

Asparagus

The truth about asparagus. I have had asparagus soup, asparagus quiche, asparagus tarts, asparagus risotto and asparagus timbale. All have been good, but nothing in my opinion is as good as steamed asparagus. It needs no adornment and is elegant with nothing done to it.

How to choose asparagus:

Asparagus season usually lasts from early April until June. Regardless if you are buying thick or thin spears, always look for firm and lush ones. Avoid spears that are dry or wrinkled. Also look for asparagus with tightly furled tips. If the asparagus have slimy tips or smell dank, do not buy them.

Asparagus are best cooked on the day they are bought. If you cannot cook them straight away, stand the asparagus in a tall jar with about an inch of water at the bottom and place in the fridge. This will make the asparagus last about three days. Be sure to change the water once a day.

To steam or lightly boil asparagus, in a large pot, place between one and two inches of water. As the water comes to a boil, prepare the asparagus.

Holding the asparagus in front of you in both hands grasp the stalk end in one hand and hold your other hand about two inches away and break the asparagus. The asparagus will naturally break at the point where the asparagus stem turns woody.

Place the asparagus in boiling water and cook until bright green and tender. This should take between three and five minutes, depending on the thickness of the spear.

To stop the cooking process, dunk the cooked asparagus in ice water. Once cold, pat the asparagus dry on paper towels.

Store the asparagus in the fridge until ready to serve. Serve at room temperature.

Ilana Epstein is a seasoned food writer who has been writing for The Jerusalem Post for the last 10 years and enjoys creating simple recipes for easy entertaining. For more information, contact Ilana on IlanaEpstein@012.net.il.