

# Culinary Corner

---

By: Helen Delichatsios, MD

This Artichoke appetizer was all the rage at an upscale restaurant in California some years back, so I thought I'd try it at home. In my ancestral country of Greece, these fascinating vegetables grow wild and artichoke-based dishes are ubiquitous; however, these dishes often focus on the hearts, ignoring the beauty of the petals that cover and protect the heart. This appetizer allows one to appreciate the splendor of the whole.

In the US, we can find artichokes year round, but in nature, artichokes peak between March to June and again in September to October. Next time an appealing artichoke beckons, bring it home and give this recipe a try. You will not be disappointed. This recipe is great for guests, but also a good snack if you want to indulge solo.

## Ingredients:

- [ ] One big artichoke
- [ ] One lemon
- [ ] Garlic 1/2 a head
- [ ] Olive oil - 2 Tbsp
- [ ] Salt -- few pinches

## Directions

- 1) Artichoke: Cut stem so artichoke can sit on its bottom.
- 2) Cut off about one inch off top (prickly parts) - this is the hardest part. Make sure your knife is up to the task
- 3) Garlic -- peel the garlic cloves and leave whole (or cut in half lengthwise if cloves are big)
- 4) Back to the artichoke - Open up the leaves and stuff with lots of garlic - see middle photo
- 5) Douse with olive oil, lemon, some salt
- 6) Wrap in Extra Duty aluminum foil (or double wrap in regular aluminum foil)
- 7) Bake in oven at 400 degrees for 60 minutes

And now the best part, Savoring your creation, ideally with others, because like most things in life, sharing adds value to the experience.

- Place it in the middle of the table, have a seat and open the aluminum foil. The artichoke will be steaming hot, so take as much as you need to marvel at this geometrically beautiful vegetable and appreciate the transformation that took place under the aluminum foil.

- Pick off the outer petals, one by one, and use your bottom teeth to get at the edible part of the plant. You will quickly figure out which part is edible, the opposite one from the thorn. The outer petals may be a little tough but as you get closer to inside, they are more tender.

- The roasted garlic bits not only flavor the artichoke, but are a caramelized treasure on their own. You can spread them on some bread (home made, preferably), or just pop them in your mouth.

- Once you peel off all the petals, you have to carefully remove and discard the Choke, which is the fine, hair-like filaments, and then finally, the Heart will be staring at you - the culmination of your efforts.

You can also try searching you tube for videos. Enjoy!!

