

Fennel



History

Fennel is another herb with a history of medicinal, magical and culinary uses. Fennel was used by the ancient Egyptians as a food and medicine, and was considered a snake bite remedy in ancient China. During the Middle Ages it was hung over doorways to drive away evil spirits. Fennel is also associated with the origin of the marathon. Ancient Athenian Pheidippides carried a fennel stalk on his 150 mile, 2 day run to Sparta to gather soldiers for the battle of Marathon with Persia in 490 B.C. The battle itself was also reportedly waged on a field of fennel.

Fennel has a long history of use as a carminative and weight-loss aid, and seeds have been eaten during Lent and fasts to stave off hunger. In traditional medicine, fennel was used as an aphrodisiac and to encourage menstruation and lactation, although some sources caution against the latter use due to possible toxicity to infants. Fennel seed and oil are approved by the German Commission E for short-term treatment of dyspepsia, flatulence and upper respiratory catarrh. Oil is reportedly antioxidant, antimicrobial, antispasmodic, and stimulates gastrointestinal motility. Allergic reactions to fennel are possible but rare. According to the German Commission E, certain preparations are not recommended for pregnant women and young children.

Pork Tenderloin w/ Fennel Seed & Onion

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 onions, sliced
- 1lb pork tenderloin
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper, freshly ground
- 1 tablespoon fennel seed
- 3/4 cup dry red wine
- 1/4 cup parsley, finely chopped



DIRECTIONS

1. In skillet, heat 1 tbsp oil over medium heat.
2. Cook onions, stirring often, until tender and golden brown, about 20 minutes. Transfer to bowl.
3. Meanwhile, cut pork into 1-inch thick medallions; season with 1/2 tsp salt and 1/4 tsp pepper. Set aside.
4. In same skillet, heat 1 tbsp oil over medium-high heat; fry fennel seeds for 10 seconds.
5. Add pork; brown on both sides, about 4 minutes.
6. Pour in wine and increase heat to high; cover and cook for 3 minutes.
7. Turn over pork and cook, uncovered, until wine is reduced to about 2 tbsp, 2 to 3 minutes.
8. Transfer pork to warm serving plate. Set aside.
9. Add onions and parsley to skillet and heat through, about 1 minute; serve over pork.

Note: Serving suggestion - nice with garlic spaghetti, and a tomato and lettuce leaf salad dressed with olive oil and lemon juice and sprinkled with chopped fresh mint.

Find it online: <https://www.food.com/recipe/pork-tenderloin-with-fennel-seed-and-onions-163570>

Fresh Tomato & Fennel Pasta

INGREDIENTS

- 12 oz pasta of your choice, I like rigatoni
- Kosher salt
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter (or more olive oil)
- 5 garlic cloves, 4 thinly sliced, one finely grated
- 1 tablespoon fennel seed
- Crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- 2 pounds tiny tomatoes, the smaller and sweeter the better, quartered or halved depending on the size
- 2 tablespoons white distilled vinegar
- Pecorino or parmesan cheese, for grating



INSTRUCTIONS

- Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. While that is happening, start the sauce.
- 2. Heat olive oil and butter in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add 4 garlic cloves, fennel seed, and a good pinch of crushed red pepper flakes, if using. Season with salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally until garlic begins to turn a lovely golden brown, while the spices toast alongside, 3 to 4 minutes.
- 3. Add tomatoes, season with salt and pepper, and turn the heat to high. Cook, tossing or stirring occasionally until they burst but don't turn to total mush (there should be juiciness, but not jamminess), 5 to 7 minutes (it might look thin, that's okay). Add vinegar and season again with salt and pepper. Remove from heat while you cook the pasta.
- 4. Once pasta is cooked to a nice al dente, drain (I like to use a slotted spoon or strainer and leave the water behind) and add to the pot, tossing to coat. Add some pasta water to loosen things up if it needs, and keep tossing and cooking until the pasta is perfectly cooked and the sauce coats each piece.
- 5. Remove from heat and spoon into a bowl, shower it with cheese, the remaining clove of garlic, and more pepper.

Find it online: <https://www.alisoneroman.com/recipes/fresh-tomato-and-fennel-pasta>

Zucchini Sautéed with Fennel Seeds

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 zucchini, thickly sliced diagonally
- 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tsp Fennel Seeds, coarsely crushed
- 1 tbsp white balsamic vinegar

Instructions:

1. Heat the oil in a large non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the zucchini and stir for 5 minutes or until golden.
2. Stir in the onion, garlic and fennel seeds. Cook, shaking the pan occasionally for 2 minutes or until the onion softens slightly. Stir in the vinegar. Season.



Find it online: <https://www.taste.com.au/recipes/zucchini-sauteed-fennel-seeds/c05ded99-973a-4d60-81c6-4c4a99a36f55>