

· Family ·

Allioideae

A local vegetable

THE SHALLOT


Origin : *Asia*

Latin name

Amaryllidaceae

Breton name

Chalotez



ORIGIN

A member of the alliaceae family, the shallot is the cousin of the onion, garlic, chives and leek. Originally found in Asia, it then spread to the Middle East and later to the Mediterranean Basin during the Crusades, under the rule of Charlemagne. As the soil’s acidity must be fairly neutral, shallots are often produced near the sea.

THE SHALLOT

on the

CÔTE DES LÉGENDES

THE VARIETIES

Shallots are split into three classifications :
Long / Half-long / Round

Five varieties can be found in our region :
Molène / Longor / Germor Mikor / Ar vro*

* Now extinct following a health problem around 2005

Shallots are sensitive to variations in temperature, which makes the climate of Northern Finistère – with a low temperature delta – ideal for this crop, while its airy soil prevents the bulb from rotting.

The seed shallot is differentiated from the traditional shallot: this is a local product that corresponds to the longor variety, or long shallot.

THE +
of the TRADITIONAL
shallot

Brittany is the largest traditional-shallot producing region in Europe, with 80% of traditional-shallot producers based in Northern Finistère and the Côtes d’Armor.

Hand planted
Hand harvested
Hand braided



Sa production est essentiellement manuelle ; environ 200 heures de travail sont nécessaires de la plantation à la récolte.

Profile

The traditional shallot is characterised by its asymmetrical shape and by the presence of the root disc – the scar left from the rest of its original root. As these grow in clumps, the seven or eight shallots produced from the same bulb will share a common root tip.

The traditional shallot has several «chambers» of scales, thus distinguishing it from the seed shallot or the onion, which only have one series of concentric scales. Their cultivation methods also differ: the traditional shallot is planted, while the seed shallot and onion are sown.

On the plate, the traditional shallot is recognisable by its tenderness in the mouth and by a more pungent taste.



THE CYCLE
of the SHALLOT

1 - BULB PLANTING

Traditional shallot production begins with the hand planting of a bulb on black mulch in February to March. This technique prevents the proliferation of «weeds» and blocks UV rays while warming the soil, which improves the crop’s quality while limiting the treatment required.

2 -BULB PROPAGATION

After a month, the leaves begin to develop; the so-called «clove» bud will then give birth to another 7 or 8 bulbs. Shallots grow in clusters and are linked together by a common root. When the foliage («the haulm») turns yellow and falls back, the shallots have reached maturity.



