



Creative Gardener

... inspiring gardeners to create!

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Use Herbs from Your Garden!

Grow This... Make That!

- **Basil** (*Ocimum*): landscape design, edible leaves, container gardens. Annual, needs warmth and full sun.
- **Chamomile** (*Chamaemelum nobile*) Landscape design, bee attraction, edible flowers, healing, Zone 4. Herbaceous perennial. Full sun to part shade. Grows up to 12 inches tall.
- **Chives** (*Allium spp.*) landscape design, bee attraction, edible flowers, and stems, cutting garden, Zone 4. . Easy to grow in a sunny, well-draining location.
- **Lavender** (*Lavandula spp.*) Landscape design, edible flowers, aromatherapy, cutting garden, healing, Zone 5. Herbaceous to semi-evergreen perennial. Varieties grow from 12 inches to 4 feet tall. Full sun. Prefers dry rocky soil, dislikes too much compost or richness.
- **Lemon Verbena** (*Aloysia triphylla*): landscape design, aromatherapy, edible leaves. Tender shrubby, perennial, treated as an annual below zone 7.
- **Mint** (*Mentha spp.*) container gardens, edible leaves, healing herb. Zone 4. Herbaceous spreading perennial. Grows up to 2 feet tall. Like rich moist soil in full sun.
- **Oregano** (*Origanum spp.*) landscape design, cutting gardens, edible flowers, bee and butterfly attraction. Zone 4. Herbaceous perennial. Some species are tender to frost. Growth habits are both upright and spreading to 3 feet. Needs sun & well-drained soil.
- **Parsley** (*Petroselinum crispum*) landscape design, edible leaves, healing. Biennial, typically grown as an annual. Like full sun and well-draining soil.
- **Roses** (*Rosa rugosa*) landscape design, edible flowers, and rose hips, aromatherapy, cutting gardens, healing, Zones 2-7. Shrub. Needs sun. Height 4 to 6 feet. Rugosa roses are disease and pest resistant. They also tolerate cold winters. Deer tend to leave spiny, shrubby rugosa roses alone.
- **Rosemary** (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) landscape design, culinary, aromatherapy, healing. Zone 7. Perennial. The trailing rosemary Prostratus Group are not hardy below zone 7. The upright variety *R. officinalis* 'Arp' has been proven to be the hardiest and is known to overwinter in zone 5. Needs full sun and well-draining soil.
- **Thyme** (*Thymus spp.*) landscape design, edible leaves, container gardens, Zone 4. Full sun, low growing (under 12 inches) herbaceous perennial. Will stay evergreen in mild winter areas. Tolerates dry, rocky soils.

Tips for success!

- If the main base of the recipe is liquid (like vinegar or tea), use fresh or dried herbs. Fresh will have the best flavor. If the recipe is dry (like sugar or salt rubs), you need to use dried herbs.
- When harvesting, use scissors to cut them, don't pull or pluck.
- During the growing season, leave four inches of the stem on leafy annuals. Cut about a third of the stem on leafy perennials.
- To keep dried kitchen herbs at their best, store them away from stove in tightly covered glass jars.

When growing leafy herbs like basil & mint for seasoning and teas, don't allow the plants to bloom. Otherwise much of the flavor will be lost to the flowers.

Harvest

Herbs are at the most flavorful and fragrant in the morning after the dew dries. This is the best time to harvest. If the herbs are dirty, you may want to water them lightly before you pick.

What Part to Harvest

Leaves: Young leaves have the highest amount of flavor and fragrance, so harvest these as needed.

Flowers: Harvest just as the plant begins to flower. Pick no later than its peak of flowering or the color and taste will fade.

Seeds: Pick just before they fully ripen, cut the stalks and tie into bundles. Invert inside a brown paper bag and hang to dry. As the seeds dry out they will fall into the bag and can easily be shaken loose from the dried flower heads.

