
Fennel 101

Tastes like licorice.



Fennel has a sweet mild licorice flavor, and the tops, stems, and bulbs can all be eaten. The feathery fronds look a lot like dill and have a delicate anise flavor which can be used like an herb to flavor salads, soups and stews. The bulb can be thinly sliced and used in salads or cooked. The stalks also taste a bit like licorice but are tougher — chop them finely if you're eating them raw, or cook them down for stir fry or pastas.

How to Store:

Cut off the stalks where they emerge from the bulb. If you want to use the feathery foliage as an herb, place the dry stalks upright in a glass filled with two inches of water. Cover the glass loosely with a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator for few days.

The unwashed bulb may be kept in a plastic bag in the refrigerator drawer for 2 weeks.

How to Prep:

The Bulb: If the outer layers of the bulb are damaged, trim off the bad spots or remove the layers. Trim off the bottom root. Slice thinly if eating raw — a mandolin is perfect for this. Prevent raw slices from discoloring by rubbing the cut edges with lemon.

The stalks resemble celery stalks in crunch factor, so chop them finely.

Chop or mince the **fronds** for garnish or seasoning.



FENNEL

Apiaceae

Nutritional Snapshot

- Highly nutritious, good source of fibre, vitamin c, calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium and manganese
- All parts of the fennel plant are rich in powerful antioxidants

Medicinal Uses

- Manganese is important for enzyme activation, metabolism, cellular protection, bone development, blood sugar regulation, and wound healing
- Contains polyphenol antioxidants rosmarinic acid, chlorogenic acid, quercetin, and apigenin
- Packed with fiber — a nutrient shown to reduce certain heart disease risk factors like high cholesterol

Best Uses:

Raw in veggie trays

Salad

Grated raw in salad

Roasted

Braised or Steamed

Grilled

Stir Fry

Pasta dish

Risotto

Wedges dipped in olive

oil

Pickled

Juice

Slaw

Smoothie

Pesto

Veggie stock (tops too)

Soup



Substitutes:

Celery, fennel seed, bok choy stems.

Pairs well with:

Fish, lemon, oranges, grapefruit, radish, apples, beets, butter, cheese, chicken, garlic, olives, potatoes, thyme, tomatoes, spinach, beans, onion.

To Freeze:

To freeze the fronds: Cut up the fronds into portion sizes you will use (a teaspoon for example) and place in an ice cube tray. Fill with water and freeze. Then use portions later as needed.

To freeze bulb: Chop into desired size. Blanch in boiling water for 30 seconds. Plunge into an ice bath for 30 seconds. Dry and freeze in Ziplock bag.

6 Ways to Use the Fronds:

Yup! You can eat the fronds too. Don't let this delicate herb-like ingredient go to waste. Here are some ideas for how to use them up...

1. **Pesto** — Add into the mix with other greens and you've got a delicious pesto. Smear it on your meat before cooking or toss with some pasta.
2. **Salads** — Add just a few fronds to your leafy green salad or top your platter of citrus salad.

3. **Juice** — You won't get a lot of juice, but it will mix in well and add some great fun flavor.
4. **Stock** — Fennel tops are great for making your own vegetable stock. Throw the fronds in your freezer scrap bag!
5. **Cooking Fish** — Lay a few stalks of the fronds along the fish to give it some licorice flavor, whether it's roasted, poached, baked, or steamed.
6. **Topping for Roasted Veggies** — The next time you throw together a platter of roasted root veggies, drizzle just a hint of the fronds over the top as a finishing herb.

Suggested Recipes:

Citrus, Fennel, and Avocado Salad

www.foodiecrush.com

Ingredients:

3 navel oranges

3 cara cara oranges

2 minneola oranges

3 mandarin oranges

1 blood orange

1/2 fennel bulb, very thinly sliced

1 avocado, peeled, pitted and sliced

1/2 shallot, peeled and very thinly sliced

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons champagne vinegar

1 tablespoon honey

kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper

1/4 cup mint leaves

Reserved fennel fronds

Directions:

Slice the peels off of the citrus and place in a bowl or on a serving plate. Layer with thinly slivered fennel slices. Add avocado slices and shallot slivers.

In a small bowl, slowly whisk the olive oil into the champagne vinegar until emulsified. Add the honey and whisk to mix. Season with kosher salt and pepper.

Pour dressing over the salad and season with more kosher salt and freshly ground pepper. Top with reserved fennel fronds and mint leaves.

Fennel Apple and Celery Slaw

Adapted from CSA Cookbook by Linda Ly

Ingredients

1 fennel bulb, core removed, cut into quarters, and sliced very thinly, fronds

reserved 1 Granny Smith apple, cut into matchsticks

1 cup thinly sliced purple cabbage

2-3 celery ribs with leaves, thinly sliced

For the dressing:

1/4 cup cider vinegar

2 T. minced chives

1/2 t. kosher salt

1/4 t. black pepper

zest and juice of 1 lemon

1/4 c. olive oil

Directions

Toss the fennel, cabbage, apple, and celery together in a large bowl. Whisk the dressing ingredients in a small bowl. Add the dressing to the slaw and toss to coat. Refrigerate for a couple hours before serving.

