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purple pea pods and the pleasures of a productive garden

Posted in *All posts* on 6th August 2014

There's that time in April and May when everything is just getting going - inspiring all these tiny seedlings but don't yet have any produce as reward for your hard work. And then suddenly, bam! You've a deluge of lettuce, courgettes sprouting forth left, right and centre, and more peas than you know what to do with.



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I love this time of year in the garden; there's always something new springing up. My favourite veg patch addition this year (so far!) has been the purple mange tout that has been merrily climbing up the wigwam of canes in our raised beds. I picked up a pack of the 'Ezetha's Krombek Blauwschokker' mange tout peas in our local National Trust kitchen garden after admiring the beautiful flowers the plant produces and the amazingly deep purple pods. They haven't failed to live up to expectations – and have provided delicate lilac and pink flowers in the interim while my slow-to-get-going sweet peas finally started flowering.



Blauwschokker are prolific in their pea production so my 2 year old and I have been regularly popping down to the bottom of the garden armed with a variety of tubs to fill with the purple pods. They're sweet and crunchy when eaten as mange tout, and paint your fingers a pleasing purple. They seem to be best eaten young – the ones we tried when proper pea size were rather bitter (and received a judgement of 'urgh, no like' from my daughter!).





And of course, there is little to match the pleasure of being able to head down the garden path and come back armed with ingredients for lunch or dinner. Whether you're hauling up garlic to store over the autumn, snipping spicy rocket leaves for salad, or picking sprigs of mint for an early evening cocktail, food you've grown yourself always tastes just that bit better. (Or perhaps not in the case of the overgrown bitter purple peas...)

What are your best garden performers so far this year?

Thanks for reading,

Helen

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