

# PETALS ON THE PLATE

CAROLINE WEBSTER INTRODUCES SOME EDIBLE FLOWERS THAT WILL ADD COLOUR AND TASTE TO YOUR SUMMER MEALS.

**LAVENDER** Use culinary lavender (English is best). Shred the flower. Put some ice-cream in a cone or bowl, sprinkle with a few lavender flowers and a drizzle of honey. They can also be used in cakes.

**MARIGOLD** Comes in a range of sunny colours and will brighten up any meal. The taste can be a bit spicy for young children, so introduce them sparingly. The petals can be used in salads or sprinkled over soup and rice and pasta dishes.

**NASTURTIUM** The flowers are crammed with vitamin C. They can be eaten whole, used in salads or as a garnish. They have a delicious sweet and slightly spicy flavour.

**ROSEMARY** Its flowers can be used in casseroles or as a garnish over meat. You can also create barbecue skewers by cutting 15cm-long stems and stripping the foliage. Soak in water and then use to make kebabs.

**ROSE** Interestingly, the flavour of the petals alters (just like the perfume) depending on the type and colour of the flower. They are delicious used in jellies and syrups.

**SAGE** The bright red flowers of the fragrant pineapple sage are delicious sprinkled over fresh pineapple and ice-cream.

**VIOLAS AND PANSIES** With your child, collect a dozen or so flowers. Pop them into an ice-cube tray and fill with water. Freeze. Your child will love them with their favourite drink.

**ZUCCHINI** Stuffed with cheese and herbs, then deep-fried, these flowers are a great delicacy in Italian cuisine.

*Other flowers to consider trying are dandelion, oregano, rocket, hibiscus and lemon verbena.*



## TASTE TEST

It's vital that lessons about what is edible, and what is not, start early. Children should never eat anything from the plant world unless they check first with you. Put simply, if you are unsure, don't eat it. Many plants found in gardens and parks are poisonous. Make sure all flowers come from plants that have not been sprayed with pesticides.

**DELICIOUS & PRETTY MAKE A RAINBOW SALAD BY ARRANGING NASTURTIUM, BASIL AND MARIGOLD FLOWERS IN A BOWL. ADD BABY LETTUCE, SLICED CAPSICUM, GRATED CARROT AND BEETROOT. SERVE WITH AN ORANGE VINAIGRETTE.**