

## Market Menu – January

Post-Christmas shortages and gluts cause severe market instability in January. The weather has also been unseasonably warm too which can cause variable pricing. Although depending on the weather English hardy crops can be damaged in a very hard frost, and earth-stored root vegetables can be impossible to harvest. So however you plan your menus, my advice is to keep your fruit and veg options open.

**Seville Oranges** are a must, and not just for making marmalade. The season will be finished in early February, so get your kilner jars ready. You can dry and powder the skins, whole poach them in syrup, make curd, marmalade, or even salt them like Moroccan preserved lemons. **Blood Oranges** remain largely seasonal. Although they did start coming through before Christmas they will get better and 'bloodier' in January, but don't expect them to be too bloody at first.



**Strawberries, Raspberries and Redcurrants** are likely to be OK at the beginning of the month, but supplies often tighten up later meaning the prices can climb steeply.

Supplies of **Cape Apricots, Peaches, Nectarines and Cherries** may become a little patchy, but should struggle on into February.

If costs are of paramount importance, it's worth leaving **Melons** off the menu. They can cost silly money this time of year.

The best **Rhubarb** of the year should start to come through in January as well. Yorkshire forced Pink **Rhubarb** has got to be one of the best British grown crops. It has a delicate flavour and striking crimson stalks, making it a great choice for your menus.



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**Seedless Grapes** may be a problem, but will still be readily available. It's the price that can fluctuate.

**Cox's Apples** keep their crunch until mid-February and **French Apples** fare pretty well, too.

**Lychees** usually become fairly abundant, wonderfully aromatic and sweet and will offer something different on your dessert menus. **Sharon Fruit** (A variety of **Persimmons**) remains a good buy. You need to wait for them to be nice and soft before using them for desserts. You can use them slightly under ripe for a sweet savoury salsa, or slice the ripe ones and poach slowly in syrup, topped with Seville Orange zest flavoured mascarpone and flaked almonds.



**Brassiccas** are likely to be plentiful and represent good value for money as long as the weather stays kind. **Romanesco, Cavalo Nero, Cauliflower, Broccoli, Kohlrabi, Swede, and Turnips** are all good menu choices.

Other good Brassica choices are also in the cabbage department; **Savoy, Primo, Hispi,** and even **Chinese leaf** will be a good shout. We also tend to start to see the **January King Cabbage** which is a hardy, late-winter cabbage with pretty outer leaves and a crunchy texture and sweet flavour.



**January King Cabbage**



**Hispi Cabbage**



**Primo Cabbage**

**Curly Kale** is a great option that can offer good value for money and provide an alternative to cabbage and brussel sprouts. The winter crop is particularly dark and tasty.

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**Purple Sprouting Broccoli** is often thought of as a summer crop but the quality is very good in January, and is also good value for money.



**Jerusalem Artichokes** will continue to offer great taste at a good price. **Spanish Globe Artichokes** represent good value and pack plenty of peppery taste too.

**Carrots, Turnips, Swede, Celeriac** and **Parsnips** are of course a tasty safe bet.

**Frisee** is likely to be at its most variable in January. If so, you can use **Chicory** or **Radicchio** for bitterness instead.

January's **Wild Mushrooms** have been excellent in recent years. Either due to the mild weather in Europe, or because there are now more sources of supply. That said please give us as much notice as possible to avoid disappointment. Please note that **Girolles** can be quite large this time of year though



**Chanterelles**



**Girolles**

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