

JOEL'S GREENHOUSE

Herbs at Joel's

To preserve, place fresh herbs in tightly sealed plastic bags and freeze. The color will fade slightly, but the flavor will remain true.

Basil - Warm, sweet flavor - good in casseroles, with meats, eggs, pickles, soups

Chives - Mild onion flavor - The stems are good fresh or dried in soups, salads, egg dishes and vegetable garnish. The flowers of this perennial look and taste lovely on a salad. Pick apart the flower head and sprinkle over the salad.

Cilantro - Citrus tasting overtones - used in South Asian, Mexican and Russian cooking. Mostly used raw or added immediately before serving. Leaves lose their aroma when dried or frozen.

Dill - Aromatic odor with delicate flavor - good in casseroles, with meats, eggs, soups and salads.

Lavender - Slightly sweet & floral flavor, leaves & buds can be used in baked goods, desserts and teas, or in savory stews and sauces. Use sparingly, a little bit goes a long way with this potent herb.

Lemon Grass - Subtle citrus flavor used in teas, soups & curries. Plant it around your patio - it grows to be a large, attractive ornamental grass and contains citronella oil that deters mosquitos. Almost all of the flavor of lemongrass is contained in the bottom 5 inches or so of the stalk. Cut away the thinner top portion and the very woody base. Then peel away the tougher

outer layers to get to the more tender part of the stalk. Even after peeling, lemongrass is quite fibrous, so it's best to either use it whole to infuse flavor and then remove it, or chop it very finely.

Mint - Most are perennial with wide spreading roots that can become invasive. Growing mint in a container is a good idea. Mint has a warm, sweet flavor with a cool after-taste. It is used in teas, beverages, syrups and candies. Mint plants come in a variety of flavors; peppermint, spearmint, chocolate, and more.

Oregano - Strong, aromatic odor - good with meats, egg dishes, soups, vegetables and Italian sauces. Oregano is a perennial, reseeds itself and can be used as ground-cover.

Parsley - Often used as a garnish, it is also good in salads and soups. Parsley is a rich source of anti-oxidants, high in vitamin C and a good source of vitamin A and folic acid.

Rosemary - Used in stuffing and meat dishes, especially Italian dishes. It is also tasty in shortbread cookies (see attached recipe).

Sage - Strong, aromatic odor - good for stuffing, with poultry, cheese dishes and salads.

Thyme - In the mint family, and related to oregano, thyme is good in casseroles, soups and sauteed vegetables. Eggs, meat and fish dishes are all enhanced with a sprinkling of thyme.

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Herb Recipes

Basil Pesto - Combine in blender: 1 cup basil, 1-2 garlic cloves, 1/4 cup pine nuts, walnuts, or pecans. Pour in extra virgin olive oil slowly until you reach a spreadable consistency. Spread on bread, add to cooked pasta or spread on halved tomatoes with parmesan cheese before broiling 3-5 min.

Grilled Zucchini, Tomatoes & Thyme - brush a large baking pan with 1 T oil. Sprinkle with 1 T lemon thyme leaves and 1/2 T salt. Cover the bottom of the pan with thin slices of 2 lg tomatoes. Arrange slices of 5 small zucchini over the tomatoes, leaving a gap to let the tomatoes show. Drizzle 4 T of oil over the vegetables, sprinkle with 1T coarse salt, 1T lemon thyme leaves, and pepper. Broil 5 inches from the heat for 5 minutes then sprinkle with 2 T parmesan cheese.

Garlic Dill Potatoes - Combine 3 Tbl melted butter, 1 Tbl chopped, fresh dill, 2 tsp minced garlic and 1/4 tsp salt. Pour over eight medium, cubed, cooked potatoes until well coated.

Tomato & Mint salad - Slice 3 large tomatoes onto a platter, top with 1/2 cup mint leaves and drizzle with a dressing of 1/4 c olive oil, 1/2 tsp lemon peel, 1 T lemon juice, 1 T cider vinegar and 1 lg clove of garlic (chopped and smashed into a pinch of salt with the flat of a knife).

Mint water - Crush a bunch of mint leaves in a pitcher of water and chill for a wonderfully refreshing drink.

Herb Shortbread Cookies - Combine 2 1/4 cup flour with 1 T fresh herb leaves (lemon thyme, rosemary or lavender) and 1/8 tsp salt. Set aside. Cream 1 c butter with 1/2 c sugar and add 1/2 tsp vanilla. Add flour mixture. Roll dough to 1/4 " thick on lightly floured surface. Cut out and place on parchment lined cookie sheets. Put in freezer for 20 minutes. Bake at 275 degrees for 30 min or until edges begin to brown.

Browned Sage Butter - in a large skillet, melt 1 pound of butter over low-med heat. At first the melted butter will foam. Next, the butter will start to bubble. Then you'll hear a stirring in the depths of the butter -a slight hissing punctuated by popping and crackling sounds. Slowly, the white milk solids will start to sink to the bottom of the pan. Soon after that, you should start to smell a fragrant, hazelnutty odor, and you will see the milk solids browning on the bottom. AT THIS POINT, drop into the pan (all at once), 1-2 cups of fresh sage leaves, finely chopped. The butter will foam and hiss. Immediately remove the pan from the heat and pour into a bowl. Scrape all the browned milk solids from the bottom of the pan into the bowl. Cool and refrigerate briefly, until it is of a spreadable consistency. Whip on medium speed until fluffy and well combined. Divide the whipped butter onto two sheets of waxed paper and roll into cylinders. Freeze to use later. Will keep indefinitely. Delicious on roasted vegetables, pasta or breads.