
Parsnips 101

Nutritious, Versatile, and Earthy



Buying:

When selecting parsnips, look for firm, creamy-white roots. Avoid any that feel soft or have blemishes. The size of the parsnip doesn't significantly affect taste, but choosing similar-sized ones ensures even cooking.



How to Store:

Roots: Store parsnips unwashed in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator. They'll keep for 2-3 weeks.

Prep Tip: Remove any greens before storing. Leaving greens attached can cause the root to lose moisture faster

Substitutes

If you're out of parsnips, carrots, turnips, or rutabagas are excellent alternatives.

Nutritional Benefits

Halblange parsnips are a great source of fiber, vitamins C, K, and folate, and contain essential minerals like potassium and magnesium. They're low in calories, making them a nutrient-dense addition to any meal. Parsnips are also packed with antioxidants, which support heart health and reduce inflammation.

How to Prep:

Wash the parsnips thoroughly before peeling. For roasting or stews, cut them into uniform chunks. If you're looking to eat them raw (like in a salad), peel and grate them for added crunch. Smaller, younger parsnips may not need to be peeled.



Pairs well with:

Parsnips complement both sweet and savory flavours beautifully.

- Pair them with:
 - Spices: Nutmeg, cinnamon, ginger, cumin
 - Herbs: Thyme, rosemary, parsley
 - Other Ingredients: Apples, honey, mustard, butter, cream, carrots, pork, chicken, root vegetables, and balsamic vinegar

Best Uses:

Parsnips shine in many dishes:

- Roasted (delicious with a drizzle of olive oil and herbs)
- Added to stews, soups, or mashed with potatoes
- Shredded in salads for a crunchy, earthy element
- Pureed as a side dish
- Baked into parsnip fries or chips
- Added to stir-fries or casseroles
- Juiced for an earthy, sweet flavour



To Roast:

How to Roast

- Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C).
- Cut the parsnips into even-sized pieces. Toss them with olive oil, salt, pepper, and your choice of herbs.
- Spread them on a baking sheet in a single layer.
- Roast for 25-35 minutes, turning halfway through, until they are golden brown and tender.

To Freeze:

To freeze parsnips:

- Blanch peeled, sliced parsnips in boiling water for 2-3 minutes.
- Immediately cool them in an ice bath to stop the cooking process.
- Drain and place in a single layer on a baking sheet to freeze individually.
- Once frozen, transfer to an airtight freezer bag. Frozen parsnips can be stored for up to 10 months.

Suggested Recipes:

Honey Roast Parsnips

Adapted from jamieoliver.com: <https://www.jamieoliver.com/inspiration/make-roast-parsnips/>

Ingredients:

2kg parsnips

1/2 a bunch of fresh thyme

2 tablespoons runny honey

olive oil

Preparation:

Scrub the parsnips clean, then slice in half lengthways.

Parboil the parsnips in boiling salted water for 10 minutes, then drain well.

Pick the thyme leaves. Toss the parsnips with the honey, thyme, a pinch of sea salt and black pepper, 10g of the butter and 2 tablespoons of oil.

Tip into a roasting tray and arrange in one layer, then roast for 40 minutes, or until golden.

Parsnips_FOUR.jpg

If you have leftover roast parsnips, break them into small pieces and mix with other leftover veg, then shallow fry in a pan, to make . Serve topped with a fried egg.

Alternatively, you can blitz leftover roast parsnips into a purée, place in a pan with softened onions and garlic, then add stock and blend to a smooth spicy parsnip soup.

Easy Parsnip Soup

Adapted from <https://www.tamingtwins.com/parsnip-soup-recipe/>

Ingredients:

800 g parsnips, peeled and cut into small chunks

1 onion, finely chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 tsp dried chilli flakes

750 ml hot vegetable stock

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

300 ml milk

Garlic Bread Croutons:

300 g Cubes of bread

4 tbsp Olive oil

3 Cloves garlic Peeled and crushed

2 tbsp Parmesan cheese Grated

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Optional garnishes:

Grated cheese

Goats cheese cubes

Toasted hazelnuts

Extra virgin olive oil

Instructions

Put the parsnips, onion, garlic, chilli flakes, stock and salt and pepper in a large saucepan.

Cook over a medium heat for about 20 minutes or until the parsnips are very tender.

Add the milk and blend until smooth. If your soup is too thick when it is finished you can add a little extra milk or stock.

Garlic bread croutons:

Preheat the oven to 200C.

Toss the cubes of bread with the oil, garlic, Parmesan and salt and pepper.

Spread on a baking sheet in one layer, with plenty of space between the cubes, and bake for about 10 minutes. (Keep an eye on them as they can burn.)

To make in the slow cooker:

Reduce the stock in the recipe to 350ml and cook on LOW for 7-8 hours or HIGH for 3-4 hours.

Add the milk at the end and blend before serving.

Parsnip Fries

This is my favourite, low effort method!

Cut parsnips into fry-sized strips, toss with olive oil and a sprinkle of paprika, salt, and pepper. Roast at 425°F (220°C) until golden and crispy, about 20-25 minutes.

Parsnip, Potato and Leek Gratin *Recipe adapted from*

<https://heinstirred.com/parsnip-potato-leek-gratin/>

As simple as parsnip fries are, this recipe is complex...but worth the effort!

Ingredients:

2 leeks washed and thinly sliced

3 large cloves garlic mashed

Baleia Extra Virgin Olive Oil

500 g parsnips peeled and thinly sliced

500 g potatoes peeled and thinly sliced but not as thin as the parsnips

100 g Kasselshoop Cheddar Cheese grated

100 g gruyere cheese grated

750 ml pouring cream

1 tbsp flour

1 ¼ tsp salt

¼ tsp ground nutmeg

freshly ground black pepper

fresh thyme leaves

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F and grease a baking dish of approx 9" x 12" in size

Fry the leeks and garlic with a good glug of olive oil over a medium heat for about 5 minutes

Layer half the parsnips, potatoes and all the leeks in the baking dish and sprinkle with half of the cheese, reserving the bigger slices of parsnips and potatoes for the final layer

Press down firmly and place a last layer of parsnip and potato slices in overlapping rows and press down again

Using the same pot you used for the leeks, heat the cream and whisk in the flour, salt, nutmeg and black pepper

When the cream just comes to a simmer, pour over the layered vegetable, slanting the baking

dish to all side to get the cream in all over the slices

Sprinkle the remaining cheese over the top, dot with a few leaves of thyme

Cover securely with foil and bake for 60 minutes

Remove the foil and pierce with a fork. The parsnips should be al dente (If not place back in the oven (covered) for another 15 minutes until al dente)

Remove the foil (don't worry if the sauce looks watery and thin) and bake uncovered for 15 minutes until golden and bubbly

Let the gratin sit for 15 minutes to set and thicken before serving