Tuscan Braised Fennel

Ingredients:

3 bulbs fennel, scrubbed, cleaned

6 cups homemade chicken stock

salt and pepper, to taste

extra virgin olive oil

1/4 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Fully wash and trim the fennel bulbs.

Trim off the tops of the fennel and set aside. Leave enough of the base intact so the fennel retains its form.

Cut the bulbs lengthwise (top to bottom) into pieces approximately 1" thick. In a pan, parboil the fennel in chicken stock until slightly tender. Strain and retain the stock.

Place the braised fennel into a pan or cast iron dish that is lightly coated with extra virgin olive oil.

Pour about 1/2 cup of the chicken stock over the fennel, salt, pepper, and cover with 1/4 cup of Parmigiano-Reggiano.

Finely chop some of the fennel tops and sprinkle over the dish for added fennel flavor.

Place in the oven and cook until the top is golden brown, approximately 20–30 minutes.

Garnish.

Cream of Fennel Soup

from How to Cook Everything by Mark Bittmann

Ingredients:

1 pound fennel bulb, chopped

1/2 cup white rice OR 1 medium potato, peeled and cut into quarters

4 cups broth

salt and ground black pepper

1/4 to 1 cup cream or half-and-half

chopped fresh parsley or chives for garnish

Directions:

Combine the fennel, rice (or potato), and stock in a large, deep pot over medium-high heat. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat to medium and cook until the veggies are very tender, about 15 minutes.

Cool slightly, then puree in a blender. Strain the puree.

Return the soup to the pot and reheat over medium-low heat. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, then add the cream. Heat through again, garnish, and serve.

Roasted Fennel with Parmesan, Black Pepper and

Chives *Adapted from sprinklesandsprouts.com*

Ingredients:

2 fennel bulbs

2 tbsp olive oil

salt

1/2 tsp ground black pepper

1/2 tsp dried chives

1/3 cup freshly grated Parmesan

1 tbsp fresh chives

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 190°C/375 ° F.

Cut the fronds off the fennel bulbs and then cut each of them in half. (reserve the fronds)

Slice the halves into 8mm (1/3-inch) slices.

Pour half of the olive oil over the base of your baking dish.

Arrange the fennel in a single layer.

Drizzle with the remaining olive oil.

Season with salt and plenty of black pepper.

And roast for 35 minutes.

Check the fennel is fork tender then remove from the oven, sprinkle with the dried chives and grated parmesan.

Bake for a further 3-5 minutes to just melt the cheese.

Chop some of the reserved fennel fronds.

Sprinkle with the fresh chives (and some of the reserved fennel fronds) and serve.

Refrigerator Fennel Pickles

Adapted from food52.com Makes 2 or 3 eight-ounce jars

Ingredients:

2 medium to large bulbs of fennel, trimmed and thinly sliced (reserving the leafy fronds)

1 1/2 cups champagne vinegar (or white wine vinegar, if you prefer)

A fat pinch of salt

1 tablespoon fennel seeds, lightly crushed
1 tablespoon sugar
10 sprigs of parsley
3 leafy sprigs of tarragon
1 bay leaf
10-12 chives
1 small clove of garlic, peeled and lightly crushed

Directions:

In a small non-reactive pan, covered, bring to a slow simmer the vinegar. Add the fennel seeds, bay leaf, salt and sugar and give it a good stir.

Tie up the fresh herbs and fennel leaves with a small piece of kitchen twine. Put them in the bottom of the pan. Muddle the fresh leaves gently with a metal spoon.

Add the fennel slices, turn the heat down to low, cover, and cook for one minute.

Without removing the lid, turn off the heat and let the pan sit for about half an hour.

Remove the fennel with a slotted spoon and put into clean jars. Pour over the cooking liquid. Then slip the herbs down along the side of the jars.

If the liquid does not cover the fennel, add filtered water as necessary. Cover and refrigerate until used. Save up to 3 weeks.

Fennel Frond and Ginger Pesto

from The CSA Cookbook by Linda Ly

Ingredients:

2 cups packed fennel fronds
1/3 cup toasted walnuts
1 1/2 T. chopped ginger
1 garlic clove
1/4 t. kosher salt
zest and juice of 1/2 lemon
1/4 c. olive oil

Directions:

In a food processor, combine all the ingredients except oil and pulse, scraping down the sides

of the bowl as needed. Add the oil in a steady stream until smooth.

Serve with pasta or roasted fish.

Roast Chicken Parts with Fennel, Celery, or Carrots *Adapted from Mark Bittman*

Ingredients:

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil

2 fennel, cut into 1/4 inch slices

1 celery bunch, chopped

1 bunch carrots, trimmed and cut into 1/4 inch thick coins

1 whole chicken, 3-4 pounds, cut into 8 pieces

Chopped parsley for garnish

Directions:

Preheat oven to 450°.

Put about 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large shallow roasting pan. Add the fennel, celery, carrots and onions to the pan and stir to coat in the olive oil. Lightly salt and pepper them. Use the whole pan.

Roast for 10 minutes.

Salt and pepper the chicken parts.

Stir the vegetables, and then arrange the chicken pieces on top, skin side up. Spoon some of the olive oil from the pan over the chicken.

Roast for 15 minutes, then baste the chicken with the pan drippings and rotate the pan.

The chicken will be done in about 30 minutes. Serve with a portion of fennel and pan juices spooned over.