

COOKING WITH HERBS

24

Amazing illustrated
Recipes for Breakfast,
Lunch and Dinner.



Dawn Keller

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Culinary Herbs
3. Techniques
4. Recipes

Aromatic Starters & Soups:

TOMATO SOUP WITH BASIL

MUSHROOM SOUP WITH THYME

TUSCAN BEAN AND HERB SOUP

BEEF STEW WITH ROSEMARY DUMPLINGS

Scrumptious Fish:

GRILLED SALMON WITH THYME AND LEMON

GRILLED FISH WITH CITRUS HERB CRUST

MEDITERRANEAN BAKED FISH WITH TOMATO, GARLIC & HERBS

GRILLED RED MULLET WITH HERB

Healthy & Flavorsome Herbal Drinks:

PUNCHY COCKTAIL

HERBAL SODAS

THYME LEMONADE

LAVENDER-INFUSED LEMONADE

HONEY SAGE GIN FIZZ

PINEAPPLE BASIL COCKTAIL

5. Conclusion

HERBS



Celer

Parsley

Lavender

Sage

Oregano

Basil

Thyme

Mint



INTRODUCTION

Herbs are one of the nature's most valuable gifts. They are basically edible plants having strong aroma and flavor. They are widely used for medication and cooking purposes.

Herbs are easy to grow. They can be grown indoor (with few hours of sunlight) and outdoor. They don't require much space and can be cultivated in abundant quantity. One of their quality is they tend to spread amazingly fast. Take the example of mint, plant them in a little space and its roots will find places to expand.

Herbs are multi-purpose plants with great diversity. They have countless uses which includes; culinary, medicinal and spiritual.

Herbs such as spinach, celery, mint have been used in dishes all around the world, one can without a doubt agree with this.

FUN FACT: It is said that smell of lavender enlightens the mood of people.

Herbal medicines or Herbalism is the use of supernatural plants to cure diseases. When you talk about herbalism, stories of Chinese medicines and their great achievements can't be ignored. Chinese healers have used extracts of plants to heal diseases which the modern pharmacist took ages to cure.

Chinese Healers used to believe that only nature can cure the natural diseases that mankind are faced with, therefore since centuries they meditated and extracted juices from plants roots and leaves. Even though we are surrounded by pharmaceutical companies but people are still using Herbalism in their lives in the form of green tea, black tea, mint tea, culinary herbs and so on.

TECHNIQUES

Herbs have limitless benefits therefore we want to use them whole year. Sadly they are allergic to winters so over the centuries people have found some useful techniques which we are going to share with you.

Herbs during summer

During summer when you want to use your herbs, simply pinch the leaves and use in your culinary, this method makes your herb plant more bushy which is great because more herbs for the days to come.

If you are into herb flowers then only cut leaves which are bigger than others and never break them from the top.

Best time for harvesting

If you are harvesting during summer, best way is to cut the long hanging bushes and don't forget to use a sharp cutter.

For the best use always cut the amount you need to use, it is not only good for the plant but for you too, as fresh leaves gives the most benefits and aroma.

It is also said that cut your herbs during mid-morning when night dew has already dried and sun has not yet dissipated the herb aroma.

Herbs during winter

During autumn your herb plant will stop expanding and growing and after few weeks it will dry up. So what should you do at this time?

Well, it is easy. Time to sharpen up your knife because you'll need to cut the major stems of your plant.

While cutting make sure you are aligning them too because after you have cut all of them simply tie them together because this way it will be easy to pinch the leaves later.

How to preserve

There is another way to use your herbs in cold winters. Idea is to preserve them and it can be achieved by cutting the leaves from their stems, pack them in small packs and freeze them in your refrigerator. In this step it is important to pack your leaves tightly as no humidity should enter the pack. Dry herbs should be kept in a cool, dry place away from the sunlight. Keep a check on open herbs because if they are in open for too long, they will lose flavor and aroma.



Buying high quality herbs

The quality of herb you buy is of the utmost importance. The best ingredient will make the best food. Whether you wish to buy fresh herbs or dried ones, there are some guidelines to be followed. Fresh herbs are available at supermarkets in many forms; tied in bunch or loose in plastic boxes or growing in a pot. In every case, check the color and aroma of the herb. It should have a vigorous appearance and appetizing aroma. It should not appear faded but fresh and bright. When buying dried herbs, follow the same guideline. Dried herbs should have appropriate and vivid color and should be fragrant.

PREPARATION OF THE HERB

Herbs are delicate plants that need proper care. Prepare your herbs just before you need them to add in your food otherwise, they will lose freshness, color and aroma. It is essential that your knife or cutting tools are pointed and sharp. The one with blunt edges will leave your herb blackened. It will also crush tender and fresh leaves.

