

## Market Menu – December

December is, of course, mid-summer for the southern hemisphere. The long days bring forth a wonderful variety of summer fruit -- all travelling far and wide, but usually arriving in good shape. We are expecting **Grapes, Raspberries, Blackberries** and **Cherries** from various parts of South America.

The Cape of South Africa should deliver us ripe **Plums, Apricots, Peaches, Nectarines, Grapes,** and **Baby Vegetables**. They won't be as tasty as the summer versions, but are still a decent alternative to wintery root veg.

**Spanish Citrus Fruit** is at its very best in December and we may see the return of **Blood Oranges**. Sometimes they don't appear till the New Year, so just pencil them in for a few specials. **Leaf Clementine's** will be in good supply and are rarely anything but delicious and beautiful.

Sweet, juicy **Lychees** have a short season. They are usually wonderful just before Christmas.

**Curly Kale, Cabbages** and **Courgettes** are all good options. Don't forget about **Sprout Tops** and **Sprout Stalks** as well. We will also be stocking **Trimmed Brussels** ready for your Xmas parties.

**Savoy Cabbage** should retain its star quality, and **Red** and **White Cabbage** are a good choice for cooked dishes and winter salads.

**Italian Fennel** stays good through most of the winter. It is particularly welcome at a time when vegetable variety is somewhat limited.



**Celeriac** is always a good choice during early winter and the home-produced crop is the best bet in December.

Of course at the height of their quality are all the root veg; **Parsnips, Carrots, Swede, Turnips, Beetroot,** and **Horseradish** deserve a mention.

**Cranberries** are also at their best in either whole fresh (340g bags) or frozen (1 Kg Bags).

**Leeks** are also worth a quick shout out, as they are always nice this time of year.

We should still have a good supply of **Local Large Leaf Spinach** as long as we don't have too many continuous frosts. If not **Cyprus Spinach** is usually something special, too.

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Starchy vegetables are great for winter energy **Sweet Potatoes** and **Salsify** offer an exciting alternative to potatoes. **English Jerusalem Artichokes** are a must, too. They are at their crunchiest in December and have plenty of nutty taste, and are usually good value. For something different if not pricey try the nutty and interesting **Crosnes** or **Japanese Artichokes**, they should get your guests talking!



And as exciting alternative-Potatoes go, the long, thin and delicious **French Ratte Potato** really takes some beating.



**Local Celery** is at its best. Most **English Salads** will be long-gone. **Italian Cos** and **Radicchio**, **Spanish Iceberg**, and superb **French Watercress** will be the order of the day. **Rocket** and **Pousses** become more expensive as they must be grown in heated and artificially-lit greenhouses, even in Provence!

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**Fresh Herbs** are not a problem in the winter. Prices tend to stay the same as do their quality. **Micro Herbs** are something that can also help lift your plates of roasted root veg by garnishing with **Micro Celery, Micro Flat Leaf Parsley**, or even the zingy **Micro Coriander**.

**Wild Mushroom** supplies can be very good in December but bad weather can cause severe shortages. Varieties likely to be available are **Pied de Moutons, Pied Bleu, Ceps, Trompettes** and **Chanterelles**. While **Girolles** are plentiful this time of year they are very large, there will be no small sizes about at all.



Don't forget that we can supply you with any prep veg for your Christmas parties like **Quarter Cut Parsnips, Cut Roast or Chateau Potatoes**, or even **Carrot and Swede Dice**. We need to have them ordered by 4 PM for next days delivery as they are all done to order with no chemical preservatives.

This year we are even going to dabble in the delivery of **Christmas Trees** grown in Boxted, Essex. We can get 2 varieties both the **Norway Spruce** and **Nordmann Fir** will add a nice touch your dining rooms, not to mention the smell of pine is about as Christmassy as it gets!



**Norway Spruce**



**Nordmann Fir**

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