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# VERONA COMMUNITY GARDEN

April 24, 2026  
Newsletter #4



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Verona Community Garden and That's My Brick!®



## Events & Activities

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Sunday, [April 26](#) at 10:00am  
Volunteer Day

Tuesday, [April 28](#) at 6:30–7:30pm  
Volunteer Day

### Volunteer Days:

We are hosting two brief volunteer sessions to fill the remaining beds so everyone can be ready for May. If you are able to assist with this physical work, we would greatly appreciate your help.

### VCG MEMBER WORK DAY & ORIENTATION

**MAY 2**  
**9:00 AM**  
RAINDATE: MAY 3



[May 2, 2026](#) at 9:00 a.m.  
Opening Work Day & Orientation  
(All Members)

All members—new and returning—are expected to attend.

**Rain Date:** May 3

**Attendance:** Mandatory

**Check-In:** Please sign in upon arrival

We look forward to getting the season off to a great start together!

### Roots & Reads

Roots & Reads is a fun, hands-on gardening workshop series for kids in grades K–4, presented in partnership with the Verona Community Garden. Each session combines stories, learning, and creative activities as we explore how plants grow and why



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**Workshop Dates**

April 27th at 4:00pm

May 4th at 4:00pm

May 18th at 4:00pm

**Montclair Community Farms Annual Plant Sale Fundraiser**

Location: Montclair Community Farms

- **Thursday, April 30:** 9:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
- **Friday, May 1:** 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- **Saturday, May 2:** 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (or until sold out)

**Rutgers Master Gardeners of Essex County Plant Sale**

Location: Presby Memorial Iris Gardens

- **Friday, May 1:** 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- **Saturday, May 2:** 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Additional Plant Sale Date**

Location: Essex County Environmental Center

- **Saturday, May 9:** 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.



## Reminders & Tips

- **Volunteer Days:**  
We are hosting two brief volunteer sessions to fill the remaining beds so everyone can be ready for May. If you are able to assist with this physical work, we would greatly appreciate your help. This volunteer sessions will be held on:  
**Sunday, April 26 at 10:00am**  
**Tuesday, April 28 at 6:30-7:30pm**
- **Opening Day Orientation and Garden Prepare Day is May 2 at 9am.** Returning gardeners are welcome to work in their bed. New gardeners are encouraged to wait until orientation. No one can begin this season until your payment is made online or mailed in. If you
- If you are planting an additional pot along the fences be sure to clearly mark it with a stake showing your name and bed #.
- The tomato cages near the shed are NOT for general community use. They are for donation beds and school beds.
- **What to Bring to the Garden:**  
Each gardener should have a personal bucket or tote with basic supplies, such as:  
gloves, pruners, snips (small pointed shears), a trowel, a claw rake, string, harvest bags, and waste bags. A small spray bottle of alcohol is also helpful for cleaning tools between uses.
- **Tool Kit Option:**  
If you prefer a ready-made solution, a garden tool and tote set can be a

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- A list of gardeners names and email addresses will be emailed to everyone. The purpose is for each of you to find a garden buddy. **Do not share this list.**

- **Those gardeners who share a common wall or bed** will be invited to a separate meeting to discuss productive uses of your shared space.

- The shed will not be ready for common use until May 2. Use caution if you must enter.

The lock combination is 2497. Please do not share it with anyone except paid garden members. The shackle on the lock (U Shaped bar) needs to be pushed and then released for the lock to open. To lock, push the shackle into the lock with the combo set, then spin the number dials. Be sure to check the area for other gardeners before you lock the gates.

- **Gate Use:**  
To open the front gate, push down on the handle.  
You may also use the back gate if parking in the gravel lot is more convenient.  
**Always close gates behind you to keep critters out.**

- **Water Access:**  
The water is now on. Hoses will be installed later this month.

- **Waste Policy:**  
All refuse and plant waste must be taken home—**please do not use the black municipal trash can for garden waste.**



- **Stay Informed:**  
The shed bulletin board includes bed assignments, a plot map, and planting calendars—check it regularly for updates.

- **Shared Tools:**  
Tools and gloves in the shed are available for community use. Tomato cages, fertilizers, and certain supplies are reserved for the advisory committee, donation beds, and school use only.

convenient way to keep everything organized.