After washing the herbs properly, get rid of thick stalks and chop the leaves with a sharp knife. Alternately, you can use a curved blade herb chopper or multi-blade herb scissors. Multi-blade herb scissors are a very efficient tool for cutting herbs as they are very fast, easy to use and there is no wastage.

TIP FOR COOKING WITH HERBS

Always use smaller amount of dried herbs as they are more concentrated so it will give more flavor and aroma as compared to fresh herbs. Typically the proportion between fresh to dry herbs is 3:1. For instance, if any recipe required 3 tbsp of fresh herbs then you will add 1 tbsp of dried ones.





Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

Handwritten label: *Handwritten text*

CULINARY HERBS

You must wonder why everything a professional chef makes or food you eat at a fancy five star restaurant tastes so exotic with irresistible aroma. The main reason behind this is the seasoning. Chefs know what ticks your pleasure. They use fresh herbs and they can tell from its smell. Herbs are widely used for cooking purposes. Some of the most popular culinary herbs are:





BASIL

Basil is one of the most popular culinary herbs which are an essential ingredient in Italian and south Asian dishes. They can be used practically almost all the dishes.

It has strong clove like flavor and known for its aromatic appeal. It is used in sauces, pizzas, pasta dishes and salads etc. Basil's leaves are available in both fresh and dried form.



BAY LEAVES

Bay leaf has a salty flavor. It is a good replacement of salt if you are trying to avoid salt in your food. It can be used fresh or dried. It goes well with salads, stews, soups, fish and rice dishes. Main purpose of bay leaves is to just give the taste, they are not supposed to be digested. They have a dark, floral scent and should be used carefully.



GARLIC CHIVES

Garlic chives are sometimes called close relative of garlic. Garlic chives gives a very subtle garlic flavor to food; not too much, not too less. It is a vital ingredient of Oriental cuisine. It is a great replacement of garlic powder and garlic salt.



OREGANO

Oregano means “mountain joy” just like its name oregano has a very warm aroma and delightful taste. It is used for seasoning soups, stews, salads, pastas, etc. Oregano is used widely in Mexican, Spanish, French, Greek and Italian food. It is mostly used in dry form in dishes.



THYME

Thyme is a very delicate herb with curled leaves and very small leaves. Thyme has a mixed lemon and minty flavor. It is an essential ingredient of the French cuisine. It is a summer herb but is available in dried form in winter. It is an important component of herbes de Provence.



ROSEMARY

Rosemary is cultivated all over the world. It is a Mediterranean herb, well-known for the woody fragrance of its twigs. When used on meats and barbecue, gives very appealing fragrance and distinct flavor. Its memorable flavor and unique aroma will make you fall in love with it. It belongs to mint family and its taste best when blended with garlic and thyme, giving your food mouth-watering aroma. It is commonly used in soups, beef, lamb stews, fish dishes, salads, etc.



DILL

Dill has a distinct spicy green taste. It is commonly used in salads, pickles, soups and salmon dishes and other seafood dishes. Its leaves are available in both fresh and dried form along with its seed.



STARTERS AND SOUPS:

TOMATO SOUP WITH FRESH BASIL







A very easy and flavorful recipe for summertime. Give it your own touch by adding herbs and spices of your choice!

Duration: 45 minutes

Yield: 4-5 servings

Level: VERY EASY

INGREDIENTS

6 large tomatoes, roughly chopped

2 medium onions, finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, roughly chopped

1 tbsp olive oil

2 tbsp tomato puree

½ bunch of fresh basil (shredded and whole leaves to garnish)

2 carrots, roughly chopped
2 sticks of celery, sliced
2 tbsp butter
2 vegetable/chicken stock cubes
salt and freshly ground pepper (to taste)

METHOD

- Put a large pan on medium heat, add olive oil and butter until it starts bubbling. Add chopped onion and stir it with a wooden spoon for 5 minutes till it softened.
- Add chopped garlic, carrots, tomatoes and sliced celery and mix together well so that all the ingredients are well-coated with butter and oil. Cook for around 15 minutes and make sure carrots have softened and onions are golden brown.
- Now pour ½ liters of boiling water in a pan, add the chicken or vegetable stock cubes. Stir well till they are dissolved. Add this to the pan with peeled tomatoes and puree. Mix together well and give it a good boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Keep stirring from time to time in order to prevent the tomatoes from sticking to the base of the pan.
- Remove the pan from heat. Add basil leaves and salt and pepper to taste. Process the soup with a hand blender or food processor until smooth. Pour into your serving bowls and season again with basil leaves.

Tip: You can add double cream if you like. You may also add other herbs like thyme or rosemary while cooking to give your soup some more flavor.



