

Steamed Artichokes with Olive Tapenade

from [What to Eat for How You Feel: The New Ayurvedic Kitchen](#)

I love watching Indian guests trying to eat an artichoke for the first time. They turn it around, look at it suspiciously from all sides, smell it, and try biting at it, until they give up and ask, “How do you eat this thing?” I show them how to pull off an outer petal, pull it through the teeth to remove the soft pulp and discard the rest; then move on to the next petal until we reach the best part: the heart. “That’s a lot of work and a lot of waste!” my guests would exclaim, gazing at the pile of inedible fiber. Yes, it takes work to reach to the heart of anything (or anyone).

Steamed Artichokes with Olive Tapenade can be served hot or at room temperature with a dip or sauce such as Kale and Arugula Pesto (page 190) or Sunflower-Sesame Dip (page 197). They go well with Spinach Risotto (page 111) and Steamed Fennel, Radicchio, and Watercress Salad (page 121).

Serves 4 Prep 10 minutes Cook about 30 minutes Gluten free Dairy free

4 medium artichokes (about 2 pounds), rinsed
1 lime, cut in half
3 bay leaves
Salt

Tapenade

1 tablespoon olive oil
¼ teaspoon asafoetida (omit if you have acidic digestion)
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper (omit if you have acidic digestion)
1/3 cup black olives, pitted and coarsely chopped
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley leaves
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil leaves
1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint leaves
1 teaspoon fresh lemon thyme leaves (optional)

For Airy digestion: Add more lime juice and pepper to taste.

For Earthy digestion: These might be a bit too heavy for your slow digestion, so eat a smaller portion. Reduce the olive oil to 2 teaspoons; add more pepper to taste. Add 1 seeded minced green Thai chile to the tapenade.

1. Working one artichoke at a time, snap off several layers of the tough outer leaves until you reach the leaves that are mostly pale green. Slice off the prickly tips of the leaves with a sharp knife or scissors. Trim the end of the stem and peel the stem’s outer layer with a vegetable peeler. Use a lime half to rub juice on the trimmed parts of the artichoke to protect them from oxidizing. Quarter the artichoke lengthwise

(leave the stem attached). With a small spoon or a paring knife, scoop out the fuzzy choke and discard it. Rub some more lime on the freshly cut artichoke pieces.

2. Set a steamer over boiling water and add 3 bay leaves to the water. Sprinkle salt over the artichokes and steam them until they are quite tender and the outer leaves pull off easily, 20 to 25 minutes.
3. While the artichokes are cooking, prepare the dressing. Lightly heat the olive oil with the asafoetida and black pepper in a metal measuring cup or a small pan, not more than 10 seconds. Remove from the heat and set aside.
4. In a small chopper or blender, pulse the olives and lime juice to a minced chunky consistency; add the infused olive oil and the fresh herbs and pulse a couple more times to incorporate them.
5. Pour the dressing over the hot cooked artichokes and let them marinate for 5 to 10 minutes. Serve warm.

Note:

- For baby artichokes, use 8 to 10; follow the same trimming instructions but cut them in half rather than quarters.

OPTIONAL SIDEBAR

The Healing Benefits of Artichokes

With their astringent and sweet tastes and heavy qualities, artichokes are very filling and satisfying for a Fiery person with a strong appetite. They are an alkalizing food and are suitable to include in weight reduction or diabetic diets. Here are some more benefits:

- Strengthen the functions of the liver and gallbladder
- High in cynarin, which increases bile production and thus fat assimilation
- High in glutathione and other antioxidants
- Have diuretic qualities
- Reduce cholesterol
- Rich in vitamins A and C (to help fight off infection)
- High in calcium and iron

Caution: Avoid eating artichokes if you suffer from inflammation of the bowel.