a dutch oven heat butter over med heat. Add leeks, cook for 3 min, stirring often. Add garlic and cook 1 min longer. Stir in the potatoes, salt, thyme, red pepper flakes, and bay leaf. Cook for about 1 min. Pour in stock and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, simmer for 20 minutes.
2. Carefully puree the soup in a high-speed blender until smooth & creamy (this may need to be done in two batches depending on your blender) Return pureed soup to pan, keep warm on a low heat. Season with salt + pepper.

## Buttered Leeks

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 leeks
- 2 T. unsalted butter, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt

Trim off and discard the root ends of the leeks. Trim off and discard any dried out or browned ends of the leek greens. Cut the leeks in half lengthwise, slice them crosswise into bite-sized pieces. You can use the dark green parts of the leek; chop it all up, just getting rid of any browned or dried ends. Wash and clean leeks.

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large frying pan over med-high heat, melt 1 tablespoon of the butter.
2. Add leeks to the pan. Sprinkle them with salt and stir to combine.
3. Cover pan, and reduce heat to med-low. Cook, stirring every 5 minutes or so until the leeks are very tender, 30 to 40 minutes total.
4. Take the pan off the heat and add the remaining tablespoon of butter. Stir until the butter is melted into the leeks. Serve warm.

Adapted from [www.thespruceeats.com](http://www.thespruceeats.com)