



Favorite Culinary Herbs

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BASIL – Probably the most popular culinary herb. Basil is a fast growing annual with several varieties of plants. Has a warm, spicy, clove-like scent and flavor. Use fresh or dried leaves in tomato and bean soups, meat stews, omelets, scrambled eggs, mixed green salads, marinades and pesto.



CHIVES/GARLIC CHIVES - A perennial that requires very little care. This plant is a small leaved mild member of the onion family. A favorite of chefs, it provides a substitute for the flavor of garlic. Use fresh leaves in omelets, salads, soups, sauces, baked potatoes and dip.



CILANTRO/CORIANDER - an annual plant with an orange peel and sage flavor. Coriander is the seed of the cilantro plant. Use in pastries, meat sauces, and pickles. Cilantro is a cousin to parsley and the leaves are used for that distinct Mexican food flavor.



DILL - a fast growing annual. The tall plant has feathery, blue-green leaves with a fresh, aromatic flavor. Use the sprigs of seed heads or seeds in pickles, rye breads, fish sauces, meats, potato salads, and vinegars. Use the leaves in sour cream dressing, vegetable dip, with baked fish and in drawn butter.



MINT - This perennial plant is fast growing and invasive. Many varieties of mint include Spearmint, Chocolate Mint, Peppermint, Lemon, and Apple. Mints prefer moist soil and require more frequent watering. They have a sweet, fresh, aromatic flavor. Use the fresh or dried leaves in pea and lentil soups, mint sauce for lamb, fruit salads, cream cheeses, tea, and jelly.



OREGANO - A perennial with a sharp, aromatic flavor. Use the fresh or dried leaves in meat dishes, marinades, soups, meat stews, egg dishes, pizzas, spaghetti sauces, and other Italian cooking.



PARSLEY - a Biennial (lives for two years) plant that is rich in vitamins and minerals. There are two varieties: Italian Flat Leaf and Curly. (See photograph) Chefs prefer the Italian flat leaf because of the ease in chopping. The refreshing, peppery flavor in the fresh leaves can be used as a garnish; or in soups and stews, omelets or scrambled eggs, most vegetable salads, potato dishes, quick breads, cheese sauces, pesto and butters.



ROSEMARY - an evergreen, perennial, woody shrub that can grow to be 2 to 3 feet tall. The plant is deer resistant. A wonderful scent that is pungent with a hint of pine. Use the fresh or dried leaves in meats; cheese, cream and game sauces; soups; egg dishes; herb breads; and stuffing.



SAGE - The hardy perennials include some varieties that are native to Texas. Enjoy the strong, musky flavor of the fresh or dried leaves in meat dishes, veal and chicken dishes, soups, meat soups, stuffing, sauces and vinegars.



SCENTED GERANIUMS - Also known as Pelargoniums, these interesting perennials grow to be 18 to 36 inches tall. There are many leaf shapes and fragrances. Scented geraniums are not noted for their blooms, but for the texture and scent of their leaves. Aromas include: Rose, Apple, Lemon, Orange, Spice, Peppermint, and Almond. Use the leaves in pound cakes, jellies, and teas.



SWEET MARJORAM - A cousin to oregano, this perennial plant has a fragrant, sweet, slightly resinous flavor. Use the fresh or dried leaves with pot roasts, broiled fish, vegetable soups, savory stews, omelets and soufflés, green salads, poultry stuffing, and spaghetti sauces.



TARRAGON – French tarragon is an annual with fine, dark green leaves. The scent and flavor is similar to licorice, so use with a light hand when cooking. Use the leaves in salads, sauces, eggs, vegetables and salad vinegars.



THYME - This favorite perennial has a sweet, pungent, earthy scent. Use with caution - thyme is extra pungent when fresh. Include the fresh or dried leaves in meat dishes, soups, gumbo, cream cheeses, omelets, rice dishes, stuffing, and seafood sauces.