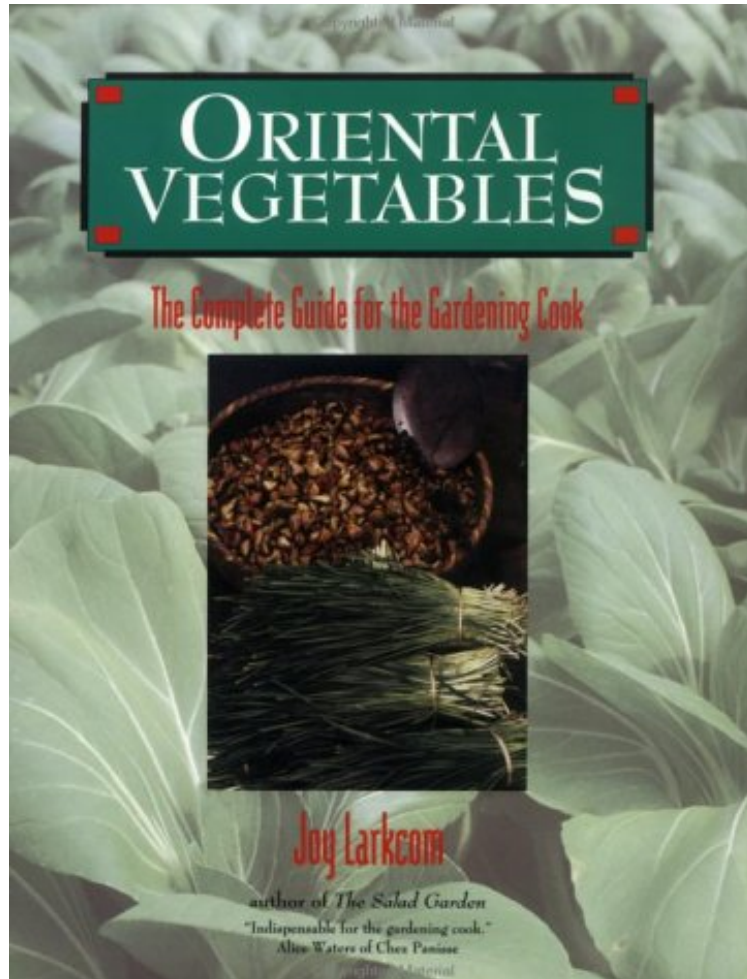


[FREE] Oriental Vegetables: The Complete Guide for the Gardening Cook

## Oriental Vegetables: The Complete Guide for the Gardening Cook

Joy Larkcom

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**Joy Larkcom : Oriental Vegetables: The Complete Guide for the Gardening Cook** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Oriental Vegetables: The Complete Guide for the Gardening Cook:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book; covers all aspects of Oriental vegetables By Laurie A. Brown I love that this book combines how to grow the Oriental vegetables and how to use them in meals. There are about a million varieties of Oriental greens and many go under different names in different areas; this book clears that up. Divided into vegetable families (onions, radishes, cabbage types, etc) it's easy to use. It has line drawings of each vegetable so you know what's what (useful when you buy veggies at the Oriental market and would like to be able to ask about them later or find seeds for them!). The first section is an encyclopedia of the vegetables (including herbs and some wild foods), followed by a section on growing, and finally recipes including pickles. I've been wanting a

