

# Rapini with Olive Oil & Garlic

serves 3-6

Rapini is classic Italian: simple, fresh, a little bitter and pungent. Rapini, also called Broccoli Raab and Broccoli di Rapa, was the star in my most favorite ever dream. The entire dream was 5 seconds. I sing with the most exuberant, operatic joy: "Rapini, rapini, rapini!!!" Then I wake up. Ever since, it has been one of my favorite vegetables.

**1 bunch rapini**  
**2 T. olive oil**

**1/2 tsp. salt**  
**2 cloves garlic**

Clean and trim the rapini. If you're buying the rapini, the grower/brand Andy Boy has the most consistent quality. Sometimes organic Andy Boy is available. The way I prep. the rapini is to cut the bud tip off at about 3-4" in length. Then I cut all the side leaves that are good quality off of the main stem, leaving the entire thin stem on the leaf. I then discard the remaining thick main stem. Bring a quart or two of water to a full boil, drop in the rapini, and blanch for 3 minutes. Drain and shake off the water thoroughly. Dry the pot, return to medium high heat, and add the olive oil. When hot, add the rapini, salt, and garlic. Fry for 1-2 minutes. Serve immediately. Garnish with lemon or shavings of parmesan if desired.

Serve rapini with your favorite rice or pasta dish. Or cook some pasta, drain, and saute' with the cooked rapini, cannellini beans, a little extra olive oil, parmesan, and pine nuts. Have a crispy romaine salad with croutons, shaved parmesan or other sharp Italian cheese, Italian olives, and freshly ground black pepper dressed with olive oil and lemon juice. Italian cuisine is very fond of bitter flavors. Rapini has a mild, pleasant bitter edge that is a nice stepping stone to some of the more bitter endives and chicories. Once you cross the threshold to being a bitter flavor lover, there is no turning back! Pungent is the next step; before you know it you'll be craving stinky cheeses!