

Rhubarb



Botanically, rhubarb is a vegetable (it's related to sorrel and dock) but its thick, fleshy stalks are treated as a fruit, despite their tart flavour.

Rhubarb grows in two crops. The first, which arrives early in the year, is forced, grown under pots, particularly in what's known as the 'rhubarb triangle' around Leeds, Wakefield and Bradford. Its stalks are watermelon pink, with pale lime green leaves, and it is the more tender and delicately flavoured of the two.

The second, called maincrop rhubarb, is grown outdoors, and arrives in spring. Its stalks are a deeper red, tinged with green, and its leaves a brighter green. It has a more intense flavour and a more robust texture than forced.