Kale

Background:
Common types of kale include curly, purple, baby, and dinosaur.
Kale goes well in salads, soups, stews, and dips.
Kale can be consumed raw, steamed, baked, or sautéed.
Both the leaves and stems can be eaten.
Kale is commonly found in American, European, and Asian cuisines.

Nutritional Value:
One cup of cooked kale contains only 36 calories and 118% of your daily vitamin K needs. Vitamin K plays a key role in bone health and regulation of the body’s inflammatory process.
Kale is high in lutein, a carotenoid that supports eye health.
Antioxidants, including carotenoids and flavonoids, can help prevent cancer.
One cup of kale provides 10% of the recommended daily amount of anti-inflammatory omega-3 fatty acids.
Minerals found in kale include calcium, potassium, copper, iron, magnesium, and phosphorous.
How to SHOP:

Find kale in the grocery store produce section near the other leafy greens in the shelves that get misted. When choosing your kale bunch, look for firm, hydrated leaves.

Kale is available in Texas from November to April, although it can be grown year-round throughout the U.S.

Frozen and canned kale are also available year-round.

How to GROW:

Kale is a frost-tolerant vegetable that can be grown throughout the fall and winter seasons.

Plant seeds 12-18 inches apart and 1/4 inch deep in mid-September through October.

The outside leaves of the kale plant can be harvested once grown to 6 inches or taller.

It takes 60-80 days for a kale plant to reach full size.

How to STORE:

Fresh kale can be stored wrapped in paper towels in the crisper drawer of a refrigerator for up to one week.

To freeze your fresh kale, remove the leaves from their stems, blanch in boiling water for 2 minutes, and place in ice water. Dry well and freeze in a freezer-safe airtight bag.
Kale Chips

INGREDIENTS:
1 Medium-size bunch of kale, washed, dried
Cooking spray
1/4 tsp. Garlic powder
Salt and pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS:
Preheat oven to 300˚F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper.
Wash kale and dry completely. Remove stems and chop leaves into bite-sized pieces.
Place kale pieces in a large bowl. Spray with enough cooking spray to evenly coat leaves, and massage kale with remaining ingredients.
Arrange prepared kale on baking sheet and bake for 15-20 minutes, flipping leaves halfway through cooking.
When kale is crispy and just starting to brown, remove from oven and let cool on pan for 5 minutes to finish crisping.

HELPFUL TIPS:
You can use a knife to remove the kale leaves from the stem, or simply tear the leaves with your hands.
Change up the flavor profile by adding chili powder, turmeric, or parmesan cheese when preparing the kale!
Pumpkin Pie Spiced Kale Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:
- 1 cup Baby kale, chopped
- 1 overripe frozen banana, cut into chunks
- 1 cup Almond milk
- 1/4 cup Pumpkin puree
- 1 Tbsp Peanut butter
- 1 1/2 tsp Maple syrup
- 1/4 tsp Pumpkin pie spice
- Fresh banana or roasted pumpkin seeds, for garnish

DIRECTIONS:
Combine all ingredients together in a blender and blend until smooth.
Garnish with extra pumpkin pie spice and/or fresh banana slices.
Serve immediately.

HELPFUL TIPS:
Baby kale is easier to blend than sturdier varieties like curly kale.
Exchange the pumpkin pie spice and maple syrup for ginger and molasses for a gingerbread flavored smoothie.
Kale Pesto on Whole Grain Pasta

**INGREDIENTS:**
- 4 cups Kale, packed (without stalks)
- 1/2 cup Parmesan, grated
- 1/2 cup Cashews, raw
- 2 cloves Garlic
- 2 Tbsp Lemon juice
- 1/2 cup Olive oil
- 1 pkg Whole grain pasta, cooked

**DIRECTIONS:**
Wash and dry kale thoroughly.
Tear kale leaves and place in food processor.
Add remaining ingredients to food processor and process until fully combined.
Drizzle in additional olive oil to reach desired consistency.
Toss pesto with whole grain pasta and serve immediately.

**HELPFUL TIPS:**
Don’t have cashews? Walnuts or pine nuts also work well.
Pulsing the kale on its own first will make it easier to blend with the remaining ingredients.