



All Images courtesy of: Rachel Lambert

Rich pickings

Harvesting the sunshine is the autumn forager's lazy way, says expert Rachel Lambert.

↑ ABOVE
Harvesting the fruits of the sea

➔ TOP
Fennel flower fritters and fennel leaf sorbet

➔ INSET
Herby oatcakes with broad bean and sea greens dip

As renowned forager Rachel Lambert tells us, there's no need to lament the end of summer. "I have to say that autumn is often a relief to me", Rachel explains, "if the summer has been good and I've been outside a lot, then I'm ready to start gathering inward and hunkering down. No longer do I feel the need to be a crazy thing – rushing around, trying to fit so much into the longer days; sea swims, fun, beach, around a working day. My sofa and kitchen have been waiting for me, ready to receive my weary, sun soaked body and to invite guests again. Now's the time to feast!"

Though what to pick? "I'm looking across the moors and wanting to taste the gorse flowers in wine, syrups and hearty rice pudding, I'm scanning the hedgerows and coast paths and waiting for fresh sprigs of sorrel and sea spinach to pop up after their summer flowering. I'm loving the silhouettes of seeded Alexander heads rich with spicy flavour and I'm anticipating the September, October spring tides when the sea's vegetables are revealed for picking. But mostly I want to sit, look, smell and feel. Relax after a busy summer and thank nature

for working so hard, allowing me to come along and enjoy her bounty."

Rachel often describes herself as a forager; a lazy gardener. "I've never understood why growing things has to be such hard work, when Mother Nature seems to do it so gracefully. Foraging can simply be a happy accident, or a pleasant by-product of a shared stroll or solitary moment in breath-taking surroundings. I applaud laziness, I think it's an essential element of balanced living."

As Rachel explains, the key to foraging well is to use your senses, including common sense – "only pick something if you're 100% sure" – and plan. "Some things are expected each season and in different environments (and these things can be learned), though sometimes it's the unexpected abundance of berries or layers of kelp fronds – and one needs to be prepared – freezer space, drying space, recipe ideas and a healthy amount of daring."

Look out for Rachel at this October's Walk Scilly Weekend on the Isles of Scilly.

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www.wildwalks-southwest.co.uk

Find out more online: www.cornwall-living.co.uk



Discover more

Rachel Lambert teaches foraging courses throughout the year. Upcoming events on Scilly include:

- Walk Scilly Weekend, 13th to 17th October

www.visitislesofscilly.com/walkscilly

Courses in Cornwall include:

- Seaweed foraging, 18th September. Prussia Cove
- Autumn foraging, 15th October. St Loy

Book on Rachels courses or buy her books on her website.

