

Food Focus: Root Vegetables

The roots of any plant are its anchor and foundation; they are the essential parts that support and nourish the plant. Root vegetables lend these properties to us when we eat them, making us feel physically and mentally grounded and rooted, increasing our stability, stamina, and endurance. Roots are a rich source of nutritious complex carbohydrates, providing a steady source of necessary sugars to the body. Instead of upsetting blood sugar levels like refined sweet foods, they steady them. Since they absorb, assimilate and supply plants with vital nutrients, roots likewise increase absorption and assimilation in our digestive tracts.

Long roots include carrots, parsnips, burdock and daikon radish. Round roots include turnips, radishes, beets and rutabagas. Long roots like burdock and daikon are excellent blood purifiers and can help improve circulation in the body and increase mental clarity. Round roots are nourishing to the stomach, spleen, pancreas and reproductive organs and can help regulate blood sugar, moods, and alleviate cravings.

Featured Recipe Roasted Root Vegetables

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 25-35 minutes

Serves: 4-6

Ingredients:

1 sweet potato
2 parsnips
2 carrots
2 turnips or 1 large rutabaga
1 daikon radish (or substitute/add in your favorites, like squash!)
olive oil
salt and pepper
herbs like: rosemary, thyme or sage, fresh if possible

Directions:

1. Pre-heat oven to 375.
2. Wash and chop all vegetables into large bite-sized pieces.
3. Place in a large baking dish with sides.
4. Drizzle with olive oil; mix well to coat each vegetable lightly with oil.
5. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and herbs.
6. Bake uncovered for 25-35 minutes until vegetables are tender and golden brown, checking every 10 minutes to stir and make sure veggies are not sticking.

Note:

Any combination of vegetables will work. Roasting only one kind of vegetable also makes a nice side dish.

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Amy Coughlin, a Certified Wellness Coach, educates individuals to make better healthy food and lifestyle choices. By creating awareness and balance, she empowers people to make significant, long-term choices which leads to living an energized and passionate life. Ultimately, her life experiences and education, coupled with her expertise in corporate training and recruitment, has inspired her to coach individuals and corporate groups in wellness education programs.

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