

FORAGING GUIDE: DANDELIONS

(*Taraxacum officinale*)



IDENTIFICATION:

Season: Spring through fall (best in early spring before flowering)

Leaves: Deeply toothed, hairless, and grow in a basal rosette (3-10 inches long); milky sap when broken.

Flowers: Bright yellow, made of many small petals; 1-2 inches wide, bloom singly on a hollow, leafless stem.

Roots: Thick taproot, brown outside and white inside.

WHERE TO FIND THEM:

Lawns, meadows, roadsides, parks, vacant lots. Prefer full sun and disturbed soil. Avoid areas sprayed with herbicides, pesticides, or pet waste.

PARTS TO HARVEST & HOW:

Leaves: Harvest in early spring for mild flavor before flowering.

Flowers: Pick in mid-spring to summer; choose freshly opened heads. **Roots:** Best in fall or early spring for stronger medicinal properties.

Tip: Always harvest sustainably-never take more than 30% from a patch.

HOW TO USE DANDELIONS:

Leaves: Eat raw in salads or cook like spinach. Bitter; blanch or sauté to mellow taste. **Flowers:** Use in jelly, wine, fritters, or syrup. Remove green base (can be bitter). **Roots:** Roast and grind for herbal coffee. Can be tinctured or

dried for tea.

SAFETY & SUSTAINABILITY:

- Wash all parts thoroughly
- Avoid polluted areas
- Don't confuse with lookalikes like Cat's Ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*) (lookalikes have hairy leaves and branching flower stems)

Foraging Guide: Dandelions TOOLS TO BRING:

- Garden gloves
- Small knife or scissors
- Basket or cloth bag
- Trowel (for roots)
- Field guide or phone for ID help

QUICK FACTS:

- All parts of the dandelion are edible and medicinal - Rich in vitamins A, C, K, and minerals
- Known for detoxifying and digestive benefits