Alternatively, something along these lines are useful. [Garden tools and Tote Set.](#)



- **Soil Access:**  
Soil is available next to the green shipping container behind the shed. You are welcome to use wheelbarrows to transport soil to your bed.  
Help filling the metal park beds is also appreciated—these beds should be filled to about 3 inches below the top.
- **Student Groups:**  
Students will be working in the garden at various times throughout the day. If you are present during these times, please do not engage with the classes so they can stay focused on their activities.
- **Planting Timing:**  
Just because plants are available for sale at garden centers does not mean it is the right time to plant them outdoors. Be sure to research appropriate planting times for your crops.
- **Community Donation Beds:**  
The metal beds in the public park area are maintained by committee members and students. Produce from these beds is donated to residents of Hillwood Terrace Apartments and others in need. Volunteer opportunities to help with these beds will be shared soon—thank you in advance for your support!
- **Soil Testing & Monitoring:**  
Many gardeners find a soil moisture meter helpful for proper watering. You may also consider a soil NPK test kit (typically under \$20) to monitor nutrient levels.  
For more detailed analysis, the [Rutgers Soil Testing Lab](#) offers testing services for approximately \$20.  
If you complete a soil test, please share your results with Carol or Dan.
- Additionally, please report any rabbit damage to the garden email address so we can assess how to address the issue.

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Community Donation Beds: The raised beds in the public park area are maintained by committee members and students. Produce from these beds is donated to residents of Hillwood Terrace Apartments and others in need. Volunteer opportunities to help with these beds will be shared soon—thank you in advance for your support!

- There is a seed sharing display inside the left shed door. Please add any extra seeds you have or help yourself to what is hanging.

The library and VEC are sponsoring a Native Gardening workshop on 28 at 6pm

- Your beds would benefit from an addition of raised bed soil or commercial compost.
- Do not be tempted to plant tomatoes, peppers or eggplant until after May 15. You can plant seeds for greens, radish, carrots, and sweet peas. See the linked planting calendars or check the calendars posted inside and outside the shed.

[The Old Farmer's Almanac Planting Calendar](#)  
[Zone 6/7 Planting Schedule](#)



## What's Up in the Garden

### Square-Foot Gardening Spacing Guide

Square-foot gardening (SFG) is a type of raised-bed gardening—basically, a raised box divided into squares. With the square-foot gardening method, you plant in 4x4-foot blocks instead of traditional rows. Different crops are planted in different blocks according to their size; for example, 16 radishes in one square foot, or just one cabbage per square foot. A lattice is laid across the top to separate each square foot.



One of the biggest advantages of square-foot gardening is how simple plant spacing becomes. Instead of measuring rows and guessing distances, each square is divided based on how many plants can comfortably grow within one square foot.

In general, plants are spaced using a simple rule: 1, 4, 9, or 16 plants per square, depending on their size. Larger plants need more room, while smaller crops can be planted more densely. This method not only saves space but also helps reduce weeds and maximize your harvest.

### Plants per Square Spacing Pattern Example Crops

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4 per square 2 × 2 grid Lettuce, basil, Swiss chard, marigolds

9 per square 3 × 3 grid Beets, spinach, bush beans, garlic

16 per square 4 × 4 grid Radishes, carrots, onions

**Quick Tip** 🌱 : To make spacing easy, lightly press a grid into the soil with your fingers before planting. This helps keep your layout neat and ensures each plant has enough room to grow.

### Square-Foot Gardening vs. Traditional Gardening

If you're deciding between square-foot gardening and traditional row gardening, it helps to understand how the two methods compare. While both can produce healthy crops, they differ in space usage, maintenance, cost, and overall efficiency.

Square-foot gardening is designed for simplicity and maximum yield in small spaces, while traditional gardening works well for larger areas and crops that need room to spread. The right choice depends on your space, time, and gardening goals.

### Does Square-Foot Gardening Really Work?

Yes, square-foot gardening works for those who have limited space because it allows plants to be situated more closely together. Also, we have definitely found that there is less weeding. If you don't have a lot of time available to weed, water, and maintain your vegetable garden, then square-foot gardening could be the answer. Finally, SFG has the benefits of all raised beds in that the soil warms more quickly for earlier planting and harvest.