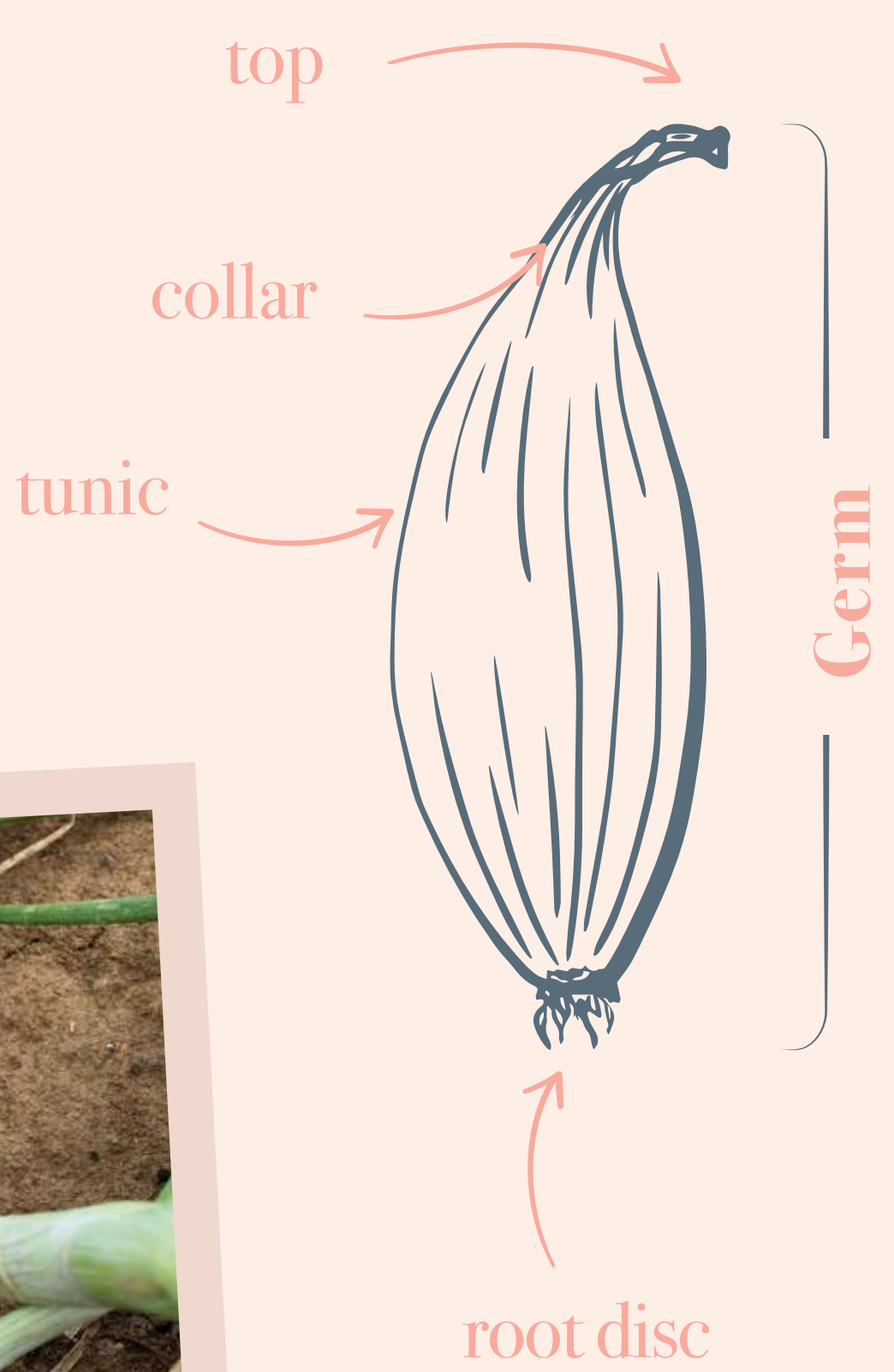
3 - HARVEST

Between 20 June and 20 July, the shallots are pulled out by hand in the fields, where they are left to dry for about three weeks (it is important that the neck dries as much as possible, as it is the area most vulnerable to the development of bacteria). The shallots are then collected by hand.

4 - STORAGE AND PACKAGING

Shallots are then stored in ventilated silos on the ground from mid-August to mid-March, then kept in a cold room until mid-June to protect them from high temperatures. Braiding allows them to be dried in the kitchen and prevents germination (the sap is then cut between the top and the bulb).

Anatomy



THE SHALLOT
ON THE PLATE

Shallots, bacon
and feta toast
recipe

by Prince de Bretagne
Breton vegetable producers

NORTH
COAST

Ingredients

12 traditional shallots

8 strips of bacon

1 teaspoon caster sugar

30 g butter

Feta

Salt and pepper

Aromatic herbs

Barbecue sauce

Baby salad leaves

STEP 1

Peel the shallots and arrange them whole, with the 30 g butter, in a saucepan or casserole dish.

Brown over a medium heat, constantly turning.

Sprinkle with sugar and let caramelise over a low heat.

Finally, cover with water.

Salt and continue cooking uncovered until the water has completely evaporated (about 20 minutes of cooking).

STEP 2

Select a cooking liquid for the candied shallots.

Here are a few options:

Fruit based: Orange juice or lemon water.

Chicken broth flavoured with thyme.

Cider (this creates very fruity candied shallots, but with body).

Red wine, for full-bodied candied shallots.

White wine or champagne, for lighter candied shallots.

An alcohol (Armagnac, Calvados, Cointrea, etc.) diluted with water.

Cooking evaporates and therefore eliminates the alcohol. Candied shallots concentrate and sublimate the flavours with which they are associated.

These will bring another dimension to your fish or meat dishes.

STEP 3

Fry the eight slices of bacon in the pan to make them a little crispier.

STEP 4

Spread the barbecue sauce (or any other sauce, according to your tastes) on your toasts.

STEP 5

Arrange two slices of bacon on each slice of toast, then add the salad, a few pieces of feta and the candied shallots.

STEP 6

Salt, pepper and sprinkle with aromatic herbs.