

# Top Asian Greens

## Pak choy (bok choy)

All types of bok choy are suitable for quick cooking methods such as steaming and stir frying. Use like cabbage or spinach. Miniature bok choy leaves are used in some green salad mixes.

– **Canton pak choy**, white bok choy has thick, white, crisp and juicy stems and smooth round leaves similar in texture to cabbage or silverbeet.

– **Shanghai bok choy**, Shanghai bok choy has thick green stems and similar leaves to white bok choy. It is smaller in size, sweeter in taste and more tender than white bok choy.



## Peking cabbage

(wong nga pak, wong nga baak or wong bok)

Peking cabbage has an elongated shape with crisp, juicy stalks and pale green, crisp leaves not unlike cos lettuce which form a heavy, compact head. Peking cabbage can be used raw in salads, or cooked in various ways.



## Chinese flat cabbage

(Tat soi – Japanese name, Rosette bok choy or taai goo choy)

Chinese flat cabbage is round, relatively flat like a plate, with a stronger flavour and slightly tougher texture than Chinese white cabbage. Choose smaller cabbages with lots of young leaves clustered at the centre. Chinese flat cabbage suits quick moist cooking methods. The young centre leaves can be used raw in a salad. Miniature tat soi is regularly found in mesclun salad mixes.



## Garland chrysanthemum

(tung ho, tong ho, chong ho or thong ho)

The leafy stalks of Garland chrysanthemum are similar to Chinese cabbage, but the leaves are bluntly lobed and the stalks look more like a lettuce but feel slightly rough in texture. Garland chrysanthemum leaves have a subtle, but distinct, 'floral' flavour which is best enjoyed in small quantities, accompanied by other flavours. Garland chrysanthemum is a winter vegetable which is generally used in a stir fry or in soup.



## Flowering Chinese cabbage (choy sum or choy sum)

Flowering Chinese cabbage has pale yellow flowers on long thin green stems (15–20 cm long) with small green leaves. It is available all year round. Prepare flowering Chinese cabbage like broccoli using quick cooking methods. Use all parts of the stem, including the flowers. It is best to eat choy sum when the flowers are in bud rather than in full bloom.



## Chinese box thorn

(gau gei choy)

This vegetable has a straight unbranched stem and is closely covered by small oval leaves, and in some varieties, thorns. The branches are usually 25–30 cm long. Use only the leaves and discard the stems. Chinese box thorn is generally used for soups where it imparts a distinct flavour.



## Chinese broccoli

(Chinese sprouting broccoli, Chinese kale  
– gai laan)

Chinese broccoli has long green stems (about 2 cm in diameter and 20 cm long), white flowers and green leaves which have a white haze on them. The flowers should be in bud rather than in full bloom. To prepare, chop the leaves roughly. Peel the stem to get rid of the fibrous layer and cut into evenly-sized pieces. Stir frying or steaming are the most common cooking methods. It has a very strong broccoli flavour and can be used instead of broccoli.



## Water spinach

(ong choy)

Water spinach stems are hollow and the leaves are arrow shaped. They taste slightly similar to spinach. The shorter the stalks, the larger the leaves at the tip, the more tender are the leaves. Discard the lowest 5–6 cm of the stems if they are tough or fibrous. Chop stems into thirds, keeping the stem and leaves roughly separated. Cook the stems first as they need more cooking, then add the leaves. Water spinach is used in a variety of ways, e.g. soups, stir fries, or raw.



# Asian Greens

## Recipes

Bok choy slaw  
Peking cabbage soup  
Boiled gai laan with oyster sauce  
Stir fried choy sum with ginger  
Stir-Fried Shanghai bok choy with garlic



For more information and recipes visit

[vegetables.co.nz](http://vegetables.co.nz)

# Asian Greens

Asian vegetables have been in New Zealand since the Chinese first settled here in the late 1800s. There are hundreds of varieties of Asian vegetables, however, only some varieties reach retail stores on a regular basis.

Choy is the Chinese word for any leafy vegetable. Asian greens have also been called cabbage – even though they don't resemble Western cabbages. The names of Asian vegetables can be confusing as they are called different names in different areas of China. For example, Chinese white cabbage is called bok choy, buk choy, pak choi or baak choi.

## Bok choy slaw

Serves 4-6



2 cups finely sliced small bok choy  
2 cups grated carrot  
½ cup sultanas  
¼-½ cup pumpkin seeds  
¼ cup chopped mint or coriander  
2 spring onions, finely sliced

### Dressing

1 red chilli, finely chopped  
2 tsp sugar  
freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
¼ cup rice vinegar  
3 Tbsp fish sauce

Place bok choy, carrot, sultanas, pumpkin seeds, mint and spring onions in a bowl.

Place dressing ingredients in a jar with a lid and shake well.  
Pour the dressing over the slaw ingredients and toss well.  
Chill and serve.

## Peking cabbage soup

Serves 4



1 L water  
⅓ cup miso paste  
2 Tbsp vegetable oil  
½ Peking cabbage, washed and chopped  
pinch salt

Bring water to the boil in a saucepan.  
Add miso paste, oil and cabbage and simmer over a medium heat for 10-15 minutes or until cabbage is tender.  
Season and serve.

## Boiled gai laan with oyster sauce

Serves 2-3



1 Tbsp cooking oil  
500g gai laan, washed and trimmed  
1 Tbsp oyster sauce  
1 Tbsp soy sauce  
⅓ cup water  
1 tsp sugar

Half fill a large heavy-based saucepan with water and bring to the boil over a high heat.  
Add oil and gai laan and simmer over a medium heat for 5-8 minutes or until tender. Drain and keep hot.  
Place oyster sauce, soy sauce, water and sugar in a saucepan. Bring to a quick boil and stir constantly.  
Place gai laan on a serving plate, drizzle oyster sauce over and serve.

## Stir fried choy sum with ginger

Serves 2-3



2 Tbsp vegetable oil  
10g fresh ginger, thinly sliced or minced  
500g choy sum, washed and trimmed  
1 Tbsp rice wine  
pinch salt  
2 Tbsp water

Heat the oil in a wok over high heat until smoking.  
Add ginger and choy sum, stir, and add rice wine and salt.  
Add water; cover with a lid and cook, stirring occasionally for 2-3 minutes, or until choy sum is tender.  
Transfer to a plate and serve immediately.

## Stir-Fried Shanghai bok choy with garlic

Serves 2-3



2 Tbsp vegetable oil  
1 clove garlic, peeled and finely chopped  
500g bok choy, washed and trimmed  
1 Tbsp rice wine  
pinch salt  
2 Tbsp water

Heat oil in a wok or pan over high heat until smoking.  
Add the garlic and cook for 10 seconds.  
Add the choy sum, stir, and add rice wine and salt.  
Add water; cover with a lid and cook, stirring occasionally for 2-3 minutes, or until bok choy is tender.  
Transfer to a plate and serve immediately.