EAT ALGAE

How & Why should we eat algae?

The following six types of algae are among the most well-known and best-tasting! Do you know them?

Bladderwrack (Fucus vesiculosus)

Bladderwrack is a perennial brown algae commonly found in the North and Baltic Seas. The leaves grow 10-30 cm long. It's easily recognisable by the gas-filled »bladders« or air sacs that give the algae buoyancy in water. It is excellent for pesto, so simply add bladderwrack to your favorite pesto recipe.


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Bladderwrack Pesto

Serrated wrack (Fucus serratus)

Serrrated wrack often grows in the same locations as bladderwrack. It is related to bladderwrack but lacks air sacs; instead, the leaves are serrated like a saw. It has a salty, fresh, and pleasantly marine flavor.


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Savoy Cabbage Salad with Sawweed

Sugar Kelp (Saccharina latissima)

The leaves of sugar kelp are amber-colored, can grow several meters long and often have a wavy structure along the edges. It adds an extra umami kick to dishes, especially tomato-based recipes. When brushed with oil and baked in the oven, sugar kelp also makes excellent crispy algae chips.


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Sugar Kelp Chips with Sesame

Algae Conserve Our Resources

Over two-thirds of our planet is covered by water, making it a significantly larger area compared to land. Algae cultivation requires neither freshwater nor fertilisers, helping to conserve our limited land resources. So, why not grow food in the sea?

Algae are superfoods!

Algae provide many important minerals (e.g. magnesium, iron) and trace elements, especially iodine. They contain protein with essential amino acids, vitamins, fibre, and unsaturated fatty acids.

Not all algae are edible!

In the North and Baltic Seas, there are more than 350 different species of macroalgae and all are generally edible. (*)

* The Japanese Sea Grapes (Sargassum muticum), which occasionally wash up on German and Danish North Sea beaches, should not be consumed as they accumulate particularly high levels of heavy metals and arsenic.


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Dulse (Palmaria palmata)

Dulse is rare in the Baltic Sea, more common in the North Sea and widespread in the Atlantic. This red algae is a culinary must-try. It is also known as the »bacon of the sea«. When pan-fried, it gives dishes a salty, savory flavor similar to bacon as well as containing vitamin B12.


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Sandwich with Dulse »Bacon«

Sea Lettuce (Ulva lactuca)

Sea lettuce is a green algae and the fastest-growing marine algae. On warm summer days, it can increase its weight by up to 20%. Eaten fresh, it tastes mild and slightly salty, making it perfect for various salads.


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Asian Salad with Sea Lettuce

Horsetail Kelp (Laminaria digitata)

Horsetail kelp (also known as »Kombu«, same as sugar kelp) is a perennial brown algae that can grow from one to several meters long. The firm leaves have a salty, fresh taste. In lasagna dishes, individual pasta sheets can be replaced with kelp blades. Alginate is extracted from horsetail kelp, which is often used by the food industry as a thickener or stabiliser, for example, in pudding or ice cream.


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Lasagna with Finger Kelp

Iodine Intake

Especially the large brown algae such as sugar or horsetail kelp have a very high iodine content. To avoid excessive iodine intake, consumption of brown algae should be limited to 1-2 meals per week. Soaking in cold water (for 10 minutes), or even better steaming or blanching can further reduce the iodine content by up to 80-90%. The iodine will also evaporate if added to a hot soup and left to simmer for a few minutes, for example.

Where Can I Buy Algae?

Many different species of algae are available dried in stores or online. Pay attention to the origin of the algae and look for the organic logo. This guarantees a gentle, sustainable harvest and sourcing from controlled waters. In Denmark, organic certification for algae is relatively uncommon. Nevertheless, many small growers manage their algae sustainably and responsibly. Algae harvested or farmed in the EU is likely to be safer than imported algae.

ALGAE ARE ALREADY AVAILABLE FROM THESE ALGAE FOOD PARTNERS:

- **www.dansktang.dk**: Sustainably harvested algae from Denmark, including all varieties from the recipes (shipping also to Germany)
- **www.meeresgarten.com**: Dried organic algae from Brittany, France

Further Information

The AlgaeFood website includes more recipes

Further information is also available in English

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