

Eat Pomegranate!

With their glossy, leathery skin containing hundreds of seeds that sparkle in bright pinkish-red pulp and juice, there's something very festive about pomegranates. Their attractive appearance and fragrant sweet-sharp juice adds excitement to both sweet and savoury dishes.

Elizabeth David (in *Elizabeth David Classics*) suggests serving them with a touch of rose water, lemon juice and sugar. Jamie Oliver's *Pomegranate and Gin Cocktail* is a simple and striking party drink that works equally well with vodka.

HISTORY - The pomegranate is native to Iran where it still grows wild today and from where it spread to India, China and Europe at least two thousand years ago. The pomegranate plays a key part in the Greek myth explaining the origin of the seasons - read the story of Demeter (Goddess of agriculture) and Persephone here.

Spanish sailors took the fruit to America as its tough skin and durability made it a fruit well suited to long sea voyages.

Pomegranates have long featured in traditional dishes throughout the Middle East and the Caucasus. They are now grown in the Mediterranean, tropical Africa, India and South East Asia. Largely ignored by the English-speaking world until relatively recently, they have become a much less rare sight in the UK in the last decade.

BIOLOGY - *Punica granatum* is a small long-lived tree whose fruit contain seeds (precisely 840 each, apparently) that are distributed by birds feeding on the pomegranates.

BUYING - Pick fruit that are weighty for their size (indicating a high liquid content) with taut, glossy, unbroken skin.

COOKING - Scan the code below to view the recipe for '*Feta & pomegranate salad*' on the seasonal recipes blog.



or visit: qmulsustainability.wordpress.com/recipes