However, there are limitations in what you can grow. As said above, plants that need more space such as corn, potatoes, watermelon, and pumpkins do not fare as well in boxes.

Square-foot gardening was revolutionary when it was first invented, and it's still a great system for people who are starting out, have limited space, or want a highly organized method to follow. However, you don't need to follow SFG to benefit from gardening with raised beds and good organization. There's a great quote: "If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail."

SFG works really well for many situations, but it doesn't fit everything. The success it brings can often lead people on to discovering the delights of fruit trees, using barrels to grow huge crops of potatoes, or managing a greenhouse full of high-value crops. It's a great stepping stone to the world of growing your own food, and that's why it's still going strong 35 years later!



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Companion Planting Chart for the Vegetable Garden

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Wondering which plants grow well together? This guide makes it easy to find the best vegetable pairings—and avoid combinations that can stunt growth or attract pests.

Backed by generations of gardening knowledge—and updated with modern research—this resource helps you plant with confidence and get better results.

For almost every vegetable you grow, there is likely to be a beneficial companion plant that will help increase soil nutrients, chase away pests, and help you get the most out of your garden. Companion planting is a great way to maximize the efficiency of your garden! Here is a list of the 17 most popular vegetables to grow along with their friends (and enemies).

### Companion Plants for Tomatoes

The tomato, as we know it today, has come a long way from the time it grew wild in



South America. Indigenous people cultivated them and slowly brought them north, experimenting with hybrids along the way. As a result, we have more than 10,000 kinds of tomatoes to enjoy today. It's now one of the most popular vegetables in the United States—and a favorite for home gardeners to grow.

**Friends:** The best companion plants for tomatoes are also ones that complement them in recipes. Basil and tomatoes were made to go together, not only in sauces but in the garden, too. This herb helps tomatoes produce greater yields and it repels both flies and mosquitoes. Marigolds are another good companion, repelling nematodes and other garden pests. Other friends to tomatoes include asparagus, carrots, celery, the onion family, lettuce, parsley, and spinach.

**Foes:** Poor tomato companion plants include cabbage, beets, peas, fennel, dill, and rosemary. Corn and tomatoes both suffer from the corn earworm, and tomatoes and potatoes are affected by the same blight, so keep these plants separate to prevent the spread of pests or disease.

### Companion Plants for Peppers

Although peppers were originally native to tropical areas, home gardeners can enjoy growing this vegetable throughout most of North America by purchasing transplants that have been started in greenhouses. and are particularly important in the cuisines of tropical Asia and equatorial America.

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**Friends:** Excellent pepper companion plants include basil, which helps repel aphids, spider

mites, mosquitoes, and flies and even potentially improves the pepper's flavor. Other good companions include onions, spinach, and tomatoes.

**Foes:** Poor companion plants for peppers include pole beans as vines can get tangled among the pepper plants. Garden favorites from the brassica family, such as broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage, are not good companion plants for peppers because they take similar nutrients from the soil and tend to attract pests such that may damage pepper plants.

### Green Bean Companion Plants



Did you know the original green bean had primarily ornamental value? That's because it took years to breed the natural stringy-ness out of green beans to make them more palatable for human consumption. Today, we enjoy hundreds of varieties of green beans—albeit, some of them are purple and red on the outside.

**Friends:** One of the best companion plants for green beans is corn because they make natural trellises, allowing beans to literally grow up with the corn. Beans also fix nitrogen in the soil, which is good for the corn. Marigolds, nasturtiums, rosemary, and summer savory repel bean beetles, and summer savory improves its growth rate and flavor. Other companions include broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and other members of the cabbage family along with cucumbers, peas, potatoes, and radishes.

**Foes:** Beets or anything from the onion family make poor green bean companions. Onions, in particular, impede the growth of bean plants.

### Cucumber Companion Plants



Cucumbers, which are known for pickles, relish, and raw eating, originated in India where a great deal of genetic diversity exists. Over thousands of years, the cucumber has been cultivated throughout the world.

**Friends:** Excellent companion plants for cucumbers include marigolds and nasturtiums, which repel aphids and beetles. Beans, celery, corn, lettuce, dill, peas, and radishes are also good cucumber companion plants.

cauliflower can compete for similar soil nutrients.

