

# cultivate

Quarterly Inspiration from Vesta Foodservice



**Spring Artichokes**  
Heirloom Flavor Meets  
Modern Farming

**Artisan Anniversary**  
Celebrating 160 years of  
Marin French

**Watercress**  
Grown Where It Thrives,  
Fresh Year-Round

# The Spring Artichoke Revival: Why Heirloom Green Globes and Newer Varieties Both Have Their Place



Artichokes have been a springtime favorite for generations, but today, they're available year-round thanks to evolving farming practices. While the heirloom Green Globe artichoke remains a seasonal delicacy with its deep, nutty flavor and meaty texture, newer hybrid varieties are grown to meet demand, ensure a steady supply, and introduce more sustainable farming techniques.

## A Changing Landscape for Artichokes

For decades, Green Globes thrived in the cool, foggy fields of Monterey County, where they were grown as perennials — returning season after season from the same rootstock. But as farming costs rose and demand for a consistent supply increased, growers had to find new ways to keep artichokes on menus year-round. That's where hybrid varieties come in. Today's hybrids, like the Imperial Star and Desert Globe, are grown as annuals, meaning they are replanted each season. This allows growers to rotate crops, which helps break pest cycles, reduces the need for chemical inputs, and improves soil health. These varieties are also bred for efficiency, offering higher yields and better disease resistance, which means less food waste and a more sustainable approach to artichoke production overall.

## The Special Appeal of Green Globes

While hybrid varieties dominate today's market, spring remains a special time for heirloom Green Globes. These artichokes, grown from the same rootstock passed down through generations, develop their signature nutty, umami-rich flavor through slow growth in the unique microclimate of Monterey County. The cool fog and occasional frosts enhance their depth of flavor, making them a seasonal treat worth seeking out. Because of their labor-intensive cultivation and lower yields, Green Globes are priced at a premium. Yet, for those who appreciate their meaty hearts and classic taste, they are an unbeatable seasonal highlight. Small farms like Suncoast Farm at the Santa Monica Farmers Market still grow Green Globes the traditional way, ensuring that springtime menus can feature this California classic at its best.

## The Benefits of Newer Varieties

While Green Globes are a springtime tradition, the reality is that most of the artichokes we sell today come from these newer varieties—and for good reason. They allow farmers to use land more efficiently, conserve resources, and reduce their environmental impact. And while some chefs still prefer the richer texture and flavor of heirlooms, hybrid varieties have come a long way in taste and consistency.



Growers like Ocean Mist and Ippolito are continually refining their artichokes to balance sustainability with great eating quality. Plus, hybrid artichokes grown in different regions, from Coachella to Baja, ensure that artichokes are available in peak condition throughout the year, rather than just in the spring and fall.

## Appreciating the Best of Both Worlds

Whether you're a fan of the classic Green Globe or you're making the most of the high-quality hybrid varieties available year-round, there's no wrong choice. Heirlooms bring history and depth of flavor, while hybrids offer a sustainable, dependable supply that keeps artichokes accessible to more people.

No matter which variety you choose, artichokes continue to be a special ingredient that brings something unique to the plate. We're proud to source from growers who are committed to quality and sustainability, and we love seeing how our customers—chefs and foodservice professionals—bring out the best in every artichoke, no matter the season.



# Antipasti Abloom

Antipasti & ingredients that inspire



Divina  
Roasted Yellow Tomatoes

**They're back!** Slightly more mellow than red tomatoes, Roasted Yellow Tomatoes add a sunny, sweet burst of flavor to salads, pasta, pizzas.

Roasting low and slow enhances their flavor while retaining their natural juices. Marinated in garlic and herbs, reach for these as an accompaniment to fresh mozz and burrata.



Divina  
Semi-Dried Sweet Peppers

**New!** Sweet red peppers are given a dimension of richness when slowly oven dried and bathed in a sweet, tangy, smoky agrodolce-style marinade. Their tender texture makes them a great addition to sandwiches.



