



COOKING WITH
CHICORY





WHAT IS CHICORY?



Also known as '*Witloof*' and '*Endive*', chicory is a versatile crop with a mildly bitter flavour. Grown in the UK in complete darkness it's available 52 weeks of the year. Red chicory is mainly used as a salad leaf, while white chicory can be eaten both raw and cooked.

Keep your chicory cool and in the dark and it will last for around a week - the flavour of the leaf is affected by light and will develop further colour and a more pronounced bitter flavour.



MEET THE GROWER

BRIAN READ

Brian Read has been growing chicory at DGM Growers since 1999



Before I started working in produce, I was working in the dairy industry and there was a lot of pressure at the time – we'd just had the BSE crisis and the future was looking uncertain. The fresh produce industry seemed more dynamic and a bit more secure, so when the opportunity came up to train on the job I jumped at the chance.

My favourite thing about growing chicory is that we have a crop every day of the year which means that you can constantly see the effects of any changes you make without having to wait for the next season! It's a very intensive and technical crop to grow, but that just keeps life interesting.

If I could change one thing, I'd like to be able to adopt new technology faster to prevent diseases affecting the crops.

My favourite way to eat chicory is in canapés – paired with smoked salmon, mackerel or grapes and honey.



GOATS CHEESE ON TOAST WITH CHICORY MARMALADE

serves 4

For the marmalade

6 chicory (either red or
white) finely shredded

Juice of 2 lemons

Sugar to taste - approx 80g

Seasoning

Place the chicory, lemon and sugar into a pan and
cook down until it is the consistency of jam.

Once this is ready spread on top of the toast, and add
slices or crumble the goats cheese on top.

To serve

4 slices of thick cut bread
toasted

200g any goats cheese

Place underneath a grill until the cheese melts.

CHEF'S TIP

Try brushing a little honey onto the goats cheese and
serving the toasts with fresh chicory.



CHICORY TART TATIN

serves 4

In a frying pan melt together the butter and sugar to form a light caramel.

Add the sliced chicory and cook so that it caramelises and the sauce thickens.

Drain any excess liquid and season to taste. Arrange the chicory neatly into a round cake tin, leaving no gaps, and leave to cool.

Cut out a circle of puff pastry and lay over the top of the chicory, making sure the edges are tucked in.

Make a small hole in the centre for any steam to escape.

Bake in a pre heated oven at 190°C until the pastry is golden and crisp. To serve, turn out the tatin onto a plate so that the chicory is on top.

CHEF'S TIP

This is perfect to serve as an alternative to a cheese course, simply by crumbling some cheese over the up-turned tatin and grilling for 2 minutes.

4 heads of chicory,
sliced horizontally
100g unsalted butter
100g demerara sugar
Puff pastry
Salt and pepper





POACHED SALMON WITH BRAISED CHICORY AND ORANGE

serves 4

Pre heat the oven to 190°C.

Halve the heads of chicory lengthways and place, in one layer, in a buttered ovenproof dish.

Place the salmon into the dish and season and dot with butter. Pour over the water and juice.

Cover the dish and bake in the oven for 15 minutes, until tender.

Remove the salmon and chicory and reduce the cooking liquor into a sauce, adding the orange segments.

Add the chicory and salmon back into the sauce to reheat for a few minutes before serving.

CHEF'S TIP

Try adding grapefruit instead of orange or adding some passionfruit to the sauce. Add capers to the sauce just before serving for an explosion of flavour!

- 2 heads of chicory
- 30g butter
- 100ml water
- 100ml orange juice
- Salt and pepper
- 2 oranges segmented
- 4 pieces of salmon
(6oz portions)
- skinned and boned

CHICORY, WALNUT AND GRAPEFRUIT SALAD

serves 4

4 heads of chicory
Small handful of rocket
Small handful of
walnut halves
1 banana shallot
(or 2 shallots), sliced
2 pink grapefruit,
segmented
50ml olive oil or walnut oil
20ml white wine vinegar
5g grain mustard

Halve the heads of chicory lengthways and slice into chunks.

Place into a bowl with the rocket, walnuts, shallot and grapefruit. Mix well.

In a separate bowl mix the oil, vinegar and mustard together well.

Mix the two together.

Season and serve.

CHEF'S TIP

This salad is great with seared tuna or chargrilled lamb leg steak, or simply add some feta cheese and croutons.



HINTS AND TIPS



The centre of the chicory head has the strongest flavour so remove the core prior to cooking, or only use the outer leaves in salads if you prefer a milder taste.

Use smaller chicory leaves as 'canapé boats' – they're especially good filled with warm pancetta or bacon, caesar salad dressing and croutons.

If your chicory has been exposed to light and is looking green around the edges, there's no need to throw it away. When cooked, chicory loses much of its bitterness – why not try caramelised chicory as an accompaniment to a roast dinner. Simply cut the chicory in half and drizzle with olive oil and vinegar. Sprinkle with brown sugar, season with salt and pepper and bake until golden-brown.

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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