



SIMPLY GOOD FOOD

Asparagus

- Season:** Supplies are best from March through June.
- Selection:** Look for straight stalks with closed, compact tips and a bright green color along almost entire length.
- Storage:** Keep fresh asparagus clean, cold and covered. Trim the stem ends about 1/4 inch and wash in warm water several times. Pat dry and place in moisture-proof wrapping. Refrigerate and use within 2 or 3 days for best quality. To maintain freshness, wrap a moist paper towel around the stem ends, or stand upright in two inches of cold water.
- To Prepare:** Hold the base of each asparagus stalk firmly and bend the stalk; the end will break off at the spot where the stalk becomes too tough to eat. Discard the tough ends; trim the scales if the stalks are gritty. Leave stalks whole; or cut into 1 to 2 inch pieces, or slice diagonally, if desired.
- To Cook:** In a large skillet, over high heat, in 1/2 inch of boiling water, heat the asparagus to boiling. Reduce the heat to medium-low, and cook the asparagus for 3 to 5 minutes until it is tender crisp. Asparagus can be steamed whole (1 lb.) for 12 to 20 minutes or cut for 7 to 12 minutes. Microwave asparagus (1 lb.) whole or cut for 7 to 12 minutes; let stand 3 minutes.
- To Serve:** Serve asparagus hot or cold, with or without a sauce. Or use asparagus in recipes for soup, main dishes, salads, and appetizers.

The Facts

- Asparagus is an excellent source of Vitamin C.
- Asparagus also contains a large amount of Vitamin A and potassium
- A 5 1/2 ounce serving contains only 20 calories.

Source: The New Good Housekeeping Cookbook
A Produce Reference Guide

Stir Fried Asparagus

1 ½ pounds asparagus
2 tablespoons salad oil
½ teaspoon salt

1. Prepare asparagus as directed in general information for asparagus.
2. Cut asparagus diagonally into 3-inch pieces. In 3-quart saucepan or 12 inch skillet over high heat, in very hot salad oil, cook asparagus, stirring quickly and frequently, until evenly coated with oil. Sprinkle with salt; continue stir-frying asparagus about 3 minutes longer or until tender-crisp.

Saucy Chicken and Asparagus

1 ½ pounds fresh asparagus spears, halved
4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves
2 tablespoons cooking oil
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
1 can (10 ¾ oz) condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted
½ cup mayonnaise
1 teaspoon lemon juice
½ teaspoon curry powder
1 cup (4 oz) shredded cheddar cheese



If desired, partially cook the asparagus; drain. Place the asparagus in a greased 9-inch square baking dish. In a skillet over medium heat, brown the chicken in oil on both sides. Season with salt and pepper. Arrange chicken over asparagus. In a bowl, mix soup, mayonnaise, lemon juice and curry powder; pour over chicken. Cover and bake at 375° for 40 minutes or until the chicken is tender and juices run clear. Sprinkle with cheese. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving. Yield: 4 servings.

Supporting State Extension Goal: Health, Safety and Well Being

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