

FORAGING FOR CONIFER TIPS

What are conifer tips?

Conifer tips are the new growth budding on the boughs of conifer trees in the spring. Although most varieties are edible, we recommend fir and spruce tips. Be sure you're confident with your tree IDs!

What parts are edible?

The whole conifer tip is edible! Harvest when they're still bright green and tender. If there's still papery brown casing on the outside of the tips, simply clean it away before consuming or preserving your tips.

What are the nutritional and medicinal benefits?

Conifer tips add bright and potent flavours to your cooking that vary depending on the variety of conifer you choose!

They are high in Vitamin C, potassium, and magnesium. They are also held to have antiviral, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antioxidant, antiseptic, antispasmodic, diuretic, expectorant, and sedative qualities.

Do not rely on plant medicines to treat medical conditions without doing appropriate research and learning from experienced knowledge holders!



How do you responsibly harvest?

Never harvest the tip at the end of a branch – this is what enables the branch to grow longer. Instead, harvest 1-3 tips from the sides of each branch, ensuring you leave the majority of fresh tips on the branch to mature.

How do you preserve and use?

Lay flat in thin layers and dry in a dehydrator or on low in an oven, then store in an airtight container for up to a year. If you prefer fresh nettles, blanch the leaves by dipping them in boiling water then lay flat on freezer paper and rolling to store in the freezer in a plastic bag. Alternatively, make “nettle pesto” by blending fresh nettles with a bit of olive oil and freezing in an ice cube tray.

Responsible foraging

Before you go foraging, always make sure you are confident in your ability to correctly identify plants! Look for locally relevant field guides or ask a knowledge holder from your community for guidance.

Cautionary note

Most conifer tips are edible, but **do not** consume tips from cedar or yew trees.