

Ingredients for Artichoke Dipping Sauce:

3 tbsp mayonnaise
1 tbsp dijon mustard
1 tbsp lemon juice
1/8 tsp garlic powder
few pinches cayenne pepper, to taste
pinch sugar or two drops agave nectar
pinch salt
lemon zest, to taste



Notes: Use caution when handling artichokes. There are tiny thorns at the top of each leaf. This recipe makes 3/4 cup of dipping sauce, enough for 2-3 large artichokes. Leftover dipping sauce may be used with other vegetables. Artichoke cooking times vary based on size. Larger artichokes can take an hour or longer.

Directions:

1. **Make the dipping sauce.** In a bowl combine all ingredients thoroughly with a whisk. Refrigerate until ready to use. Sauce thickens as it chills.
2. **Prepare the artichoke.** Peel the first few bottom rows of leaves off the artichoke. Use scissors to cut the tips off the leaves. Use a knife to cut the tip off the top of the artichoke. Wash the splinter free artichoke in cool water, separating the leaves slightly to clean out any trapped dirt. Finally, cut off the stem.
3. **Cook the artichoke.** Place a steaming rack or basket in the bottom of a large pot. Fill pot with water just below the steaming rack. Place artichoke(s) on rack and squeeze generously with lemon. Place lemon in pot while steaming for extra lemon essence. Allow water to come to a gentle boil, then turn the heat down to low and cover. Steam for 45 minutes or longer depending on the size of artichoke. Use tongs to turn artichoke midway through cooking time. The artichoke is ready when leaves pull off easily and the bottom "bite" of the leaf is tender. Best when served hot with dipping sauce, but artichokes can also be served cold.
4. **Enjoy** dipping the leaves in dipping sauce.
5. **Prepare the heart.** When you have reached the delicate, purplish leaves, stop eating and use a spoon to scoop out the fuzzy part just below the purplish leaves. Use a knife to cut away the inedible parts to reveal the heart. Cut the heart into pieces.
6. **Enjoy** heart with dipping sauce.