

SPECIES OF THE WEEK



Cep

Boletus edulis

Boletus edulis is more commonly known as Cep, Porcino or Penny-bun. It is widely distributed across Europe, Asia and North America. The western north American species is known as the California king bolete and is larger and darker coloured.

This fungus grows in deciduous and coniferous forests, forming symbiotic associations with the trees by enveloping the tree's underground roots with sheaths of fungal tissue. The fungus produces spore-bearing fruit bodies above ground in summer and autumn. The fruit body has a large brown cap which can reach up to 35cm in diameter and 3kg in weight.

Like other boletes it has tubes extending down from the underside of the cap, rather than gills. Spores escape when mature through the tube openings, or pores, the pore surface is whitish when young, but turns greenish-yellow with age. The stem is white or yellowish and can reach up to 25cm and 10 cm thick, and partially covered with a raised network pattern, or reticulations.

B. edulis is used extensively in cooking and can be found as early as June through to October.

The generic name *Boletus* comes from the Greek *bolos*, meaning 'lump of clay', while the specific epithet *edulis* means 'edible'

Caution: If you cannot positively identify the species of fungus as edible – LEAVE IT, don't take the chance.