

Eating Out

Perfect pumpkin party food



Spinach salad with pumpkin at More

Oliver Robinson discovers how these giants of the vegetable patch became a Halloween favourite, and rounds up the pick of the pumpkin platters

Spinach salad with oven-roasted pumpkin

More's spinach salad features roasted pumpkin, which is offset by feta cheese – a real crowd pleaser. Not only is it tasty, it's really rather healthy: the salad is low in fat, low-cholesterol and has a low glycaemic index.

Dhs52. More Café, Dubai Mall (04 339 8934). For several other locations, see www.morecafe.biz

If there's one thing more fun than carving frightening faces into pumpkins, it's eating pumpkin. After all, there aren't many fruits that can be seamlessly utilised as a starter, main and dessert (tasting great whatever form they take), while also providing a supreme source of vitamin A, potassium and fibre.

This winter fruit is in season come late October-early November, and was incorporated into the tradition of Halloween by Irish immigrants to the United States during the time of the Potato Famine (circa 1854). The Irish used to carve lanterns from beets or turnips come Halloween to represent the deceased, but began to use pumpkins simply because they were more readily available in the US.

It's thought that pumpkins originated in Central America more than 7,000 years ago and were first harvested by Native Americans. Pumpkins are now one of America's

most harvested crops, with more than 680 million kilos of the fruit being produced every year.

Needless to say, dry Dubai isn't the most conducive environment in which to grow pumpkins, and so the majority of the pumpkin that ends up on your plate here will have likely been

Jumeirah Beach Hotel, is its variety.

'It is such a diverse fruit that you can use in both sweet and savoury dishes – roast it, use it as a dessert or a sauce or use its seeds and oil.'

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imported from nearby India, one of the world's top pumpkin producers alongside the States, Mexico and China. Luckily for us, the taste of this majestic fruit is not different to that of the pumpkins Stateside or in Europe.

The beauty of pumpkins, according to Irish Chef Paul Ryan of Go West,

Chef Paul recommends nutmeg, ginger and chillis. To help you try it for yourself, here we provide two delectable pumpkin recipes (one courtesy of chef Paul), as well as round-up six dishes to try, ensuring that this Halloween will be as flavourful for you as it is frightening.