

Fabulous Fennel

Fennel and Orange Salad

Bleak January is here with its post-party feel. Gym memberships and diets in all honour, but don't we need a boost rather than a punishing regime? Wrap up warm, go for a walk and choose something zesty, zingy and energizing to eat!

To rejuvenate over-worked digestive systems and encourage a little weight-loss, look no further than the Cambridgeshire soil.

The Larder stocks fabulous, locally grown, organic Fennel; currently at its peak. Not only does Fennel taste great both raw and cooked, but it is well-known for improving digestion. It is also the leanest vegetable of all and if that's not enough, Fennel is packed with minerals such as calcium and potassium.

To prepare, rinse under cold running water and trim any discoloured outer layers. Cut off the woody base, remove the fronds and trim off the top. Fennel quickly goes brown so either cook immediately or put in acidulated water, i.e. water to which lemon juice has been added.

For a delicious gratin, cut the fennel bulbs into wedges, cook in salted water until slightly softened and bake in a medium oven with some olive oil and freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

Fennel and Orange Salad

1. Rinse and trim the fennel. Slice finely and arrange on a nice large ceramic platter.
2. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. If you wish, add the juice from one Seville orange, in season for a few short weeks only.
3. Peel the oranges and remove all white pith. Slice thinly and arrange over the fennel.
4. Scatter with chopped walnuts or pumpkin seeds.

Recipe provided by www.cambridgecookeryschool.com

INGREDIENTS

1 small fennel bulb per person

½ orange per person

Virgin olive oil, the greener and more peppery the better

Juice from 1 Seville Orange (optional)

Maldon sea salt

Freshly ground black pepper

A small handful of chopped walnuts or pumpkin seeds