Sweet Corn

It is speculated that sweet corn is derived from wild corn native to the lowlands of the Andes Mountains of South America. It wasn’t until the late 1700s that the Native Americans began growing sweet corn.

Sweet corn breeding over the years has selected for varieties that are high in sugar making them sweet. In the process, much of the nutritional benefits of the ancestral corn have been lost. The “supersweet” varieties available today convert their sugar to starch more slowly than the older supersweet varieties and the “sugary enhancer” varieties. Supersweet corn can be yellow, white, or bicolored.

What to Look for When Purchasing

You should shop early in the day to get the freshest sweet corn available. Look for corn with husks that are bright green and have well-filled ears with plump kernels. The kernels at the tip of the ear should be smaller than the rest—large kernels indicate corn that is overly mature.

Avoid corn with under-developed kernels, wilted or dried husks, brown kernels, or depressed areas on the kernels.

Storage Tips

Sweet corn should be refrigerated immediately and eaten soon after purchase as its quality deteriorates rapidly after harvest. Leave the husks on until you are ready to prepare the corn to retain moisture in the ear.

Cooking Tips

Remove the husks and silks prior to cooking. A vegetable brush will aid in the removal of stubborn silk. If you find a worm or two in the ear, there’s no reason to discard the entire ear, simply remove the portion with the worm. You may cut the kernels from the cob or cook the cob intact.

Corn can be steamed, boiled, or roasted. Older sweet corn can be added to soups, stews, casseroles, quiches, and other cooked dishes.

Uses

- Vegetable salad with peppers & onions & topped with a vinaigrette.
- Grilled with olive oil & cumin.