



Garden to Table: Edible Flowers

Introduction

Edible flowers add beauty, flavor, and nutrition to your landscape. The following list are just some of the flowers that thrive in Ventura's Mediterranean climate and can be incorporated into salads, desserts, beverages, and more. Always ensure flowers are pesticide-free before consuming.

Recommended Edible Flowers

Nasturtium (*Tropaeolum majus*)

Flavor: Peppery, similar to watercress

Uses: Salads, garnishes, stuffed flowers

Growing Tips: Easy to grow, prefers full sun, tolerates poor soil, blooms spring through fall

Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*)

Flavor: Mildly tangy, slightly bitter

Uses: Salads, soups, rice dishes, herbal teas

Growing Tips: Self-seeding annual, full sun to part shade, blooms most of the year in Ventura

Borage (*Borago officinalis*)

Flavor: Cucumber-like, refreshing

Uses: Beverages, salads, frozen in ice cubes

Growing Tips: Self-seeding annual, full sun, attracts pollinators, beautiful blue star-shaped flowers

Lavender (*Lavandula* spp.)

Flavor: Floral, slightly sweet

Uses: Baking, beverages, honey, sugar infusions

Growing Tips: Perennial, drought-tolerant, perfect for Ventura, full sun, well-drained soil

Rose (*Rosa* spp.)

Flavor: Floral, slightly sweet to fruity

Uses: Jams, desserts, beverages, salads

Growing Tips: Fragrant varieties have best flavor, remove bitter white base, choose disease-resistant cultivars

Pansy & Viola (*Viola* spp.)

Flavor: Mild, slightly sweet

Uses: Salads, desserts, frozen in ice cubes, cake decorations

Growing Tips: Cool-season annual, excellent for winter gardens in Ventura, part shade in warmer months



Society Garlic (*Tulbaghia violacea*)

Flavor: Mild garlic flavor

Uses: Salads, as garnish, savory dishes

Growing Tips: Perennial, drought-tolerant, blooms spring through fall, thrives in Ventura

Squash Blossoms (*Cucurbita* spp.)

Flavor: Mild, slightly sweet, vegetal

Uses: Stuffed and baked, quesadillas, tempura, raw in salads

Growing Tips: Harvest male flowers (thin stems), leave female flowers (bulbous base) to produce fruit

Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)

Flavor: Pine-like, aromatic

Uses: Baking, infused oils, garnishes

Growing Tips: Perennial shrub, extremely drought-tolerant, perfect for Ventura, full sun

Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)

Flavor: Slightly peppery, earthy

Uses: Fried sage flowers, salads, garnishes

Growing Tips: Perennial, drought-tolerant once established, full sun to part shade

Safety Tips

- Only eat flowers you can positively identify
- Ensure flowers are pesticide-free and organically grown
- Avoid flowers from florists, roadsides, or garden centers unless specifically labeled edible
- Introduce new flowers gradually - some people may have allergies
- Remove pistils and stamens before eating (except for small flowers)
- Rinse flowers gently and pat dry before use

Resources

Learn more about the Ventura County Master Gardener using this QR to visit the website.

To learn more about the **UC Master Gardener Program** and see a list of upcoming classes, visit our website at <http://ucanr.org/sites/VCMG> or scan the QR code below

