

Market Menu – January

Post-Christmas shortages and gluts cause severe market instability in January. The weather has also been unseasonably warm too which can cause variable pricing. However, depending on the weather English hardy crops can be damaged in a very hard frost, and earth-stored root vegetables can be impossible to harvest. So however you plan your menus, my advice is to keep your fruit and veg options open.

Seville Oranges are a must, and not just for making marmalade. The season will be finished in early February, so get your kilner jars ready. You can dry and powder the skins, whole poach them in syrup, make curd, marmalade, or even salt them like Moroccan preserved lemons. **Blood Oranges** remain largely seasonal. Everyone expects them in December and they always fail to show until January. They are usually well worth waiting for in terms of taste, but don't expect them to be too bloody at first.



Cox's Apples keep their crunch until mid-February and **French Apples** fare pretty well, too.

Strawberries, Raspberries and Redcurrants are likely to be available at the beginning of the month, but supplies often tighten up later meaning the prices can go through the roof.

Supplies of **Cape Apricots, Peaches, Nectarines and Cherries** may become a little patchy, but should struggle on into February.

If costs are of paramount importance, it's worth leaving **Melons** off the menu. They can cost silly money this time of year.

Seedless Grapes may be a problem, but will still be readily available. It's the price that can fluctuate.

Purple Sprouting Broccoli is usually of very good quality in January.

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Lychees usually become fairly abundant, wonderfully aromatic and sweet and will offer something different on your dessert menus. **Sharon Fruit** (A variety of **Persimmons**) remains a good buy. You need to wait for them to be nice and soft before using them for desserts. You can use them slightly under ripe for a sweet savoury salsa, or slice the ripe ones and bake slowly in syrup, topped with Seville Orange zest flavoured mascarpone and flaked almonds.



Brassicacs are likely to be plentiful and represent good value for money as long as the weather stays kind.

Curly Kale is a great option that can offer good value for money and provide an alternative to cabbage and brussel sprouts. The winter crop is particularly dark and tasty.

Large Linchip Royale Potatoes are a fairly new product that some of you are already using. They are grown in Lincolnshire in Fenn Land Soil by Lin Royale as a replacement for the high priced Lovers Potatoes. They are washed and graded large potato that are grown for chipping and roasting and are proving to be very popular and are a nice product to use in your kitchens.



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Jerusalem Artichokes will continue to offer great taste at a good price. **Spanish Globe Artichokes** represent good value and pack plenty of peppery taste too.

Carrots, Turnips, Swede, Celeriac and **Parsnips** are of course a tasty safe bet.

Spider Frisee is likely to be at its most variable in January. If so, you can use **Chicory** or **Radicchio** for bitterness instead.



January's **Wild Mushrooms** have been excellent in recent years. Either due to the mild weather in Europe, or because there are now more sources of supply. That said please give us as much notice as possible to avoid disappointment.



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