CREAMY MUSHROOM SOUP WITH THYME







If you are a mushroom lover then this rich, creamy and delicious soup is just perfect for you. This recipe brings out the earthy flavor of mushroom making the flavor more intense and irresistible.

Duration: 50 minutes

Yield: 6-7 servings

Level: EASY

INGREDIENTS

1 pound mushrooms, cleaned and sliced

1 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp butter

1 tsp fresh thyme, finely chopped (only leaves)

1 tsp fresh sage, chopped
1 medium white onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
1 cup heavy cream
4 cups vegetable stock
salt and freshly ground pepper (to taste)

METHOD

- In a heavy-bottomed frying pan, toss the mushrooms in olive oil, salt and pepper and thyme.
- Now roast the mushrooms in the pre-heated oven (400°F/200°C) for about 30 minutes until golden brown.
- Heat the oil over medium-high heat, fry onion until tender.
- Add garlic, sage, thyme and sauté for about 1 minute.
- Now add the roasted mushrooms, vegetable stock and simmer for 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
- Turn off the heat and puree with a blender or a hand held blender. Add the heavy cream, mix well and serve with gingerbread.



TUSCAN BEAN AND HERB SOUP





This is a very healthy and flavorful recipe which is equally good for lunch and dinner. The beauty of this dish is that you can use variety of vegetables and herbs of your choice or that available in your home.

Duration: 30 minutes

Yield: 6-8 servings

Level: VERY EASY

INGREDIENTS

1 can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
1 can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
2 carrots, diced
2 large tomatoes, roughly chopped
2 medium onions, finely chopped
4 garlic cloves, minced
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp fresh thyme, finely chopped (only leaves)
2 tsp fresh oregano, finely chopped
1 tsp fresh rosemary, finely chopped
2 sticks of celery, diced
handful of baby spinach leaves, washed and roughly chopped
5 cups vegetable stock
salt and freshly ground pepper (to taste)

METHOD

- In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat for about one minute. Add the onions, garlic, carrots, celery, thyme, oregano, rosemary and salt and

pepper. Stir occasionally. Cook for 6-7 minutes until vegetables are soft.

- Add the tomatoes with juice, beans, vegetable stock and bring it to a boil. Lower the heat, cover the lid and cook for further 45 minutes.
- Add the baby spinach leaves to the top of the soup and cook for 2 minutes. Tuscan bean and herb soup is ready to serve.



BEEF STEW WITH ROSEMARY DUMPLINGS







This exotic and mouthwatering recipe is a heaven for beef lovers with rosemary dumplings giving it a perfect finish.

Duration: 2 hr 50 minutes

Yield: 4-6 servings

Level: Moderate

INGREDIENTS

For stew

2 pounds beef stock, cut into cubes (1-2 inches)

2 cups of beef broth

2 tsp olive oil

2 tbsp flour

2 tbsp tomato puree

2 garlic cloves, minced
2 medium carrots, diced
2 sticks celery, sliced
12 baby onions, peeled and chopped
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
½ cup of light sour cream
2 tbsp of cornstarch
2 tsp sugar
2 tsp fresh rosemary, finely chopped
½ tsp dried mixed herb
2 bay leaves
pinch of salt and pepper

For dumplings

125g plain flour
½ tsp baking powder
1 tbsp rosemary, finely chopped
3-4 tbsp cold water
65g suet
pinch of salt

METHOD

- In a medium bowl add beef broth, balsamic vinegar, tomato puree, sugar, salt and pepper. Stir well and set it aside.
- Season beef cubes with flour. Make sure it is well-coated.
- In a large flat frying pan heat olive oil, over medium heat. Add the coated beef cubes and fry on each side until golden brown. Add onion, carrots, garlic and

celery. Cook for 5 minutes until onions are soft.

- Add the mixed dried herb and cook for one more minute. Add the beef broth mixture and bring it to the boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 40-60 minutes until carrots are tender. Add bay leaf, chopped rosemary and cover the lid.
- After around 40 minutes, mix the cornstarch and sour cream. Add this mixture to the stew and mix well.
- In a bowl add flour, suet, baking powder and a pinch of salt. Mix well and add rosemary. Add enough cold water (100 ml) to make soft dough. Divide the dough into 12 equal balls and with your floured hand roll lightly into balls.
- Drop the balls into the stew. Serve immediately on warm plates.

Tip: You can freeze the stew for at least 3 months. You may add redcurrant jelly instead of sugar to give extra shine to the sauce.



