

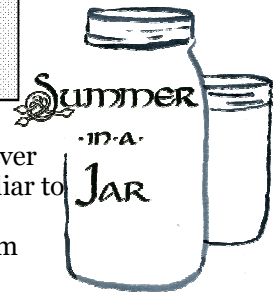


Jubilee Farm Summer Session Week 5

I could only think of the glee my French girlfriend, Sandrine, would have over the contents of the CSA box this week— shallots & fennel! Though unfamiliar to many, these are culinary treats.

Shallots are related to onions but their flavor is much more subtle. Try them added to a vinaigrette, they'll taste sweet.

Fennel has several parts, which we will explore for their attributes and uses in the kitchen. It tends to have a mild licorice flavor. This is a week the kids can add two new veggies to their repertoire.



Fennel Parts and Pieces

The Bulb: Immediately remove the stalks and leaves from the bulb. Store them separately, wrapped in towels.

Once you have removed the top, cut the bulb in half through the core. Sometimes the core can be a little tough, so remove it. Slice the bulb up in the desired pieces.

Treat the bulb like celery. It can be sautéed, braised, roasted and caramelized-yummy, shredded or sliced thinly for a salad.

The Stalk: This part can be tough & stringy but it's full of flavor. Use it for soups and meat braises or roasted chicken. (I use it most often under a roasted chicken)

Remember to remove it before serving.

The Leaves: Oh these are so wonderful! Use them as soon as possible, added to a salad, as a garnish on top of soup, or over potatoes or other veggies with butter and a squeeze of lemon.

The Seeds: Here's some interesting trivia. The Puritans called these *meeting seeds* because they would chew on them in the course of their very long church services to quiet the tummy rumblings. They're a great breath freshener and also aid digestion. We use fennel seeds in our homemade Italian sausage.

Roasted Chicken with Fennel (Two meals-One Chicken)

1 whole chicken –organic if possible or use a Ranger Chicken, WA grown.

Rinse the chicken and pat dry with paper towel.

Loosen the skin over the breast and down to the thigh.

Whisk together:

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 4 Tbs Sherry Vinegar– or other good vinegar
- 4 toes of mashed garlic
- 1 tsp Kosher or Sea salt
- 2 tsp black pepper

Pour between the skin and breast meat and into the cavity and rub some over the outside of the bird.

Brown the top and bottom of the bird in the large enamel lined cast iron pot with a little olive oil.

Lift up the bird with a large kitchen fork and add to the bottom of the pot:

- 3 whole carrots
- Fennel stalks
- Shallots-peeled and cut in small chunks
- 2 cups of dry white wine (or water if you don't have any wine)

Place the whole chicken on top of the bed of vegetables.

Put it in the oven uncovered at 425 degrees for 15 minutes to brown the bird.

Place the lid over the pot and continue cooking the chicken at 350 degrees for another 30 minutes.

If the chicken is done the juice will run clear when you place a sharp knife between the leg & thigh.

Take the chicken out of the oven and allow it to rest for 10 minutes while you make gravy or sauce.

Remove all of the meat from the bones and serve on a platter with carrots & shallots.

Making “Broth” (We call it stock around our house, but technically it’s broth.)

After dinner:

Put the pot, the chicken carcass, left over veggies, and drippings or sauce in the refrigerator.

The next morning or evening....depending on your schedule:

Cover everything in the pot with cold water and a splash of good vinegar.

Bring to a boil, turn down and simmer.

Remove any scum on the surface after about 30 minutes.

Continue cooking for 3-4 hours or longer if you have time. The longer you cook the bones the more nutrition you draw from them.

Once you’re done making the broth, pour it through a colander into a large bowl and allow it to cool quickly. Don’t cover it until it has cooled.

I usually leave it in the refrigerator for a day and allow the fat to come to the top. It’s easy to remove before pouring the broth into freezer containers of your choice.

Remember to label the broth: Fennel/chicken broth and include a date. Use it for soups, sauces, risotto...

Option 2: Save a quart and make the following meal.

Meal 2

White Beans with Red Fennel Sauce

This idea comes from Edward Giobbi who wrote, Pleasures of the Good Earth, one of my all time favorite cookbooks. His family ate it with salted fish, which *isn’t* a part of our family’s food traditions.

Soak 3 cups of small white beans. We like cannellini beans.

Cover them with plenty of water, usually about 3 inches over the top of the beans.

Bring them to a hard boil. Turn off and allow to soak for 2-3 hours or overnight on the stovetop.

In the morning pour the beans out into a colander and rinse.

Refill the pot with fresh cold water and cook the beans for 2-3 hours depending on size and age of the bean. *Never salt beans until they are soft and well cooked.

While they are cooking make a **tomato- fennel red sauce**.

Sauté until soft and sweet:

1 whole onion-sliced

2-3 toes of minced garlic

A pinch of red hot pepper flakes

1-2 fennel bulbs, cored and sliced 1/4 inch thick

Add:

1 quart of your home canned whole roma tomatoes from last summer(!) ,or a can from the store.

1 quart of the chicken broth made the night before or stored in the freezer.

1 Tbs fresh mint-chopped

Simmer for 30 –40 minutes with the lid off.

Salt and pepper to taste.

Sauté another onion and some garlic in a large pan

Add cooked beans and stir in sautéed onion & garlic.

Season with salt and pepper.

To serve:

Spoon hot beans into the bottom of an individual bowl.

If you have some leftover chicken meat from the prior meal, spoon over the beans. You don’t need to heat it up again, the beans & sauce will take care of that.

Pour the red fennel sauce over the beans and top with a generous grating of pecorino romano or Reggiano cheese and chopped fennel leaves.

Another option: Braise 1 lb of greens and stir into the cooked beans.

Grilled Italian sausages go nicely with this too. Enjoy!

Summer in a Jar teaches home food preservation and scratch cooking. If you’re interested in taking a class, you can register on our website, **www.summerinajar.com**.

Not all classes are posted presently, so give us a call if you have a specific interest. 425.788.5696

Interested in learning how to safely can your own tomatoes?

Classes begin in August. Rediscover the taste of real tomatoes, lower salt intake and save trips to the grocery store by putting up organic romas .