book like this for a long time and so happy to finally have found it!35 of 35 people found the following review helpful. Great Source of Ingelligence on Growing and Using VeggiesBy B. Marold`Oriental Vegetables' by English gardening writer Joy Larkcom is the real deal. For foodies like myself, the most important thing to know about the book is exactly what deal it is real. I bought it with a bunch of other books on Asian ingredients without paying attention to much about the book except for the title, being lead to it by 's cleverly surfacing books related to the books you have already chose to buy. Especially do not be deceived by the very nice blurb on the cover from Alice Waters and play extra attention to the subtitle, `The Complete Guide for the Gardening Cook'.This book is much more about gardening than it is about cooking, and it tackles the subject of gardening very, very well. It does an exceptionally good job on detailing for us the ins and outs of growing the primary subject of the book, oriental vegetables.The very best news about this book is that it was published 14 years ago, just as commerce between the West and China and Indochina was warming up. This trade has had these 14 years to mature into something that makes the access to unusual seeds even easier. A corollary to this is the fact that the book also predates the blooming of the Internet, so most of the sources Ms. Larkcom gives from the UK, the United States, Canada, Australia, and Japan will probably be joined by others and be themselves more accessible.Ms. Larkcom began her inquiry into her subject already an expert on growing vegetables. She enhanced her credentials by making long trips to China and Japan and by enlisting the assistance of a large stable of translators. All of this linguistic help was probably even more necessary for Oriental plants, as the systematic naming of plants in China and Japan is probably far behind that in the west, plus the fact that there are simply so many different species to deal with. I have seen in other horticultural books that China is the source of far more plant species than any comparable region on the earth. Even a cursory look at Ms. Larkcom's table of contents gives weight to this observation. This lists 77 species or groups of species by `common name'. This is substantially less than Elizabeth Schneider's approximately135 species covered in `Vegetables from Amaranth to Zucchini', but this book is limited to less than a quarter of the world's land mass while Schneider covers the entire world (as seen from western Europe).If you already own Bruce Cost's classic `Oriental Ingredients', you have not touched the surface of what Larkcom's book can offer. Cost gives us the culinary and economic scoop. Ms. Larkcom focuses on the horticultural.Ms. Larkcom's favorite subject may very well be the cabbages, as they are her first subject and she lovingly describes them as being very easy to grow in western soils and climates. In her general introduction to these brassicas, she covers climatic factors, stages of use, fitting the oriental brassicas into Western gardens, cultivation, pests and diseases, grouping the oriental brassicas, and specific hybrid brassicas. The introductory section finishes up with an excellent diagram of how oriental brassicas are related. This may do nothing to improve your salads or stir-frys, but it's great in helping to choose substitutes when one species is out of season and a related species is in full bloom.For each individual species, Ms. Larkcom follows Bruce Cost's practice by giving the most common English name, the biological family, the two part Latin name, other common English names, plus names in Mandarin, Cantonese, and Japanese. Even among the Mandarin and Cantonese speakers, some plants may have several different names. After this linguistic heading, there are paragraphs on background, use, characteristics, types, climate, soil, cultivation, intercropping, pests and disease, harvesting, storage, and varieties. Whew! All this information includes a culinary aspect I have simply not seen elsewhere. This is the fact that several plants go through different stages and while some stages may be commercially less desirable in western eyes, they are really quite highly prized by Oriental users.After Brassicas, the other major groups of plants are beans, cucurbits (gourds and melons), onions, radishes, water vegetables, tubers, and herbs and wild plants. If I were to take away one plant from this book and give it a shot at growing in my back yard, it would probably be the radishes. The rich assortment of oriental radishes is in strong contrast to the variety available in even a better than average American megamart.The biggest surprise I found was that ginger received a light coverage as an herb and its relative, galangal is not mentioned at all. I am certain this is because neither of these two plants is easy to grow in home gardens, and growing is what this book is all about. This reinforces the fact that for the foodie with a black thumb, this book needs a companion with a culinary focus to fill out one's picture of Oriental veggies.The main body of the book dealing with individual plants is supplemented with an excellent chapter on growing techniques. I am not as familiar with the soil as I am with the stove, but from what I can see, this chapter is first rate, covering techniques which you may not find in your average Better Homes and Gardens title. This is followed by a chapter on cooking which is even better than what I saw in other books on vegetables where the emphasis was more on cooking than in this horticulturally slanted book.The appendices to this book alone are worth the price of admission with its excellent tables of gardening terms, growing calendars, plant names, and bibliographies. While there is some danger that the references to suppliers may be out of date, I do recognize several current major players such as W. Atlee Burpee and Johnny's Selected Seeds.If any of this interests you, this book is for you!6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Helps you sort out the seed catalog offeringsBy Mom's in the GardenThis book has really helped me understand the wonderful variety of Asian plant seeds offered by Johnny's and Fedco Seeds. It has an emphasis on the brassicas, probably because the author lives in Britain, and those crops can grow there all year. Keep her climate in mind when you read this book (average of 60 degrees in the summer, minimum low of 20 degrees in the winter, and plenty of rain).Oriental vegetables, especially the brassicas, seem to be easier to grow and hardier than the traditional cabbages, broccoli, etc., that I've grown side-by-side with them. It is

great to have a book that helps sort out the confusing names. For example, I learned that Senposai (a seed I bought from Fedco - called "one thousand treasure vegetable" in Japan) is a cross between ordinary cabbage and komatsuna, and tastes much like ordinary cabbage. Then there is a lot of information on komatsuna, chinese cabbage, pak choi, mibuna mizuna, choy sum, etc., with a chart to help you sort them all out. In the back, there is all the obligatory information on gardening techniques that is covered better in other books, but with helpful some references to Asian techniques and tools. She speaks with authority on plant protection, telling you specifics on what works for her. There is a nice, but small section of recipes. The growing information and plant name charts are VERY helpful. And finally, the index is thorough. If you are planning to grow Asian vegetables, especially brassicas, this book is worth consulting. If it were updated, I would give it five stars.

Here in paperback is the indispensable guide for Western gardeners to the Far East's cornucopia of amazing vegetables - all full of flavor versatile, and easy to grow. Whatever your climate or soil type, Joy Larkcom shows how you can grow a whole new world of vegetables. Here are hardy leafy mustards, raab, and komatsuna for temperate climates; Chinese yams and water spinach for the subtropical garden; even ideas for the city container gardener who can succeed the exotic herbs like sesame and ginger. Based on ten years of research, *Oriental Vegetables* features over a hundred varieties of crops for ever garden, along with their history and characteristics. Using organic methods and both traditional and modern techniques, Larkcom takes you through each stage of cultivation, helping you avoid pests and diseases, and offering not only tips on harvesting and storage, but also over of her own delicious and innovative recipes. Includes list of seed outlets and suppliers.

From *Library Journal* Larkcom, a British-based gardener and author of *The Salad Garden* (LJ 5/1/84), presents a comprehensive volume on Chinese and Japanese vegetables. Over 100 varieties are listed with information on scientific and Oriental names, general background, cultivation requirements, and use in the kitchen. An additional section focuses on gardening techniques, such as "cut and come again" methods and protected cropping. The book concludes with a short collection of simple recipes. The information-dense text is occasionally lightened by high-quality line drawings and several pages of color photographs. The thorough index will be helpful for individuals interested in determining the identity of vegetables found in Oriental markets. As a whole, *Oriental Vegetables* focuses more on information for the "garden" than the "kitchen," and it should be a fine addition for most gardening collections, especially in such areas where interest in Oriental food is high. - Virginia A. Henrichs, Chicago Botanic Garden Lib., Glencoe, Ill. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. 'An insufficiently sung heroine of our time is Joy Larkcom, and I recommend anything she has written on salad crops and vegetables. She delves into unfamiliar ground in both Europe and Asia' -- *Guardian* 20040529 About the Author JOY LARKCOM is the author of *The Salad Garden: Salad from Seed to Table*, and is a pioneer in organic gardening. A recent *Garden Writer of the Year* in Britain, she has been awarded the Royal Horticultural Society's prestigious Veitch Memorial Medal.