

7 WAYS TO COOK WITH FENNEL

Fennel may look like a member of the onion family, but it is actually related to carrots, parsley and dill. It is an excellent source of fiber, vitamin C and potassium. Raw fennel tastes like licorice. When cooked, the flavor becomes mild, somewhat of a cross between celery and onion.

Choose fennel with firm, green stalks and leaves. Bulbs should be firm without blemishes or soft spots. Store in a paper bag in the refrigerator and use within a few days. To prepare, wash thoroughly and trim off stalks. Cut off the root end and remove outer leaves, if damaged. Chop or slice the bulb as desired. The stalks and greens are edible, too! The stalks can be chopped or shredded for use in salads or soups as a substitute for celery. The lacy leaves are a tasty addition to fresh salads and make a pretty garnish.

Try our top recipe ideas to enjoy this tasty veggie:

1. **Start your favorite soup** recipe with half onion and half chopped fennel. Sauté in a little canola oil and proceed as usual.
2. **Make a fresh salad** by chopping two apples, two fennel bulbs and three celery stalks. Combine with a few tablespoons of lemon juice, olive oil and salt and pepper to taste. Top with Parmesan cheese and toasted walnuts.
3. **Bake with chicken** by placing slices of lemons and fennel in the bottom of a baking dish and topping with chicken pieces seasoned with salt, pepper and your favorite herbs. Bake at 350 degrees about an hour or until meat thermometer reads 165 degrees.
4. **Bake with fish** by seasoning and sautéing fennel slices until golden. Place in a baking pan and place fish fillets on top. Bake at 425 degrees about 10-12 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork.
5. **Pan-grilled with pork** by slicing a 1-pound pork loin into 1/2-inch pieces. Season with salt and pepper and brown on both sides. Remove from pan and set aside. Sauté chopped fennel until tender. Add a half cup of chicken broth and scrape up the browned bits. Return pork to pan and continue cooking until pork is cooked through.
6. **Roast quartered fennel bulbs** with a few tablespoons of olive oil, salt and pepper in a 450 degree oven. Turn after 15 minutes and roast another 10 minutes or so until edges are lightly browned.
7. **Boost flavor** when baking scalloped potatoes by layering in slices of sautéed, caramelized fennel. Bake as usual and enjoy!