### Companion Plants for Onions



Although many people believe onions originated in central Asia, some research shows that onions may have been started in Iran and West Pakistan. Wild onions were likely used around the world for years before onions were formally planted and cultivated.

**Friends:** Carrots make good onion companion plants because onions will repel the carrot fly and chase away the aphids. Other good friends of onions include beets, cabbage, carrots, lettuce, parsnips (which also suffer from carrot fly), tomatoes, and spices like marjoram, savory, and rosemary.

**Foes:** Asparagus, beans, sage, and peas make more companion plants for onions. Onions may stunt their growth and negatively affect their flavor.

### Lettuce Companion Plants



Interestingly, lettuce may have been cultivated by ancient Egyptians. However, it's not clear that they ate the leaves as we do today, but instead may have used lettuce for oil production or as a religious sacrifice.

**Friends:** One of the best companion plants for lettuce is mint, which keeps away the slugs that feed on lettuce leaves. Chives and garlic help repel aphids, and marigolds attract aphid-eating ladybugs. Beets, broccoli, carrots, corn, peas, and radishes also work as good lettuce companion plants. And, finally, you may also want to plant a trellis of pole beans nearby as a wall of beans can provide shade as the weather grows warmer. Keeping lettuce plants cooler and well-watered can keep them from going to seed and becoming bitter.

**Foes:** Parsley, which tends to be bushy, can crowd your lettuce plants. Brassicas can compete with lettuces for the same nutrients.

### Summer Squash or Zucchini Companion Plants

Zucchini may be known as one of the most prolific garden vegetables in our country.

**Friends:** The best companion plants for zucchini are beans, peas, radishes, peppermint, dill, parsley, oregano and marigolds. Ideally, they should be grown with other plants that require regular watering but don't require a great deal of space.

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Foes: Potatoes make a poor zucchini companion



plant, as both are prone to blight. Cucumbers and pumpkins should also be planted further away as they attract the same diseases and pests as zucchini.

### Companion Plants for Carrots



Carrots are a staple vegetable for many gardeners, and the fact that they can be left in the ground during the winter makes them extra convenient.

**Friends:** Since carrots are heat sensitive, tomato plants that can provide them a bit of shade are excellent companions. Tomatoes are also known to produce solanine, which is a natural insecticide that targets pests affecting carrot plants. Since tomatoes benefit as well, they make perfect companion plants for carrots. Carrots aerate the soil around the roots of the tomato plants, allowing more air and water to reach the roots. Leeks and carrots are also good companion plants since leeks repel carrot flies and carrots repel leek moths and onion flies. Rosemary, sage, and chive also help repel carrot flies.

**Foes:** Both coriander and dill produce compounds that can harm carrot plants, and parsnips suffer from the same diseases and pests as carrots, so keep them apart to minimize a potential infestation.

### Radish Companion Plants



Although radishes likely originated in Asia, they have probably been grown in western Europe since the mid-sixteenth century. Since they can be ready to eat in only four weeks, they are one of the fastest crops in a home garden.

**Friends:** Cucumbers make good companion plants for radishes as they distract cucumber beetles that like to feed on the radishes. They also do well among carrots because they are harvested before the carrots and they loosen the soil as the carrots start to take off. Onions, beets, cabbage, kale, lettuce, spinach, and squash are also good friends for radishes.

**Foes:** Hyssop makes a poor radish companion plant because it can inhibit growth. Since radishes belong to the brassica family, they may have a difficult time germinating near broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, turnip, and mustard.

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[Companion Plants of Sweet Corn](#)
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A mutation in regular field corn, which led to the

sweet corn that we know today, was originally discovered in Pennsylvania in the mid-1700s. Sweet corn is typically harvested before the corn is completely mature so we can enjoy the higher sugar content.

**Friends:** Corn loves veggies that fix nitrogen in the soil—like green beans. Cornstalks also make a great trellis for vining or trailing plants including beans, cucumbers, peas, pumpkins, and melons. Zucchini is a good sweet corn companion plant when planted among corn.

**Foes:** Tomatoes make poor companion plants of sweet corn, as both are attacked by corn earworms. Plant these two far apart to minimize the spread of these pests.

