

## Italian Chestnuts



October is the month of the chestnut harvest and there are chestnut festivals all over Italy. Sweet and smoky, with a creamy texture and a burnished shell cooked just enough to steam the meat without burning it to a bitter crisp, **Italian Chestnuts**, are superior to the ones we typically find in local markets. The best way to enjoy them is roasting, although they can also be candied, boiled, steamed or deep-fried.

Chestnuts are rich in various minerals, especially potassium, phosphorus, magnesium and calcium. Unlike most nuts, they contain a substantial quantity of vitamin C.

Look for raw Italian chestnuts with a dark brown exterior with no significant blemishes or cracks, and skin should be shiny, tight and healthy looking. Avoid any nuts which are soft, off-colored, cracked or moldy. Fresh chestnuts dry out quickly so they should be kept in a sealed container in the fridge. They can also be stored in an open mesh bag, placed in a cool and dry place for up to two months.

Chestnuts are peeled and cooked before eating. They should not be eaten raw, as the tannic acid in them can upset your stomach. Chestnuts can be roasted in their shells, boiled, braised or puréed. Their sweet nutty flavor combines nicely with poultry, mushrooms, whipped cream, or vanilla.

Here are some ways to prepare chestnuts:

### Boil

- Boil chestnuts for 25-30 minutes with water
- Remove chestnuts from pot, and rinse them with cold water before serving

### Roast

- Preheat oven to 425°F
- Cut an "X" on top of each chestnut to keep them from exploding while roasting
- Put chestnuts on a baking pan with the "X" facing up
- Roast for 30-40 minutes until the skins open
- Remove chestnuts from oven, peel off the skin before serving

### Microwave

- Cut chestnuts in half
- Place them in a bowl, and microwave them for 2-5 minutes

### Open Fire

- Cut an "X" on top of each chestnut
- Cook them in a cast-iron pan over an open fire for 5 minutes
- Turn over, and cook for another 5 minutes

## Italian Sausage, Mushroom, and Chestnut Stuffing

Italian Sausage, Mushroom, and Chestnut Stuffing recipe: <https://www.closetcooking.com/italian-sausage-mushroom-and-chestnut/>

**PREP TIME: 10 MINS / COOK TIME: 1 HR / SERVINGS: 4**

### INGREDIENTS:

- ❖ 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ❖ 8 oz Italian sausage, casings removed
- ❖ 1 tbsp. butter
- ❖ ½ cup onion, diced
- ❖ ½ cup celery, diced
- ❖ 1 tablespoon butter
- ❖ 4 oz mushrooms, quartered
- ❖ 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- ❖ 1 tbsp. thyme, chopped
- ❖ 2 tbsp. sage, chopped
- ❖ salt and pepper to taste
- ❖ ¼ cup white wine or chicken stock
- ❖ 1 handful parsley, chopped
- ❖ 1 cup roasted and peel chestnuts, halved
- ❖ 1 day old loaf Italian bread cut into 3/4 cubes
- ❖ 2 cups chicken stock, warm

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat the oil in a pan over medium heat.
2. Add the sausage and cook until no longer pink, about 8-10 minutes, breaking it apart as you go and set it aside.
3. Add the butter, onions and celery to the pan and sauté until tender, about 10 minutes.
4. Add the mushrooms, garlic, thyme, sage, salt and pepper and sauté until everything is tender and just starting to brown, about 10-12 minutes.
5. Add the wine, deglaze the pan and simmer until most of the liquid has evaporated.
6. Mix the sausage, vegetables, parsley, chestnuts and bread in a large bowl and mix in the stock until all of the bread is moist but not soggy.
7. Pour the mixture into a greased baking dish and cover with foil.
8. Bake in a preheated 350F/180C oven for 20 minutes.
9. Remove the foil and continue cooking until the top turns nice and golden brown, about 10 minutes.





## Apples

**Honeycrisp Apples** were developed in 1960 through an apple cross-breeding program and were released in 1991 to the market. They have a light green or yellow background covered with a red-orange flush and a hint of pink. Honeycrisp Apples are crisp, crunchy, juicy, sweet, refreshing, and with a little trace of acidity.



**Royal Gala Apples** are a cross between a **Golden Delicious**, and a **Kidd's Orange Red**, which were discovered in the 1930's in New Zealand. They have gained popularity in the United States since the 60's.



Royal Galas are characterised by a blush of pink on the skin, and a striking bright yellow-red color. With a mildly sweet flavor and long availability window, this apple is one of today's most popular varieties. Galas are among the top 3 apple varieties grown in Washington State. Due to their early harvest date and softer-eating, Gala apples tend to be smaller in size than most, making this one a great choice for snacking, and for kids.



**Ambrosia Apples** They are glossy, and have a pink-tinged orange/red flush over a creamy-yellow and green background. Ambrosia Apples are tender with a juicy and crispy flesh. Since they are a low-acidic apple, Ambrosia Apples are a great snacking variety for kids and seniors.

## Organic Sweet Potatoes & Yams

With Thanksgiving quickly approaching, we wanted to focus on organic **Sweet Potatoes** and **Yams**, which are two of the holidays busiest commodities. All of our organic sweet potatoes and yams come from California and they are grown by AV Thomas. Mr. Thomas started growing yams in Livingston, California, on 10 acres in 1960. The company has been growing ever since, and they are the largest sweet potato shipper in California; they have over 700 employees (depending on the season), harvest over 1700 organic acres, and on their busy days load up 90 truckloads of sweet potatoes a day! We choose to partner with AV Thomas due to their high quality standards, food safety standards, and exceptional customer service.



Many people ask us, "What's the difference between a sweet potato and a yam?" The answer is – Sweet Potato is the large "category" name, and yams are a type of sweet potato. So all yams can be called sweet potatoes, but not all sweet potatoes can be called yams. Sweet Potatoes are yellow to cream colored inside; drier than yams, and have a mild, nutty taste. Yams are moist, sweet and orange when you cut into them. The most popular variety of yam grown in the US is the Beauregard variety. Red yam varieties include garnets – they are extra moist and flavorful with orange insides and a red-copper to plum colored skin.



**Sweet Potatoes**

Sweet Potatoes are considered a SUPERFOOD. They are high in fiber, and in antioxidants like Vitamin E and beta-carotene. Antioxidants are essential for good brain functioning, and it's one of the few sources of Vitamin E that is low in fat and calories. Sweet potatoes also have a low glycemic index, meaning they are a food that is characterized by slow absorption, a modest rise in glucose levels, and a smooth return to normal levels. This is very important for people who suffer from diabetes, who are dependent upon stable blood glucose levels. Potassium is also found in sweet potatoes. Potassium is important in maintaining fluid, electrolyte balances and healthy cells. Naturally low in calories, and high in nutritional value, sweet potatoes and yams are some of Mother Nature's best work!



**Garnet Yam**

Make sure you speak with your Fresh Direct Produce sales rep to pre-book your organic Sweet Potatoes and Yams for the Thanksgiving Holiday to ensure supplies for your customers.



**Jewel Yam**



For more information on these items, please contact your sales representative by calling:  
Vancouver: 604.255.1330 Calgary: 403.235.1366  
or visit our website : [www.freshdirectproduce.com](http://www.freshdirectproduce.com)



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