Drying and Preserving

Hang drying is the most popular way to preserve herbs. Pick a dark airy place to hang them. Avoid direct sunlight and store in an area with good air circulation around the hanging herb bundles. Harvest long stems and bundle the herbs with rubber bands. A folding wooden dowel laundry rack is the perfect space saver to hang herb bundles on. It is best to store leaves whole and break them down at the time of use.

Flavor

Chamomile Tea

Chamomile is a relaxing tea that aids in digestion. Boil water in a teakettle. Transfer boiling water into a warmed glass or ceramic teapot. Add a handful of fresh chamomile flowers and allow to steep for at least 10 minutes, longer for stronger tea. Try an herbal hot toddy for evening relaxation. Make a large cup (8 ounces) of hot, strong chamomile tea. Add 1 teaspoon of honey (see chamomile infused honey recipe), a squeeze of fresh lemon juice (about a ½ teaspoon) and a shot of rum. Sip and enjoy.



Chive Butter

1 cube unsalted Butter
1 teaspoon lemon juice
2-3 tablespoons fresh chives, chopped
Soften butter, add remaining ingredients, cream together well, place in tightly covered container, and refrigerate overnight for best flavor. A classic blend is made with chives for a baked potato topper or garlic for hot French bread.

Lavender Herb Soda

Refreshing and fizzy, use lavender or try another herb sugar syrup to customize the flavor.

½ cup fresh squeezed lime juice
25 ounces sparkling mineral water
1 cup Lavender Sugar Syrup (recipe below)
Add ingredients to a serving pitcher and stir to mix well. Serve immediately over ice and garnish with a lavender stem.

Lavender Herb Syrup 2 cups water 2 cups sugar ½ cup tightly packed lavender buds Bring sugar and water to a boil in a glass pan. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Reduce heat and add lavender buds. Simmer 5 minutes. Allow to cool completely. Strain the buds from the liquid and pour liquid into a clean glass bottle. Store in the refrigerator to use as needed.

Nurturing

Lavender Mist

In 4 ounces of purified water, simmer ½ cup fresh lavender buds. Allow to cool, strain and add 10 drops of lavender essential oil. Place in a sterilized glass mister bottle. Shake well before use. Mist on sunburned or irritated skin to bring relief and promote healing. For added benefits on warm days, refrigerate and use the mist chilled. Also use in the household to freshen linens and musty rooms.

Sweet Feet Sugar Scrub

1 cup organic raw sugar
1/4 cup fresh spearmint leaves, cut into small pieces
1/4 cup fresh rosemary leaves
1/3 cup grape seed oil
vitamin E capsule
Optional: lime zest to add fragrance and enhance color of the scrub.

What to do:

In a small, wide-mouth canning jar, add about an inch of sugar. Add a layer of spearmint; sift sugar to cover leaves. Place a layer of rosemary leaves, cover with sugar, and then alternate layers of herbs and sugar until the jar is full. Use immediately, or for a richer result, cover jar and allow to sit for a 5 to 7 days. The sugar will be highly fragrant from absorbing the essential oils.

Household Cleaning

Minty Balm Scouring Powder

Mix 1 cup baking soda, ¼ cup borax and 1/4 cup dried lemon balm leaves and 1/4 cup dried mint leaves. Pulse in a spice grinder until the herbs are powdery and mix well into the soda and borax. Use to scrub sinks and tubs for a fragrant gentle abrasive.

Lavender Vacuum Fresh Combine 3 parts baking soda with 1 part lavender buds. Grind in a spice or coffee bean grinder. Allow to stand for a week to allow fragrance to permeate to soda. Shake on carpets; allow to sit for a few hours and vacuum up.

Lavender Rosemary sachets Fill sachets 1/2 full with dried lavender buds and fill remaining space with dried rosemary leaves. Shake to mix and close tightly by stitching or tying with ribbon. Place in drawers, stored suitcases, stored clothing, shoes and closets to ward of insects and keep fresh smelling. Nice as a car freshener too.

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More inspiration for your herb garden!

A Taste for Herbs

Your guide to seasonings, mixes and blends from the herb lovers garden

The Herb Lover's Spa Book

Create a luxury Spa Experience at Home with Fragrant Herbs from your Garden