### Potato Companion Plants



Potatoes are believed to have originated in the highlands of the Andes in western South America. In fact, researchers believe people started growing potatoes in that region as early as 8,000 to 5,000 BC.

**Friends:** Potato companion plants include beans, cabbage, peas, and corn. Marigolds planted near potato patches help deter beetles and horseradish will provide overall protection to potatoes.

**Foes:** Tomatoes as they are prone to blight, which can also affect potatoes, so they make poor companions for potatoes.

### Companion Plants for Peas



Peas may have been one of the oldest cultivated crops with wild plants being native to the Mediterranean area. The oldest pea was 3,000 years old and found in Thailand.

**Friends:** Peas love to be planted by beans, carrots, corn, cucumbers, radish, and turnip. If you plant mint near peas, they should be healthier and tastier. Chives planted near peas also help deter aphids, making them excellent pea plant companions.

**Foes:** Don't plant peas near garlic or onions as it will stunt their growth

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and cabbage. Primitive varieties originated around the Horn of Africa (East Africa).

**Friends:** The best companion plants for broccoli and other brassicas include celery, beans, beets, dill, onions, and lettuce.

**Foes:** Try not to plant tomatoes, eggplant,

beans, peppers, or squash nearby.

### Asparagus Companion Plants



Asparagus are hearty and prolific in early spring.

**Friends:** Tomatoes among the top companions for asparagus due to the mutually beneficial relationship they share. They emit solanine, which naturally deters the asparagus beetle. Basil's strong scent also confuses these beetles while attracting beneficial insects such as bees and butterflies.

**Foes:** Poor asparagus companions are onions, garlic, and potatoes, which can all inhibit growth.

### Companion Plants for Beets



Sea beets—beet's wild ancestors—were originally found near the Mediterranean Sea. People grew them for their leaves.

**Friends:** Good friends of beets include brassicas, lettuce, kohlrabi, and bush beans.

**Foes:** Don't plant beets near others from the same family including spinach and chard as they may attract the same diseases and pests.

### Companion Plants for Winter Squash



Winter squash such as butternut and acorn or pumpkins are a staple of autumn.

**Friends:** The best companion plants for winter squash include corn, beans, sunflowers, and spices like marjoram and dill.

**Foes:** Since winter squash tend to grow quickly and all over its bed, be sure to keep root crops

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[like radishes or smaller plants far away to keep from being overgrown.](#)
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## Companion Plants for Spinach



Chalk full of nutrients, spinach originated in what is now Iran.

**Friends:** The best companion plants for spinach include lettuce, mustard greens, chard, kale, and other leafy greens. Later, the same bed can be used for brassicas.

**Foes:** Potatoes, corn, and peppers are poor companions to spinach.

Follow these companion planting guidelines to boost yields, minimize pest or disease problems and make garden management easier!

*Pam Malinoski, Farmers Almanac*

*Updated: June 2, 2025*

## Recipes

### Quiche Recipe

*John Kanell  
Preppy Kitchen*



My endlessly adaptable and exceptionally easy Quiche Recipe is the back-pocket brunch recipe everyone should have. The savory egg custard filling is flavored with your choice of mix-ins and baked into a buttery crust—it's the perfect canvas for your culinary creativity!

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time (or use a store-bought crust as a shortcut, if needed) and requires zero specialized skills or tools.

Aside from being easy enough for even a novice to master, it's one of those kitchen chameleons that can be adapted to fit whatever you have knocking around the pantry and crisper drawer. No wonder it's my favorite quiche recipe!

Total Time: 1hr 50 minutes

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 50 minutes

Colling Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 8 servings

### EQUIPMENT

9-inch pie plate

Parchment paper

pie weights

Rolling Pin

### INGREDIENTS

1 pie crust

6 large eggs

½ cup heavy cream (120mL)

½ cup whole milk (120mL)

½ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

1 cup shredded gruyere cheese divided (100g)

1 cup diced ham divided (180g)

2 green onions thinly sliced

### INSTRUCTIONS

Let the pie crust soften at room temperature until it is ready to roll.

