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Fenugreek

Botanical name: *Trigonella foenum-graecum*



You may have read our article on schabziger, here is the low down on the plant used to flavour it.

Fenugreek is one of the oldest cultivated medicinal plants native to southern Europe and Asia. A very popular plant grown throughout Mediterranean regions, Argentina, North Africa, France, India, and the U.S., fenugreek is mentioned in detail in Egyptian papyrus writings circa 1500 B.C. It was actually one of the spices used by ancient Egyptians in their embalming ceremonies.

An annual plant about two feet tall, this herb is also considered a legume. It produces light green leaves similar to clover, small white flowers, and long pods

each containing 10 to 20 small, hard, golden-brown seeds. The seeds have a pungent aroma and fairly bitter taste, described as similar to burnt celery.

The tender leaves and shoots of the plant can be added to salad greens, and the extract is used for marinades as well as imitation vanilla, butterscotch, rum, and maple syrup flavouring. Actually, prolonged ingestion of fenugreek is widely noted for its ability to change the odour of perspiration and urine to smell like maple syrup. And, the seeds can even be roasted and ground to make coffee.

Health Benefits of Fenugreek

Fenugreek seeds are rich in minerals such as iron, potassium, calcium, selenium, copper, zinc, manganese and magnesium and they contain a number of useful vitamins, including vitamins A and C. On top of that, they have polysaccharides which help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol levels and the amino acid in the seeds also helps lower blood sugar levels in patients with diabetes. It's notable that 100 grams of fenugreek seeds contain about 323 calories and that the fibre content is quite high so seeds add-

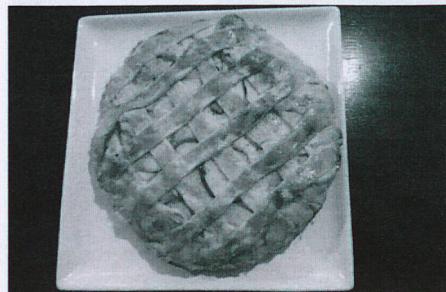
ed to digestive bulk help prevent constipation. The paste can be applied topically to fight infection and inflammation in wounds, and the herb portion is used to treat diarrhoea and stomach ulcers.

Fenugreek also contains choline which studies show may not only help slow mental aging, but also calm PMS and symptoms of menopause. There are also those who attribute to fenugreek the ability to promote breast growth in women, although no studies prove it decisively. However, another key compound, diosgenin, has been shown to increase milk flow, which makes this herb very popular among breastfeeding mothers. Research also indicates that this compound may play an important part in inhibiting several types of cancer. To top it off, fenugreek is considered an aphrodisiac and plenty of studies tout its ability to increase libido in men.

Next time you eat some Schabziger think of all the good things that the fenugreek in it will do for you. After reading up about fenugreek and its many health qualities, I am tempted to try and eat it myself - editor

Text adapted from:
foodfacts.mercola.com

Cholera



You don't have to be scared of this Cholera, because this vegetable pie is a speciality from Valais/Wallis and anything but dangerous. There are different stories about where the name come from, but it's most likely from the time around 1830, when the cholera-epidemic hit the Valais/Wallis and it was forbidden to trade and exchange food. The pie was put together with the ingredients that were available in a farmers household: flour, leek, potatoes, cheese and apples. The original recipe was made with alp-cheese from Valais/Wallis, but you can use any cheese, I've used edam and parmesan cheese. I was surprised how well all the ingredients work together, we loved it. I'm sure I will bake this Cholera pie again!!!

Ingredients

Dough

- 300 g flour
- ½ tsp salt
- 110 g butter, cold and cut into small cubes
- 150 ml cold water

(or a store-bought pie dough if you do not want to make your own)

Filling

- butter or oil for frying
- 1 onion, diced
- 500 g leek, cut in 1 cm slices
- Salt and pepper to taste.
- Pinch of nutmeg
- 500 g cooked potatoes, peeled, cut in thin slices
- 200 g grated cheese
- 1 big or 2 small apples, cut into thin slices
- 1 egg
- 100 ml cream
- 1 egg yolk

Instructions

1. To make the dough: In a bowl mix the flour and salt. Add the butter and rub with the flour to a crumbly mixture, pour

in the water and quickly put the dough together. Wrap the dough in glad foil and put it in the fridge for 30 min.

2. Roll out 2/3 of the dough on a little flour, lay out a baking dish (appr. 28 cm Ø) with baking paper, put the dough in it with 1.5 cm hanging over the rim. Prick the base of the dough with a fork, then put it in the fridge.

3. For the filling fry the onion and leek in a little butter or oil, add a little water and cook for 5 min. Season and let it cool down.

4. First put the potatoes on the base of the dough, then the onion-leek mixture and season. Put the cheese on top and finish with the apple slices.

5. Mix the egg and cream, season, and pour onto the filling. Roll out the leftover dough, cut it into strips and lay it onto the pie in form of a grid, use a little water to stick it on if needed.

6. Preheat oven to 200° C. Brush the latticed strips with egg yolk and bake the Cholera on the lowest rack in the oven for 30 to 40 min. Enjoy!

Researched and tested by Brigitte Hofer