Divina  
Long Stem Artichokes

**A classic!** Long Stem Artichokes are enticing when presented on a cheese and charcuterie board. Picked, trimmed, and sorted by hand, they are lightly marinated in wine vinegar and have a tender, robust flavor. Halve and grill them for an extraordinary experience.



Divina  
Caramelized Onions

**New!** A total labor savor, these Caramelized Onions have all the flavor you crave and ease you need. Well-balanced with savory, sweet, and a touch of tang, add them to burgers, sandwiches, sauces, breads, and more.

Whether you are leaning into small-plate snacking or looking to streamline with consistent, ready-to-use ingredients, Divina's Mediterranean specialties will energize your Spring menu features.



Divina  
Sliced Pepperoncinis

**Now available!** Bold and bright Greek pepperoncinis are delicately sliced to save you from de-stemming and sorting seeds. Tangy with a mild heat and made without artificial preservatives, feel good heaping them onto sandwiches, hummus, salads, and everything else.

# Aged to Perfection

## 160 Years of Marin French Cheese

This year, Marin French Cheese Co. celebrates 160 years of artisanal cheesemaking with time-honored methods and a passion for quality. Nestled in the rolling hills of West Marin County, the creamery has been producing French-inspired, California-crafted cheeses since 1865. It holds the title of the oldest cheese company in the United States.

The story began when Jefferson Thompson, a dairy farmer from Illinois, established a 700-acre ranch. Thompson's innovative spirit led to the creation of the now-legendary Breakfast Cheese. Following the Gold Rush, dockworkers in the San Francisco Bay area faced an egg shortage and sought an alternative source of morning protein. Thompson responded by crafting a soft, fresh cheese using milk remnants from butter production. Delivered by steamboat and cart, the cheese became a staple and remains beloved today.

Marin French's sustainable practices and small-batch hand-crafted production methods contribute to the distinct flavor of its cheeses. Fresh local milk from Northern California dairy cows gives each batch a unique coastal character. Traditional cheesemaking cultures create rich, creamy textures and subtle complexities in every wheel.

Marin French Cheese's legacy resonates with chefs seeking superior ingredients. As they commemorate their 160th anniversary, the company's commitment to tradition and craftsmanship continues to set them apart as America's oldest artisan cheesemaker.



### Golden Bites

#### Marin's Artisanal Cheese Experience

**Petite Breakfast:** Soft and mild with a creamy texture. Perfect any time of day.

**Triple Crème Brie :** Rich, buttery, and indulgent. Ideal for cheese boards or baked appetizers.

**Camembert:** Earthy, creamy, and versatile for both sweet and savory pairings.

**Petite Crème:** Light, silky, and perfect for spreads or recipes.

**Petite Truffle:** Luxurious with aromatic black truffles.

**Golden Gate:** A washed-rind cheese with bold, complex flavors and a creamy interior.





*World Central Kitchen @wckitchen  
Border Grill @bordergrill  
Socalo @socalorestaurant*

## *A Community Fed, A Community United*

The Los Angeles fires in January left families, businesses, and communities grappling with loss. Many Angelenos saw their homes and cherished landmarks reduced to ashes, taking a lifetime of memories with them.



*Triple Beam Pizza @triplebeampizza*

Yet, resilience and generosity shone through. People across LA came together to support those in need, offering shelter, supplies, and hope. Among the most compassionate responses came from the foodservice industry, where chefs, restaurant teams, and hospitality professionals stepped up the way they know best—by preparing meals.



*Gather For Good, A.O.C. Restaurant & Wine Bar  
@andgatherforgood @aocla @aocbrentwood*

From large-scale efforts led by World Central Kitchen to independent restaurant owners using their own funds, the hospitality industry once again proved it is always among the first to respond. Our customers played a crucial role, donating ingredients, volunteering, and cooking thousands of meals. Their dedication embodied the true spirit of community, proving that even in dark times, kindness and unity prevail.



