



COOKING WITH
FENNEL



WHAT IS FENNEL?

Also known as *Florence fennel* or *finocchio*, fennel has a distinctive aniseed flavour that mellows when cooked.

All parts of the vegetable are edible - the bulb and stalk can be eaten raw or cooked and the fine leaves can be used as a garnish.

Fennel is harvested in the UK between June and November, but is available year-round.

A portrait of Julian Perowne, a man with short brown hair and blue eyes, smiling. He is wearing a dark blue zip-up jacket over a plaid shirt. The background is a green tractor.

MEET THE GROWER

JULIAN PEROWNE

Farm Manager at Jack Buck Farms, has been growing fennel for 10 years



I'd always wanted to work on a farm. My family has a long history of farming so once I'd completed my agriculture degree I spent some time working on my cousin's farm in Norfolk before joining the team at Jack Buck Farms.

We began growing fennel because supermarkets were asking for it! It was an opportunity for us to try something new and we do enjoy a challenge!

My favourite thing about growing fennel is how it looks in the field - the green foliage really does look beautiful.

It's not the easiest crop to manage, it has a tendency to bolt before the bulbs begin to grow (this means it prematurely produces a flowering stem in an attempt to produce seeds).

I love to eat it sliced incredibly thinly and simply dressed with a vinaigrette.



HALIBUT WITH FENNEL, ORANGE AND TARRAGON

serves 4

2 fennel bulbs sliced in half
with the ends trimmed,
diced and kept for the salsa
1 orange segmented, and
chopped

2 sprigs of tarragon,
chopped

1 shallot diced

25ml sesame oil

10ml vinegar

4 fillets halibut

½ a lemon

10g butter

Place the fennel wedges, halibut, lemon and butter
into a pan and cook for around 10 minutes in an oven
at 180°C, or until the fennel is soft.

Serve with an orange and fennel salsa - to make the
salsa add the remainder of the ingredients to a bowl
and mix well.

Season to taste, adding a little chilli if you're feeling
brave!

CHEF'S TIP

Try using a different fish like cod or monkfish and
wrapping the fish in parma ham.



MOULES MARINIÈRE WITH FENNEL, GARLIC AND PARSLEY

serves 4

1.75kg mussels
1 garlic clove, finely
chopped
2 shallots, finely chopped
2 bulbs of fennel sliced
15g butter
A bouquet garni of parsley,
thyme and bay leaves
100ml dry white wine
or cider
120ml double cream
Handful of parsley leaves,
coarsley chopped

To serve

Crusty bread

Wash the mussels under plenty of cold, running water. Discard any open ones that won't close when lightly squeezed. Pull out the tough, fibrous beards protruding from between the tightly closed shells and then knock off any barnacles with a large knife.

Give the mussels another quick rinse to remove any little pieces of shell.

Soften the garlic, fennel and shallots in the butter with the bouquet garni in a large pan big enough to take all the mussels - it should only be half full.

Add the mussels and wine or cider, turn up the heat, then cover and steam them open in their own juices for 3-4 minutes. Give the pan a good shake every now and then.

Remove the bouquet garni, add the cream and chopped parsley and remove from the heat. Spoon into four large warmed bowls and serve with lots of crusty bread.





BRAISED FENNEL AND BROWN BUTTER COUS COUS

serves 4

For the cous cous

300g water
15g olive oil
6g salt

1 finely diced onion
2 carrots finely diced
1 fennel bulb finely diced
12 flat parsley leaves finely
chopped
250g cous cous
50g butter

For the cous cous

Place the chicken stock into a pan and bring to the boil. In a frying pan, add the olive oil and cook the vegetables for 2-3 minutes on a medium heat.

Add the cous cous to the vegetables and remove from the heat. Add the boiling chicken stock and mix well.

Cling film the pan and leave to cool down, stirring after 5 minutes. To serve, add the butter to a pan and allow to go a nutty colour.

Stir the butter into the cous cous and season to taste.

For the fennel

1 fennel bulb, sliced into 4
Chicken stock to cover
10g butter

For the fennel

Place all ingredients into the pan and cook gently for around 10 minutes or until the fennel is soft.

CHEF'S TIP

Goes perfectly with lamb shanks.



PIGEON BREAST WITH CARROT AND FENNEL SLAW

serves 4

Place the carrot and fennel in a sieve over a bowl and season. Leave for an hour to withdraw any excess liquid.

Mayonnaise to bind
2 carrots, peeled and grated
2 bulbs of fennel grated

Add mayonnaise to the carrot and fennel and mix.
Add lemon juice to taste.

Juice of ½ a lemon
4 pigeon breasts
100g double cream

To cook the pigeon, put the breasts into an ovenproof frying pan with the cream, garlic and thyme.

1 clove of garlic
1 sprig of thyme

Place under a grill for 2 minutes. Turn the pigeon breasts over and cook for another 2 minutes.

Remove from the grill and allow to rest for 2 minutes.

CHEF'S TIP

Try something a little different and serve with some pan roasted apricots or plums.



HINTS AND TIPS



Fennel bulbs can dehydrate quite easily. To prevent this you can wrap them in damp kitchen paper before storing in the fridge.

Fennel is a perfect candidate for pickling so why not try it with your leftovers? When pickled it resembles sauerkraut and is a fantastic meal accompaniment or addition to sandwiches or salads.

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.dgmgrowers.co.uk



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