

Cooking Asparagus The Fun And Easy Way

Preparation is the key when you're going to cook asparagus. There are several methods of cooking boiling, grilling, steaming, or roasting. The microwave is also a good option when cooking asparagus. Cut the asparagus into sections and you can use it in stirfries you can also blanch the asparagus and use it in vegetable dips. Of course, there's nothing like steamed asparagus with butter, salt, and pepper.

When buying asparagus make sure that it is fresh, the asparagus will taste much better and can be kept for two to three days when properly stored. Once you get the asparagus home and ready to prepare, you'll need to trim it. The easiest way to trim asparagus before cooking is to simply do it by hand by bending the stock until it breaks. If it will not break but only bends, it is probably old and will not be as fresh as you would like it. Some cooks prefer to peel the bottom of the stocks this is not really necessary but sometimes helps when the stocks are a little woody. Contrary to popular belief the thicker asparagus is actually more flavorful than the pencil thin variety that most people want to buy.

An easy way to peel asparagus if you decide to go that route, is to lay a stalk on the counter or a cutting board and use a vegetable peeler. Starting at the top of the asparagus peel all the way to the end. The main reason anybody would peel asparagus, as I mentioned above, would be to make the asparagus more tender. You don't need to completely peel the asparagus either, simply peel down one side to allow moisture to enter the asparagus while it is cooking.

If you want to steam the asparagus here is a simple method. After you have trimmed your asparagus to the size you need, and optionally peeled it, place them in a saucepan and about an inch of water. Another steaming method you can use when cooking asparagus is to stand them vertically. Make sure you tie the bundles at the bottom and the top so they don't fall over in the pan. They should steam for approximately 5 to 10 minutes depending on the thickness.

Boiling is a great way to cook asparagus also. You want to use just enough water to cover the asparagus but make sure all the stems face the same direction and are covered with water. The asparagus will take between four to six minutes to cook completely, but again that depends on the size.

One method I really enjoy is using the grill. Cooking asparagus on the grill either directly over the fire or on skewers gives a great smoky flavor. Depending how you like them, cook the asparagus for anywhere from 30 seconds to 10 minutes. Another great way to cook the asparagus is to wrap them in foil with a little bit of olive oil and salt and pepper and cook them on the grill for 10-20 minutes. You'll have a great treat.

On those winter days when you really don't want to cook asparagus on the BBQ, another great option is roasting. Simply heat the oven to 425° F, and lay the asparagus flat on a baking sheet lined with foil. You can put any seasoning you want on the asparagus when roasting; salt, pepper, lemon pepper or any other spice that you have on hand are good. You will be rewarded with a nice tender stalk with a roasted flavor in about two to three minutes.

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About the Author

Jon Griffin has been playing music since he was 7 years old. He is also an avid cook and expert in beer, brewing and other beverages. He owns salsablanca.com and learningaboutstuff.com He went to Grove School of Music where he studied songwriting and composing and arranging (yes it was fun doing a big band chart every week!).