# WATERCRESS: A SUPERFOOD THAT GOES THE DISTANCE

At Vesta Foodservice, we source as close to home as possible—but as far as necessary to ensure quality and consistency. Watercress thrives in clean, flowing water, which means its ideal growing regions are limited. While California is home to many incredible crops, large-scale watercress production is not one of them. That’s why we rely on B&W Quality Growers, who have been perfecting the art of growing premium watercress for over 150 years.

B&W’s farms provide the ideal growing conditions and span eight states, strategically following the sun to ensure a year-round supply of fresh, nutrient-dense watercress. Known for its signature peppery bite and crisp texture, watercress isn’t just flavorful—it’s a powerhouse of nutrition.

We source both their classic green watercress and exclusive Wild Red Watercress, each offering a vibrant, fresh, and consistently high-quality product. Grown with sustainability in mind, B&W ensures that every bunch and ready-to-eat bag meets the highest standards. By sourcing from the best growing regions, we make sure our customers enjoy the freshest, most flavorful watercress all year long.

IT’S THE ONLY LEAFY GREEN TO RECEIVE A PERFECT SCORE FROM THE CENTERS OF DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) FOR ITS DENSE CONCENTRATION OF VITAMINS & ANTIOXIDANTS.



# INDEX

## COVER

PLEASE BE SURE TO CHECK WITH YOUR SALES REPRESENTATIVE OR CUSTOMER SERVICE ABOUT PRODUCT AVAILABILITY.

## 1-2 IN SEASON

19470	ARTICHOKE-BABY PURPLE LOCAL 10 LB	09121	Farmers Market Green Globe Artichokes
03992	ARTICHOKE 12 CT	13945	ARTICHOKE-HEARTS QTR MARINATED 6/5.5 LB
00030	ARTICHOKE 18 CT	06480	ARTICHOKE-MARINATED GRILLED 2/67 OZ
00031	ARTICHOKE 24 CT	13685	ARTICHOKE-STEMS ON ITALIAN 5.5 LB
15129	ARTICHOKE WITH STEM 14 CT	03628	FZN-ARTICHOKE BOTTOM 10/1 KG
00033	ARTICHOKE-BABY 20 LB	25374	FZN-ARTICHOKE BOURSIN GFI APPZ 200/1 OZ
21928	ARTICHOKE-BABY (LARGE) 20 LB	12402	FZN-ARTICHOKE HEART QUARTERED 10/2.2 LB
19515	ARTICHOKE-HALVES GRILLED DIVIN 2.4 LB	08670	FZN-RAV ARTICHOKE/CHEESE CUCIN 7.5 LB/120
05196	ARTICHOKE-HEARTS IN WATER 6/3 KG		

## 3 EDITOR'S PICKS

28282	DIVINA ROASTED YELLOW TOMATOES 2/4 LB	28284	DIVINA CARAMELIZED ONIONS 5 LB
28283	DIVINA SEMI-DRIED SWEET PEPPERS 4 LB	26251	DIVINA SLICED PEPPERONCINIS 3/4.4 LB
13685	DIVINA LONG STEM ARTICHOKE 5.5 LB		

## 4 CURD NERD

12024	MARIN FRENCH TRIPLE CRÈME BRIE 6/8 OZ	12026	MARIN FRENCH PETITE CRÈME 6/4 OZ
12025	MARIN FRENCH CAMEMBERT 6/8 OZ	19436	MARIN FRENCH PETITE TRUFFLE 6/4 OZ
27044	MARIN FRENCH GOLDEN GATE 6/8 OZ	19437	MARIN FRENCH PETITE BREAKFAST 6/4 OZ

## 5 COMMUNITY MATTERS

## 6 TRAVELOG

00730	B&W WATERCRESS 12 CT
18540	B&W RED WATERCRESS 1.5 LB
19347	B&W BABY LEAF CLEANED WATERCRESS 1.5 LB