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## Oh Fiddle Dee Dee! It's Scarlett and Me!

*Saturday, July 19, 2014*

Scarlett O'Hara and I have something in common.  
No, it's not her 20" waist. It's a vegetable.

Remember the scene in "Gone with the Wind" when Scarlett shook her fist at the heavens and swore that she would never be hungry again? She was holding a TURNIP.

All that survived the devastation of the war was the turnip.

In our 2nd year of growing our own food DH & I are eating a LOT of turnips, pounds and pounds of turnips. In our private little war zone it's survived all kinds of danger. It's one vegetable that doesn't appeal to our wildlife, or bugs, beetles or birds.

The turnip greens stand tall and proud marking their location, just waiting for us to dig them out. Rain or drought, they just keep growing.

As I offered our surplus to neighbors and looked for recipes, I realized that the turnip is not a popular vegetable.

Scarlett's oath implied that only the starving would eat turnips.

I learned that:

Traditionally turnips have been the food of "cows, pigs, sheep, the desperate, and the poor."

The Romans used to hurl turnips at unpopular public figures.

"Turnip eater" meant a country bumpkin in the 15th century

Charles Dickens in his novels used "turnip" as a synonym for a perfect idiot

So what does it say about DH and me that we're willingly eating turnips and even liking them?

Maybe it's genetic. I'm a descendant of sturdy peasant stock who probably ate a lot of turnips. DH is so happy to have a gardening success that he'll gladly eat anything he grew.

So far we've made:

Turnips, carrots and onions in the pressure cooker

"Balsamic Root Vegetables" (turnips, carrots, sweet potatoes, cranberries) in the crock pot

Roasted turnips with assorted spices

Even "turnip fries" which you'll never find on McD's menu but they were OK.

In case they are unfamiliar to you, they look like this.

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The source of my historical information:  
"The Vegetable that Terrorized the Romans and Industrialized England"  
[theplate.nationalgeographic.com/2014/05/08/the-vegetable-that-terrorized-romans-and-helped-industrialize-england/](http://theplate.nationalgeographic.com/2014/05/08/the-vegetable-that-terrorized-romans-and-helped-industrialize-england/)

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## Member Comments About This Blog Post



**CD14815535**

Have never had a turnip--can you describe the taste? Like a beet, maybe? But very cool your garden is growing!  
2515 days ago



**LINDAKAY228**

I like turnips and turnip greens! So some of us are with you in this! It's okra that I can't stand LOL!  
2518 days ago



**SARAWALKS**

I adore turnips. Always have. Boiled, roasted, raw, however. My mom did too. Turnip greens are completely delicious. It's amazing how many people have never discovered them! But the vogue for roasted root veggies may bring them back to center stage - I hope so! (well, at least ON the stage...)  
Great blog!  
2520 days ago



Comment edited on: 7/20/2014 6:55:13 AM



**DOVESEYES**

Great blog thanks  
2520 days ago



**PHOENIX1949**

Raw and thinly sliced on a crudite tray is tasty to me (appeals to my love of crunchy foods) BUT don't like them cooked. Those are some good-looking turnips. It has been years since I eaten any turnips so this Blog has inspired me to add to this week's grocery list.  
2521 days ago



**MARYJEANSL**

I have to admit that I understand why they're not popular. One can get them here at Farmer's Markets seasonally. Compared to other root vegetables in the same family (rutabaga, kohlrabi), they are much more strongly flavored and thus, to me anyway, not as good. I like to boil and mash



(well, OK, in the food processor) rutabaga and kohlrabi and add to mashed potatoes for more nutrition and flavor, or cut into small pieces and roast in the oven with a little oil and salt. But the turnips are just too strong and unpleasant tasting for me to enjoy, even prepared those two ways.  
2521 days ago



**DR1939**

We've always eaten mashed turnips, although not frequently.  
2521 days ago

v



**WATERMELLEN**

You don't turnip your nose at turnips?? (Sorry could not resist!!). I'm good with 'em too so long as they are not boiled into a stinky sulphurous mush, which is I think what most people associate with turnips.  
2521 days ago

v



**TERI-RIFIC**

Who would think you could write an entertaining blog about the turnip. Well done. I don't think I've ever had one. How much stuff do you grow in your garden?  
2521 days ago

v



**TRAVELGRRL**

Can't say I've ever had one! What I hate is how expensive some veggies are to buy even though they grow so prolificly -- like zucchini & yellow squash, and now turnips!  
2521 days ago

v



**KRISZTA11**

Great blog, and great article, thanks for sharing!  
We should be grateful to the turnip for its hardiness, for supporting mankind in years of famine. I don't think I have ever seen a turnip ( the one with the purple color on your pics) ... I would love to try one, after reading its story.  
There is a huge white radish which looks alike, and I love that one.



2521 days ago

Comment edited on: 7/19/2014 10:02:52 AM

v



**PHEBESS**

I toss turnips in with my roasted root vegs (roasted in the oven) - only way to get DH to eat things like turnips.

I've had dry pan fried baby turnips, which are incredibly tasty- pick them way early when they're just little bitty things. Sort of sweet!  
2521 days ago

v



**MISCHAKEO**

I have never eaten a turnip. However, if they are a vegetable they must be good for you. More power to you for growing them and finding recipes that you like. I did find the historical comments interesting..plus did not know that Scarlett was holding a turnip. Too funny.  
2521 days ago

v



**CD4114015**

WOW, you gave a great lesson here! My grandmother used to love them, grow them, and eat them all the time. I NEVER liked them and to this day don't. But I shall remember this lesson just in case!



You do grow beautiful ones, by the way! ENJOY  
2521 days ago

v



**SYLPHINPROGRESS**

All this time I've thought that Scarlett had been pulling up wild radishes. May I? She had a 17-inch waist, the smallest in three counties, at the beginning of the book. At some time along the way, the generous-hearted lass described Mammy as a "cow" for her 24-inch waist.

I discovered turnips in adulthood and was delighted to read that young ones are eaten by children whole and raw, as apples. That tidbit may have come from my 1960's edition of "The Joy of Cooking." Root vegetables, including rutabaga,\* are good, radishes being the exception. I've cut up a variety (turnips, carrots, potatoes and whatever else), parboiled them and placed them around a sturdy, peasant meatloaf to roast. Drizzled with some olive oil and herbs. Peasant food can be the best.

\* Which I've eaten only once. I seem to recall that it was mashed with whatever seasonings and served as a side with something done with duck breast. I bought a rutabaga once, but was unable to cut into it and didn't put it whole into the oven for fear of having a permanent, waxy mess.

You have a knack as a food stylist.

v

2521 days ago

Comment edited on: 7/19/2014 8:28:05 AM



**NELLJONES**

I have never been a turnip fan (or a fan of rutabagas) but I think it's because my parents ate too many of them growing up during the Depression.



And I think Scarlett O'Hara was lacing into a 16" waist. Ouch!

2521 days ago



**CETANISTAWI**



2521 days ago



**CD12521021**

We grew turnips in our garden as a kid. I won't say I love them but i do buy them from time to time just to change up the vege's. Enjoy your garden God Bless



2521 days ago



**BOOKLOVINGGIRL**

I'm definitely not a big turnip fan. But I love that you and your DH are growing food you can eat. I think that's pretty awesome and inspiring.



2521 days ago



**SPINNINGJW**

Enjoy the bounty of your garden. Hey, if you like 'em, who cares what others think, they are a vegetable!



2521 days ago



**ONEKIDSMOM**

I remember doing a combined turnip / potato mash... gave different flavoring to the dish, but it wasn't bad!



2521 days ago

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