

Eating With The Seasons In July with Georgina White

Well it's officially winter and I for one am enjoying the novelty of being able to get the jumpers out of the cupboard and wrap for the cooler, rainy days. A great way to keep warm and feel cosy is to tuck into some comfort food and here's a selection of the great produce that's available in July: celery, fennel, leeks, beetroot, carrots, cauliflower, spinach, parsnips, onions, okra, oranges, nashi pears, fresh dates, kiwifruit, lemons, granny smiths apples and cumquats.

For a hearty, warming side dish to any meal why not try my Fennel & Potato Gratin below which is a healthier twist on the traditional cream based gratins so you get all the comfort but not the calories!



Fennel & Potato Gratin - Serves 4

2 potatoes, peeled
1 fennel bulb, thinly sliced
1 brown onion, thinly sliced
1 tin low fat evaporated milk
Pinch of paprika
Salt & pepper

Prepare a deep oven-proof dish by coating the inside with a little oil and then layering with some baking paper. Ensure the paper comes all the way up the sides so you can use it at the end to lift out the cooked gratin.

Using a mandolin, thinly slice the potatoes. Start with a thin layer of the potatoes in the bottom of the tin, then add a thin layer of the fennel and onion. Repeat the layering process several times, seasoning with salt and pepper half way through. Make sure that the top layer is potato. Press down, season, sprinkle with a pinch of paprika and pour the evaporated milk over the top, making sure it sinks down the sides into the tin covering all the layers. Press down the potato again.

Set the oven to 180° and bake the gratin for 40 minutes or until the top layer is browned and the potato is soft when you push a knife into it.

Allow to cool for a few minutes, then lift out of the tin using the baking sheet, slice and serve.

Competition!

Got a favourite seasonal recipe? Email it to food@thesplash.com.au and we'll print the best next month. The winner will receive a free cooking lesson, valued at \$129, courtesy of Simply Sumptuous Food, a boutique cooking school specialising in healthy vegetarian cooking.

Judge's decision is final, no correspondence will be entered into, except of course that you DO need to write in to enter. Otherwise how would we know who won? Come on, be sensible. Now get those entries in pronto!