

All Raw Fennel = Easy and Yummy!

The fennel plant has been appreciated since ancient times. It originally grew wild (and still does) in the Mediterranean region and its popularity spread across many cultures.

The variety of fennel that is used in these fennel recipes is known as Florence fennel, or sometimes bulb fennel. Its roundish base, which isn't actually a bulb but tightly packed white leaves, is topped by green stalks ending in wispy leaves. Fennel has a mild licorice flavor that marries well with many recipes.

Nutritional Benefits include:

Fennel is high in vitamins A and E, calcium and potassium. Fennel and ginger make a good digestive tea. (Steep the fresh leaves with a bit of sliced ginger for 5 minutes in boiling water.)

Storing Fennel

You can store fennel in the refrigerator for several days, although it does tend to lose some of its flavor the longer you keep it. Wrap it well or store it in a plastic container to keep it fresh and avoid having its flavor mingle with everything else in your refrigerator.

Preparing Fennel

Before preparing these fennel recipes, you need to cut off some of bulb. Begin by removing the green tops, which can be set aside and dried to flavor a soup or stew. If you want whole bulbs just cut off a small piece of the base. Otherwise, cut it off at about 1/2 inch, then remove the two most outer leaves which can be tough.

Raw Fennel

You can serve raw fennel slices with a dip. The leaves make great scoopers and the fennel adds a pleasant licorice taste. Fennel can be chopped finely and served in a salad as in the recipe below. You might also like to try raw fennel with apples, melon, ham, or smoked salmon.
www.easy-french-food.com/fennel-recipes.html

Fennel and Cheese for Dessert adapted from The Victory Garden Cookbook by M. Morash

Fennel bulbs

One great cheese, such as blue cheese or a local goat cheese
best olive oil
S & P

Wash and trim fennel bulbs. If small, cut in half; quarter larger ones. Serve with slices of cheese and pass the oil, salt, and pepper.

Fennel Salad

1 Bulb fennel
1 bunch radish
1 Cucumber
A few carrots
Rice vinegar
Dill 1-2 tsp if fresh

Thinly slice fennel, carrots and radish. Seed and chop cucumber. Mix everything into a bowl and toss with some rice vinegar and some dill to taste. This salad gets better as the days go by and it marinates in the vinegar, but it is really tasty the day of as well.

FENNEL, GRAPE, AND GORGONZOLA SALAD

1 lg. bulb fennel bulb (sometimes called anise)
2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1/2 cup halved black grapes, seeded
2 oz. Gorgonzola cheese, crumbled (about 1/2 cup)
1 cup thinly sliced radicchio
1 cup thinly sliced romaine (wash and dry before slicing)

Trim fennel stalks flush with bulb and discard any tough outer layers. Halve bulb lengthwise, discard core, and slice fennel thin. In a bowl toss together fennel, oil, lemon juice, and salt and pepper to taste and let stand 10 minutes. Add grapes, Gorgonzola, radicchio, and romaine and toss to combine.

ARUGULA, FENNEL AND ORANGE SALAD

1/4 cup minced shallots
3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 1/2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
2 lg. oranges
7 cups arugula (about 10 large bunches), trimmed
1 lg. fennel bulb, quartered lengthwise, cored, thinly sliced crosswise
1 sm. red onion, thinly sliced

Whisk minced shallots, olive oil and lemon juice in medium bowl to blend. Season dressing to taste with salt and pepper.

Cut all peel and white pith from oranges. Using small sharp knife, cut between membranes to release segments. Combine arugula, fennel and onion in large bowl. Toss with enough dressing to coat. Add orange segments; toss to combine. Season salad to taste with salt and pepper and serve. Serves 6.
Bon Appetit

FENNEL, ORANGE AND CAPER SALAD This and it's REALLY good.

2 bulbs fennel
1 tbsp. capers;drained
1 tbsp. dill or chervil, fresh; chopped

DRESSING:

1/4 orange, seeded
2 tsp. red wine vinegar
1 tbsp. Dijon mustard
2 tsp. sugar
1/2 tsp. salt
4 tbsp. olive oil

Trim the stalks from the fennel, cut the bulb in half lengthwise; then cut crosswise into very thin slices. Place in a large bowl with the capers and the dill.

Make the dressing. Cut the quarter orange in small pieces and place in the work bowl of a food processor with the vinegar, mustard, sugar and salt. Process until smooth. With the motor running slowly, pour in the olive oil. Pour over the fennel, toss well and serve. from: www.recipeland.com

ITALIAN FENNEL SALAD

Thinly slice 1 medium-size fennel bulb and 1 unpeeled orange. Arrange - alternating and overlapping or however you like - on two salad plates. Strew with half a dozen salt-cured or Kalamata olives, sprinkle each plate with 1/2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, a few drops of fresh lemon juice, a tsp. of finely chopped fennel leaves, salt and freshly ground white pepper. Serve at once or let the ingredients mingle an hour or so. Serves 2.
The Kitchen Garden Cookbook, Sylvia Thompson

More great fennel recipes, including cooked ones at www.mariquita.com/recipes/fennel.html