cooking with misunderstood vegetables

Fuzzy, bumpy, slimy, and twisty – many vegetables are hard to figure out. See the below tips for preparing some of the more unusual vegetables.

Stinging Nettles

As the name implies, edible nettles have painful stingy leaves, so use gloves when handling raw nettles. Once cooked, these woody, nutty wild plants are rendered harmless and are delicious in soups, smoothies, pestos, and can be substituted for dark leafy greens in almost any recipe.

Kohlrabi

German for “cabbage turnip”, kohlrabi tastes a lot like a juicy broccoli stem and can be eaten raw or cooked. Try thin slices in a fresh green salad, sautéing until golden, mashing, roasting, and drizzling with balsamic vinegar.

Romanesco

With an exotic, geometric appearance, this cruciferous vegetable can be prepared just as you would cauliflower or broccoli. The unique structure adds an unusual bumpy texture that allows romanesco containing dishes to hold sauces well.

Rutabaga

This underrated cruciferous vegetable is also termed a “yellow turnip” due to its distinctive yellow-orange hue. Grate into a vegetable slaw, dice into soup, or mash with or without potatoes.

Purslane

Considered a weed, purslane is actually an edible lemony succulent that enjoys hot weather. The best way to eat purslane is fresh atop salad or grilled meat or quickly sautéed.

Fennel Bulb

Fennel is a versatile vegetable with four edible portions including the crunchy white bulb. Grilling, roasting, or sautéing the fennel bulb brings out caramelized and subtle licorice-like flavors and textures.

Celery Root

Unlike its unappetizing appearance, celery root or, “celeriac” is surprisingly delicious. This root has a flavors akin to celery and parsley and it great prepared as you would any root vegetable, providing new flavor to dishes such as mashed potatoes.

Salsify

An intimidating looking brown root vegetable, salsify has a uniquely sweet and creamy flavor and texture once the rough outer peel is removed that pairs well with acids, such as citrus or vinegar.

www.CafeBonAppetit.com