



Alegría

LOCALLY-GROWN,
NATURALLY!

FRESH

REGENERATIVE ORGANIC SALAD GREENS
HIGHLY NUTRITIOUS SAME-DAY HARVEST // CLEAN & NATURAL
PESTICIDE FREE // SPECIALLY SELECTED SUPERFOODS
GREAT TASTE DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR!

Welcome to the Alegría Farmacy!

Longevity, health and well-being is just a delicious salad away!

SALAD GREENS

HEALTHY FACTS



Fennel

Scientific name: Foeniculum vulgare

Fennel is a flowering plant species in the celery family Apiaceae or Umbelliferae. It is the sole species in the genus *Foeniculum*. It is a hardy, perennial herb with yellow flowers and feathery leaves. It is indigenous to the shores of the Mediterranean but has become widely naturalized in many parts of the world, especially on dry soils near the sea-coast and on riverbanks.

Fennel is crunchy and slightly sweet, adding a refreshing contribution to the ever popular Mediterranean cuisine. Most often associated with Italian cooking, be sure to add this to your selection of fresh vegetables from the autumn through early spring when it is readily available and at its best.

Fennel is composed of a white or pale green bulb from which closely superimposed stalks are arranged. The stalks are topped with feathery green leaves near which flowers grow and produce fennel seeds. The bulb, stalk, leaves and seeds are all edible. Fennel belongs to the Umbellifereae family and is therefore closely related to parsley, carrots, dill and coriander.

Health Benefits

Unique Phytonutrients with Antioxidant and Health-Promoting Effects

Like many of its fellow spices, fennel contains its own unique combination of phytonutrients—including the flavonoids *rutin*, *quercetin*, and various *kaempferol glycosides*—that

give it strong antioxidant activity. The phytonutrients in fennel extracts compare favorably in research studies to BHT (*butylated hydroxytoluene*), a potentially toxic antioxidant commonly added to processed foods.

The most fascinating phytonutrient compound in fennel, however, may be *anethole*—the primary component of its volatile oil. In animal studies, the anethole in fennel has repeatedly been shown to reduce inflammation and to help prevent the occurrence of cancer. Researchers have also proposed a biological mechanism that may explain these anti-inflammatory and anticancer effects. This mechanism involves the shutting down of a intercellular signaling system called *tumor necrosis factor* (or *TNF-mediated signaling*). By shutting down this signaling process, the *anethole* in fennel prevents activation of a potentially strong gene-altering and inflammation-triggering molecule called *NF-kappaB*. The volatile oil has also been shown to be able to protect the liver of experimental animals from toxic chemical injury.

Antioxidant Protection and Immune Support from Vitamin C

In addition to its unusual phytonutrients, fennel bulb is an excellent source of vitamin C. Vitamin C is the body's primary water-soluble antioxidant, able to neutralize free radicals in all aqueous environments of the body. If left unchecked, these free radicals cause cellular damage that results in the pain and joint deterioration that occurs in conditions like osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

The vitamin C found in fennel bulb is directly antimicrobial and is also needed for the proper function of the immune system.

Fiber, Folate and Potassium for Cardiovascular and Colon Health

As a very good source of fiber, fennel bulb may help to reduce elevated cholesterol levels. And since fiber also removes potentially carcinogenic toxins from the colon, fennel bulb may also be useful in preventing colon cancer. In addition to its fiber, fennel is a very good source of folate, a B vitamin that is necessary for the conversion of a dangerous molecule called homocysteine into other, benign molecules. At high levels, homocysteine, which can directly damage blood vessel walls, is considered a significant risk factor for heart attack or stroke. Fennel is also a very good source of potassium, a mineral that helps lower high blood pressure, another risk factor for stroke and heart attack.

A Few Quick Serving Ideas:

- Healthy sautéed fennel and onions make a wonderful side dish.
- Combine sliced fennel with avocados, and oranges for a delightful salad.
- Braised fennel is a wonderful complement to scallops.
- Next time you are looking for a new way to adorn your sandwiches, consider adding sliced fennel in addition to the traditional toppings of lettuce and tomato.
- Top thinly sliced fennel with plain yogurt and mint leaves.
- Fennel is a match made in Heaven when served with salmon.