On a lightly floured surface, roll the pie dough into a 13-inch circle, about ⅛-inch thick. Press the dough into a 9-inch pie plate. Trim any uneven edges, leaving a 1-inch overhang. Tuck the overhang under and press the crust to the rim of the pie plate. Crimp the crust with your fingers or as you like. Place in the freezer for 20 minutes.

While the crust is chilling, preheat the oven to 425°F.

Press a piece of parchment paper inside the crust to fully cover it, then fill it with pie weights or dry baking beans. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes until the edges of the crust look dry.

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is lightly golden. Let the crust cool while you make the filling. Reduce the oven temperature to 350°F.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs, cream, milk, salt, and pepper. Stir in  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup ham (135g),  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup cheese (75g), and the green onion. Pour the egg mixture into the prepared crust. Place on a rimmed baking sheet.

Bake for 30 minutes. Sprinkle the top of the filling with the remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups of ham (45g) and cheese (25g). Continue baking for 20 to 25 minutes more or until the filling is puffed and completely set.

Cool for 30 minutes before slicing and serving. Garnish with additional thinly sliced green onion, if desired.

## NOTES

**Pat the diced ham very dry before adding it to the filling.** Too much moisture can keep the filling from setting properly. If time allows, I recommend you also cook the ham in a dry skillet over medium heat for 5 to 6 minutes, stirring frequently, until it releases some liquid and is lightly browned. Let it cool slightly before adding to the filling.

**If you want to use “wet” ingredients for your mix-ins,** do what you can to remove excess moisture first. This means cooking raw veggies until the pan is dry or squeezing out excess liquid from ingredients like defrosted frozen spinach or grated raw potatoes (though not frozen hash browns—they’re already pressed).

**If you are cooking a filling, make sure to let it cool after cooking** so you don’t accidentally scramble or curdle the custard mixture when you add it.

**Use a pastry mat with measurements** to help you roll out the dough to the appropriate size for your pie plate.

**If the edges of your pie crust are browning too quickly,** tent them with foil or use a pie shield.

**Let the quiche rest for a full 30 minutes before slicing.** Otherwise, they won’t be as clean or sturdy, and the filling may ooze out.

## NUTRITION

Calories: 295kcal | Carbohydrates: 12g | Protein: 14g | Fat: 21g | Saturated Fat: 10g | Polyunsaturated Fat: 2g | Monounsaturated Fat: 7g | Trans Fat: 0.01g | Cholesterol: 184mg | Sodium: 599mg | Potassium: 132mg | Fiber: 1g | Sugar: 2g | Vitamin A: 633IU | Vitamin C: 1mg | Calcium: 223mg | Iron: 1mg



## Lu's Bloody Mary

*Rosie Schaap*

*NY Times Cooking*



A Bloody Mary is a cocktail containing vodka, tomato juice, and other spices and flavorings including Worcestershire sauce, hot sauces, garlic, herbs, horseradish, celery, olives, pickled vegetables, salt, black pepper, lemon juice, lime juice and celery salt. Some versions of the drink, such as the "surf 'n' turf" Bloody Mary, include shrimp and bacon as garnishes. In the United States, it is usually consumed in the morning or early afternoon, and is popular as a hangover cure.

The Bloody Mary was invented in the 1920s or 1930s. There are various theories as to the origin of the drink and its name. It has many variants, most notably the Red Snapper (made with gin), Bloody Maria (made with blanco tequila), and the Virgin Mary (made without alcohol).

### **INGREDIENTS**

Lemon wedge

Lime wedge

4oz. tomato juice

2dashes Tabasco

2dashes Worcestershire sauce

Pinch of sea salt

Pinch of celery salt

Pinch of coarsely ground pepper (pepper too finely ground will bring more heat and less flavor)

¼teaspoon peeled and freshly shredded horseradish (avoid using prepared horseradish from a jar)

2oz. vodka (not flavored)

### **GARNISH**

Slice of seedless cucumber

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Pitted green olive  
Lemon wedge

Black pepper

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1

Squeeze lemon and lime wedges into a shaker. Add all other ingredients except vodka, and stir. Taste the mix, and adjust the seasoning if needed. Put the mix in the fridge, and let it sit overnight.

### Step 2

Pour vodka into the shaker. Add ice cubes, and shake.

