

Roasted fennel and puy lentil salad

(Recipe produced by Nishma Shah)

Serves: 4 adults

Meat-free, fish-free, egg-free, dairy-free, wheat-free, gluten-free, soya-free, nut-free, no added sugar (optional).

Ingredients:

- 1 fennel bulb (with leaves)
- 1 courgette
- 1 yellow/orange pepper
- 10 cherry tomatoes
- 100 grams dried puy lentils
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon black pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ litre water
- Salt to taste

Fennel seed dressing

- 40 millilitres olive oil (3 tablespoons)
- 150 millilitres balsamic vinegar
- 5 tablespoons tomato passata
- 2 red onions (appx 100 grams)
- 5 cloves garlic
- 1 tablespoon fennel seeds
- 1 teaspoon chilli flakes (optional)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon sugar (optional)

Equipment:

Oven, oven tray (appx 2 inches deep), plane grater/garlic press, knife, chopping board, 2 small/medium pans (sufaria), sieve.

Preparation:

1. Wash all the vegetables.
2. Remove and save the leaves on the fennel bulb (for garnishing at the end).
3. Cut the fennel bulb into quarters lengthwise.
4. Cut the courgette into two halves lengthwise, and then further chop the halves into 1-inch pieces or into quarters depending on the thickness of the courgette.
5. Cut the yellow/orange pepper into quarters, and then halve the quarters.
6. The cherry tomatoes can be left whole, or else you can halve them (according to your preference).
7. Peel and chop one of the red onions into quarters.
8. Peel and very finely dice the other red onion (for the fennel seed dressing).
9. Wash the puy lentils, and soak them for 30 minutes (soaking is optional, but will reduce the cooking time in the next step)
10. Boil the lentils in $\frac{1}{2}$ litre of water with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt, for:
 - ~15 minutes if you've not soaked them beforehand, or
 - ~8 minutes if you soaked the lentils for 30 minutes beforehand.
11. Once cooked, the puy lentils should be soft and hold their shape. (They should not be mushy.)
12. Use a sieve to drain off excess water from the cooked puy lentils.

Roasted fennel and puy lentil salad

(Recipe produced by Nishma Shah)

Method: Roasted vegetables

Place all the prepped vegetables (fennel bulb, quartered red onion, courgette, pepper, cherry tomatoes) into the oven tray, and allow to roast in the oven for 20 minutes at 180°C.

Method: Fennel seed dressing

(suggestion: open your kitchen window during this part, due to the strong balsamic vinegar smell!)

1. To a small pan, first add the finely-diced onions and gently warm the pan on low heat.
2. Next add the olive oil and let the pan contents gently cook on medium heat for a few minutes.
3. The onions should caramelize and become darker in colour.
4. When the onions have become soft, add the fennel seeds and chilli flakes.
5. Grate in the garlic cloves, or use a garlic press, and allow to cook for about 1 minute, while keeping watch so as not to burn the garlic.
6. Add the balsamic vinegar and tomato passata, and keep on stirring until the strong balsamic vinegar smell is no longer there.
7. The dressing should be runny enough to coat all the vegetables and lentils.
Add 1 tablespoon of water, if required, to make it runnier.
8. Switch off the cooker.

Method: Roasted fennel & puy lentil salad

1. Remove the oven tray of roasted vegetables from the oven.
2. Pick out the four fennel bulb pieces and put them to the side in the same oven tray.
3. Use a teaspoon to pour a little dressing in between the fennel bulb petals.
4. Add the cooked puy lentils to the remaining dressing, and mix.
5. Add the resulting puy lentil mix to the roasted vegetables, and mix thoroughly but gently.
6. Plate the four portions of the Roasted fennel & puy lentil salad,
but without the fennel bulb pieces.
7. Top each portion with one fennel bulb piece.
8. Garnish each portion with the fennel leaves saved from the preparation stage.

Enjoy... ☺

