

some like it hot

Spicing up the English countryside is all in a day's work for chilli farmer Salvatore Genovese.

Despite being the heart of England, with spacious green fields and traditional crops of veg, Bedfordshire may be more exotic than you think.

Home to the biggest chilli farm in the UK, the area produces over 10,000 kilos a week, which end up on Tesco shelves across the UK. This all began when Salvatore Genovese and his Italian parents, originally cucumber producers, experimented with a few chilli plants 'for a bit of fun'.

'People are amazed that you can actually get English chillis,' says Salvatore. 'But they're incredibly fresh, hot and tangy, and haven't been flown thousands of miles.'

Rich in vitamin C and the antioxidant betacarotene, chillis are good news for your tastebuds and your immune system.

Although a long way from home, chillis are easy to grow in the UK. 'We use glasshouses and specially formulated grow bags which are computer-controlled to give the plant all the food and water it requires.'

It may sound hi-tech, but the farm uses sustainable, chemical-free practices wherever possible. For instance, 'we literally bring in bags of insects which eat all the bad guys, so we're completely back to nature in terms of pest control.' The Genoveses's have also built a state-of-the-art glasshouse which collates rainwater in a reservoir and then uses it to irrigate the crop: making it a totally sustainable water source.

'We're expanding all the time because people really love cooking with chillis. They've become the new staple ingredients for flavour,' says Salvatore.



Salvatore loves chilli: 'I add it to everything – pasta dishes, sauces, even steak.' The farm has recently started growing the Dorset Naga chilli for Tesco – the hottest in the world.



And to drink
Tesco Albariño,
£5.99 for 75cl
 An aromatic Spanish white. Its elegant apricot flavours make it the ideal wine for most seafood dishes

Green Serande

Strong heat, use in sauces and meat dishes for an extra kick

Cherry Bomb

Provides a good clean heat, perfect for stuffing with goats cheese for a hot appetizer

Red Serande

Great for making marinades to use with chicken or seafood.

Dorset Naga

So hot, merely dipping it into sauces adds a fiery twist



sauteed prawns with mojo chilli salsa

Serves 4 as a starter
Prep 10-15 minutes
Cook 5 minutes
1 papaya peeled and finely chopped
4 tbsp fresh parsley, finely chopped
A large pinch of sugar
120ml freshly squeezed lime juice
2 large, mild red chillies, de-seeded and finely chopped
2 tsp olive oil
400g raw large prawns
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
Finely grated zest of 2 limes
5 small, hot red chillies (optional)
100g baby leaf or rocket salad
4 spring onions, finely sliced

- Mix together the papaya, parsley, sugar, lime zest and juice. Add the chopped chilli and one of the small chillies, finely sliced. (This will make the salsa very hot so only add if you like it spicy).
- Season with salt and pepper.
- Heat a large non stick pan, add the oil and saute the prawns for just 3 minutes until they turn bright pink and the garlic is lightly golden.
- Stir in the lime zest and season.
- To serve place a small handful of salad leaves on each plate, pile the prawns on top and drizzle the salsa over and around. Garnish with the spring onion and a small red chilli.
- This recipe is equally delicious using avocado or mango, instead of papaya

Each serving contains

Calories	Sugar	Fat	Saturates	Salt
135	1.5g	2.5g	0.5g	1.5g
7%	2%	4%	3%	3%

of your guideline daily amount

