













Season: spring / summer
From the garden: fennel, garlic, thyme
Type: side dish
Difficulty: easy
Country of origin: Italy
Serves: 6-8 or approx. 24-32 tastes



Equipment

-  shallow baking pan
-  board
-  knife
-  measuring cup or spoons
-  mixing bowl
-  tongs

Ingredients

-  4 small fennel bulbs
-  60 mls (4 tablespoons) extra virgin olive oil
-  6 nice fat garlic cloves
-  a handful of fresh thyme springs
-  sea salt
-  ½ cup black olives (optional)

How to make it

1. Preheat the oven to 200 degrees Celsius.
2. Wash the fennel and trim off the root end, the stalks and feathery leaves. Keep some of the leaves for a garnish and place the rest in the compost bucket.
3. Cut each bulb in half lengthways, then cut each half into 4-3 wedges, each with a little bit of root end to hold it together.

ROASTED FENNEL WITH THYME AND OLIVES

4. Peel the garlic cloves and then smash them under a heavy knife or rolling pin to flatten but do not chop them up.
5. Pull all the leaves from the thyme sprigs. Put the bare twigs in the compost.
6. Place the fennel, garlic and thyme in a bowl and add the olive oil. Toss to coat well and then tip out onto a shallow baking pan. Sprinkle with sea salt.
7. Roast for about 15 minutes then use tongs to turn the wedges over. Continue to roast until tender - another 15-20 minutes, turning once more during that time. Add the olives if using and continue to roast until the fennel just starts to caramelize on the edges.
8. Taste and add more salt if needed. Serve warm or at room temperature, garnish with some of the fennel tops or some fresh thyme sprigs.

Notes:

1/ This makes a great filling for a simple pastry galette. Simply sauté some onions until softened and golden, cool and spread over a round of rolled out shortcrust pastry, leaving a 3-4 inch border. Remove the fennel from the oven at the point where you would add the olives. Cool then place on top of the onions and scatter with the garlic and olives. Turn the edges of the pastry back over the vegetables, brush the edge with egg wash or a little milk and bake at 200 degrees C until the pastry is golden and the base is well cooked.

2/ Add a pinch of chilli flakes to the mixture before cooking.

Skills

Roasting, chopping

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