### Step 3

Fill an 8-ounce glass about halfway with ice, and strain the shaker contents over it.

### Step 4

For garnish, I prefer a slice of seedless cucumber, also known as a hothouse or English cucumber, rather than celery. (This isn't a deal breaker, though.) Cut a ½-inch-thick slice of cucumber on the bias. Cut a slit in the slice, and place on the rim of the glass. Spear the pitted green olive with a toothpick, and stick it through the rind of the lemon wedge. Place the wedge on the rim of the glass. Crack a little freshly ground pepper on top.

Enjoy responsibly!

## Poems & Humor



### Spring

*Gerard Manley Hopkins*

Nothing is so beautiful as Spring –  
When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and  
lovely and lush;

**Question: What did the carrots say to each other on Valentine's Day?**

Answer: We are soil mates.

**Question: How did the bowl of chili lose the World Series?**

Answer: It beaned in the winning run.

**Question: Did you hear about the turkey that plays baseball?**

Answer: He covers first base.

**Question: Why did the squash break up with the pumpkin?**

Answer: It said it needed some space to grow.

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Through the echoing timber does so  
rinse and wring  
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear  
him sing;  
The glassy peartree leaves and blooms,  
they brush  
The descending blue; that blue is all in a  
rush  
With richness; the racing lambs too have  
fair their fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?  
A strain of the earth's sweet being in the  
beginning  
In Eden garden. - Have, get, before it  
cloy,  
Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour  
with sinning,  
Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and  
boy,  
Most, O maid's child, thy choice and  
worthy the winning.

"Why did the scarecrow win an award?  
Because he was outstanding in his field!"  
— *Source Unknown*

"I'm not anti-social; I'm just pro-  
garden." — *Source Unknown*

"Gardeners know all the dirt." — *Source  
Unknown*

"The best way to garden is to put on a  
wide-brimmed straw hat and some old  
clothes. And with a hoe in one hand and  
a cold drink in the other, tell somebody  
else where to dig." — *Texas Bix Bender*

lunch?

Answer: The calf-eteria!

**Question: How did the watermelon  
farmer feel after winning the lottery?**

Answer: Like a melon bucks!

**Question: What if a farmer's favorite  
type of music?**

Answer: Anything with a good beet!

**Question: What is small, red and  
whispers?**

Answer: A hoarse radish.

**Question: What did the radish say  
when it won the race?**

Answer: I really turnip-ed my game!

**Question: What do bees wear in the  
rain?**

Answer: Their yellow jackets.



**Pleasantdale Nurseries Inc** – 240 Pleasant Valley Way, West Orange  
**Metropolitan At Caldwell Nursery** – 246 Passaic Ave, West Caldwell  
**La Serra Gardens** – 813 Union Blvd, Totowa  
**Centre Ridge Garden Center** – 652 Centre St, Nutley  
**Cerbos Parsippany Greenhouse & Garden Center** – 440 Littleton Rd., Parsippany  
**The Farm at Green Village** – 403 Green Village Rd., Green Village  
**Country Mile Gardens** – 1108 Mount Kemble Avenue, Morristown

**Educational Platforms**

**Wildstead** is a design practice and education platform for people who are ready for change — ecologically, aesthetically, and personally. Design services. Self-guided curriculum. And an app coming soon. Wildstead® replaces authority with agency through design, education, and stewardship of land as a living system.  
<https://www.wildstead.com/>

## 🧱 Building Legacy One Brick at a Time

[Verona Community Garden and That's My Brick!](#)® have joined forces to raise money for our project! The Verona Community Garden is located near HBW Middle School.

The goal of this space has been to create a multi-use community centerpiece. The garden has given community members an opportunity to learn, connect and grow together.

This cherished spot has grown over the last 4 years and is fully funded by grants and donations. As the demand for the garden has grown we need a walkway in our public section of the garden. We are asking for your support through an engraved brick fundraiser.

Help us create a legacy for the community by showing your support with this fundraiser.



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## Stay Connected with VCG!

Join our vibrant community online! Follow us on **Facebook** (*Verona NJ Community Garden*) and **Instagram** (*veronanjcommunitygarden*) for updates, photos, and event highlights. You can also stay in the loop by joining the [VCG WhatsApp Group!](#)

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