

IF THE PACKS WERE THAT GOOD,
YOU SHOULD LOOK 18 JOHN?

What if I said it contained exceptional cleansing and healing agents for the human dermis and had effective anti-inflammatory, anti-rheumatic and anti-bacterial properties?

Oh, and I nearly forgot, it's a natural renewable resource that grows in ample sustainable volumes right along our national coastline. In fact, growing farms of it actually filters the local waterways and reverses our carbon footprint.

Pass me a lighter.

The words 'no' and 'brainer' met the day that Mother Nature invented seaweed.

In a hot broken elevator I expect.

It's a foodstuff that monks in the sixth century first started nibbling on. The concept slowly crept along populated coastlines, currently constitutes over 10% of the world's oldest living peoples' diet, and is now drifting its way onto many of the best laid tables in London.

There are over 10,000 types of seaweed under the world's aquatic, 625 of which are lucky enough to be resident of the west of Ireland's coastline. That's where, more days than not, you'll find one John Fitzgerald out amidst the sea moss.

John is an unsung pioneer of the modern movement of mankind towards more sustainable sources of food and functional living. Seaweed is nothing new, but John reckons that the new age of technology and the internet is definitely helping to spread the word about the benefits of sea plants and ways in which to integrate them into our daily diets.

Bread, soups, stews, casseroles, pastas, salads, stocks, condiments and crisps - the methods of cooking and serving seaweed are endless. It tastes deliciously salty/sweet and one can definitely qualify it as a super food, so why has it not been in our culinary crosshairs before now?

John reckons we actually used to eat it a lot more, but once we focused our attention on more agricultural methods a few hundred years ago, a lot of the knowledge of seaweed farming was somewhat lost. With the world's stomach becoming more intelligent, health conscious and socially aware however, we're now beginning to take seaweed somewhat more seaweously*.



YEAH. ON DAY THREE.
IN MAGAZUE.

Many Asian countries have been onto the benefits of algaculture for some time, and are now enjoying this global boom in popularity through export, but if we can pull our mud soiled thumbs out fast enough, our perfectly adapted coasts could be the most suitable sustainable successful farms that you can imagine. They would provide benefits for everyone involved, from the farmers' pockets, to local community waterways and even the world's macro eco system.

Seaweed is not only for human consumption either. It has incredible potential as an agri-food and agrochemical fertilizer, it's an organic source of non-sodium based salt, and a natural preservative that renders a best before date redundant.

I fear I'm beginning to sound like a salesman for seaweed, not that it would be a hard job. John does it for nothing, and simply strives to "increase awareness and appreciation of the super healthy seaweed bounty that thrives on our pristine coastline".

Try saying that five times after Friday's forage.

If you want to know more, book a course, get some bath packs, or discover what the Lands-Head-Handshake is, surf your way to atlanticirishseaweed.com.

John Fitzgerald is not only good for an enlightening chat, but has many seaweed recipes on his website (atlanticirishseaweed.com) and does tours and classes locally to educate guests on the methods of foraging, storing and preparation of various seaweeds.

*sorry - I couldn't help it!

