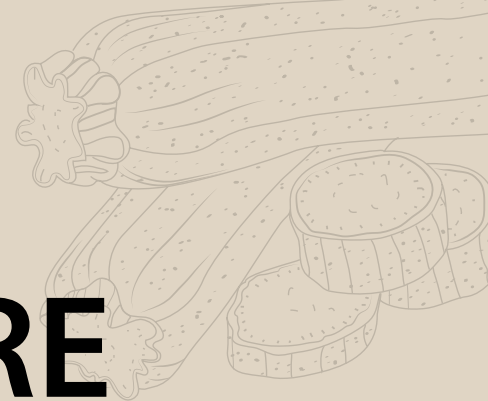


COOKING WITH
COURGETTES





WHAT ARE COURGETTES?

A member of the squash family, the courgette – also known as *zucchini* - is a versatile vegetable with tender flesh and seeds and soft edible skin.

Courgettes can be eaten raw or cooked - just slice off each end and they're ready to go. Keep them in your fridge to ensure they stay at their best.

The UK courgette season runs between June and October, with Spanish and Moroccan crops available across the winter and spring months.



PAUL SOUTHALL

Paul Southall at D. Southall and Sons (partners Donald Southall and his sons Paul and Michael) has been growing courgettes since 1982

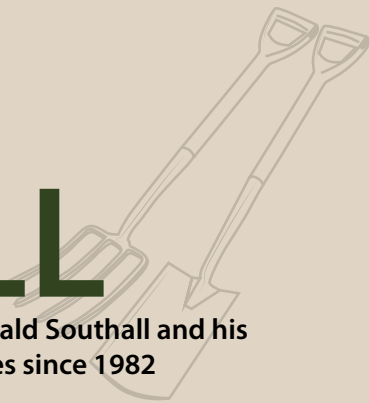
Before I became a farmer, I studied Agricultural and Food Marketing at Newcastle University. I also played a lot of football and cricket while I was up there.

In the early 80s I was keen that we should diversify away from the standard arable crops and joined a local co-operative which ran a number of vegetable-specific growers groups, including one for courgettes. The crop was then classed as exotic and we worked hard at trialling new varieties and growing systems to get the best out of the product.

My favourite thing about growing courgettes has to be the look of a mature courgette patch, with its dark green glossy leaves, vibrant yellow flowers and glistening fruit.

If I could change one thing, I'd like to reduce the amount of black polymulch that we use primarily for weed suppression. It is expensive to buy, lay, recover and then dispose of for recycling.

My 'signature dish' as an infrequent cook is Madhur Jaffrey's prawn and courgette curry. It has some great fresh flavours and also looks brilliant when served.





COURGETTE, SULTANA AND PECAN CAKE

serves 4

2 large eggs
125ml vegetable oil
85g soft brown sugar
350g courgettes,
coarsely grated
1 tsp vanilla extract
300g plain flour
2 tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp nutmeg
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
½ tsp baking powder
85g pecans, chopped
140g sultanas

Heat oven to 180°C/160°C fan/gas 4.

Butter and line a 2lb loaf tin with baking parchment.

In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, oil and sugar, then add the courgettes and vanilla.

In another bowl, combine the remaining ingredients with a pinch of salt.

Stir the dry ingredients into the wet mixture, then pour into the tin.

Bake for 1 hour, or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.

Leave to cool, then serve, or freeze for up to 1 month.

STUFFED COURGETTE

serves 4

2 courgettes
100g mascarpone
100g crème fraîche
1 shallot, diced
1 clove of garlic, diced
2 tbsps toasted pine nuts
50g spinach, sliced
20g olives, chopped
10g capers, chopped
10g olive oil
5g balsamic vinegar
1 tsp French mustard

First soften the shallots and garlic in a pan.

Mix this with the spinach, olives, capers, pine nuts, crème fraîche and mascarpone. Season to taste.

Next get a potato peeler and peel the courgettes into ribbons.

Place a teaspoon of the mix onto the end of a ribbon and roll up.

Carry on until the filling has been used.

With any left over ribbons, place them in a bowl and mix with the oil, vinegar and mustard and place onto a plate with the rest of the stuffed courgettes.





CHARRED COURGETTE SALAD WITH MINT AND FETA

serves 4

3 courgettes, roughly cut
25ml oil
2 sprigs of mint
2 gherkins, roughly
chopped
150g feta cheese
3 spring onions
6 dried apricots, chopped
1 tsp cumin

Toss the courgette in the oil and cumin.

Place the courgette onto a hot griddle pan and char well (alternatively, the courgettes can be cooked in a hot frying pan).

Place into a bowl and mix with the rest of the ingredients.

Season with salt and a little lemon juice or vinegar.

CHEF'S TIP

This is great served on its own or as an accompaniment to game or fish.



COURGETTE AND MINT SOUP serves 4

Peel the courgettes but do not throw away the green skin.

Melt the butter in a pan then add the finely chopped courgette, shallot, garlic and rosemary.

Cover with water and cook for 5 minutes.

Add the green courgette skin, mint and spinach and blend thoroughly.

Season and serve.

CHEF'S TIP

This is fantastic with some cos lettuce and peas, or even olives, served in the bowl - a perfect dinner party starter.

2 courgettes
2 shallots finely sliced
1 clove of garlic, crushed
50g butter
2-3 sprigs of mint
Handful of spinach
Seasoning to taste



HINTS AND TIPS



As they have a high water content, courgettes don't taste their best when boiled – try roasting, grilling, frying or even microwaving instead.

Got half a courgette left over? Why not try:

Making courgette fritters – grate your courgette and coat in a basic batter made from flour, water and any seasoning or spices.
Fry in a little oil until golden brown and crispy.

Cutting it into ribbons with a potato peeler, tossing it in some olive oil and seasoning and piling it on a flatbread. Cover with mozzarella and grill until the cheese is melted for a quick and tasty snack.

WHO ARE WE?



We're a grower, a supplier and a marketer of niche vegetables.

Part of M&W Mack Ltd, we belong to a family run business that's been trading since 1874.

Want to find out more?

Visit www.dmgrowers.co.uk



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