

Serpente Zucchini

(*Cucurbita hydra*)

[\[The Day After Ragnarok\]](#)

Stats: ...It's a mobile zucchini.

Portions of Italy technically survived the Serpentfall, but nowhere in close proximity to the Serpent Curtain is going to be actually *pleasant*. In the Piemonte region, wise men only carefully eat the grain, and do not drink the wine at all -- but they still cultivate the *Serpente Zucchini*. It helps keeps them alive.

As mutated abominations of nature Tainted by the Serpent go, Serpente Zucchini are remarkably benign. While still clearly a plant-like organism, the ripe Zucchini have developed the ability to detach themselves from their vines and seek new soil on their own; the Zucchini moves like a three to five foot long snake, and looks vaguely like one (with flowers in the place where the eyes would be). Fortunately, it does not consume flesh, blood, brains, spinal fluid, bile, lymph, or even hair. It also does not attack or stalk living creatures, will not strangle humans in the night, does not drain humans of their life essence, increase the chances of Serpent Taint, or subtly poison the

environment. It tastes indescribably awful, of course, but that's fine. Serpente Zucchini are no longer human food sources.

What they are instead are early warning systems. A Serpente Zucchini gets agitated when within twenty feet of a tainted monster or chimera, possibly because anything tainted by the Serpent finds Serpente Zucchini irresistibly delicious. It's believed by their cultivars that the Zuchinis seek out humans precisely because they dimly understand that humans **won't** eat them, which bizarrely enough makes them increasingly popular pets. They're not exactly affectionate, but they do like human body heat, and stay where you put them.

Serpente Zuchinis last about three years in the wild; nobody knows how long they'll live while being taken care of by humans. They generally just need soil and water to survive, and seem to do slightly better when either is even slightly Tainted. The major problem that the Serpente Zucchini poses to humans is its fecundity: a mature Serpente Zucchini can spawn another two each calendar year, and they reach reproductive age as soon as they detach from the vine. This can making breeding them tricky. For that matter, more than one Italian agricultural

expert is adamant about not breeding them at all. You simply can't trust things that come from the Serpent.

- Moe Lane

- <http://www.moelane.com>