SCRUMPTIOUS FISH:

GRILLED SALMON WITH THYME AND LEMON



Duration: 30 minutes

Yield: 6-8 servings

Level: VERY EASY

INGREDIENTS

6 salmon fillets

2 tbsp fresh thyme, finely chopped

½ tsp lemon zest, grated

3 tbsp fresh lemon juice

3 cloves garlic, minced

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

salt and pepper (to taste)

METHOD

- Beat together garlic, thyme, grated lemon zest and lemon juice.
- Heat the grill on medium-low heat.
- Season salmon with salt and pepper.
- Place the salmon on preheated grill and cover it with lid. Grill the fish for 3-4 minutes, each side. Remove from grill.
- Brush it lemon thyme sauce. Serve immediately.



GRILLED FISH WITH CITRUS HERB CRUST





Duration: 20 minutes

Yield: 2-3 servings

Level: VERY EASY

INGREDIENTS

4 swordfish fillets

2 tbsp basil, minced

2 tbsp oregano, minced

2 tbsp parsley, minced

½ lemon zest

½ orange zest

2 tbsp olive oil

salt and pepper (to taste)

METHOD

- Season swordfish fillets with salt and pepper on both sides.
- On a large dish add oregano, basil, parsley, lemon and orange zest, olive oil and salt and pepper. Mix together well.
- Now coat the seasoned fillets with the herbs mixture generously. Marinate for 10 minutes.
- Place the fish on medium-low heat side of the grill. Cover it with a lid and cook for 5 minutes. Flip the fish and cook the other side for 5 more minutes.
- Squeeze lemon and orange juice on the fish, dish out and serve.



MEDITERRANEAN BAKED FISH WITH TOMATO, GARLIC & HERBS



Duration: 35 minutes

Yield: 3-4 servings

Level: EASY

INGREDIENTS

4 white fish fillets

28 ounces tomatoes, canned

2-3 cloves garlic

1 tbsp olive oil

4 ounces olives

1 lemon, thinly sliced

1 tbsp capers

2 tbsp onion, minced

2 tbsp fresh basil, finely chopped

salt and pepper (to taste)

METHOD

- Preheat the oven to 180°C.
- In a frying pan add few drops of olive oil and garlic. Fry for 2 minutes. Add onion, crushed tomatoes, chopped basil and salt and pepper. Make a fine sauce.
- Place your fresh tomato basil sauce and then fish in an oven proof dish. Pour some sauce on the fish. Arrange thinly sliced lemons on the top of it. Now add the drained olives and capers on fish and tomatoes. Drizzle little olive oil on top.



- Bake the fish for about 25 minutes. Dish out, garnish with basil and enjoy!

GRILLED RED MULLET WITH HERB





Duration: 30 minutes

Yield: 4-5 servings

Level: VERY EASY

INGREDIENTS

12 red mullet fillets (1 3/4 lbs.)

500g red mature tomatoes, peeled and chopped

7 tbsp pepper, diced

1 tbsp dill, finely chopped

1 tbsp basil, finely chopped

1 tbsp chervil, finely chopped

1 tbsp tarragon, finely chopped

60 ml extra virgin olive oil

sea salt & freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

METHOD

- In a small bowl add tomatoes, olive oil, pepper, salt and black pepper and make a mixture. In the end, add all the herbs. Set aside.
- Now prepare the red mullet fillets. Season it with salt and pepper.
- Sprinkle oil on the grill, place the fillets. Cook both sides for 4-5 minutes.
- On a plate arrange herbs, tomatoes and pepper mixture. Place the red mullets and serve.



HEALTHY & FLAVORSOME HERBAL DRINKS:
PUNCHY COCKTAIL



INGREDIENTS

1 cup lychee juice

1 cup guava juice

1 cup passion fruit juice

1/3 cup fresh lime juice
½ cup tangerine juice
½ cup basil leaves
few basil leaves, for garnish
lime slices, for garnish

METHOD

- In a large pitcher, mix lychee, passion and guava juices.
- In a medium size sauce pan, add basil and one cup of fruit juices mixture. Bring it to boil. Lower the heat and cook for 5 minutes.
- Remove from heat. Let it cool for a while.
- Pour mixture into a jug, removing basil. Add lime and tangerine juices. Stir well.
- Serve over ice. Garnish with lime slice and basil.



HERBAL SODAS

INGREDIENTS

½ cup sugar

1 tsp lemon juice, freshly squeezed

¾ ounces fresh herbs, such as basil, tarragon, mint and thyme

Ice, for serving

Club soda, for serving

METHOD

- In a medium size saucepan, pour one cup water and sugar. Keep heating and bring the mixture to boil. Meanwhile, keep stirring until sugar is completely dissolved.
- Remove from heat. Add basil, tarragon, mint and thyme. Mix well and cover with lid. Let it cool completely.
- Pour the syrup into a small bowl, discarding all the herbs. Add lemon juice and stir. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
- When serving, fill glasses with ice and drop 4 tablespoons syrup. Add soda water and stir. Enjoy!





THYME LEMONADE



INGREDIENTS

1 bunch fresh thyme

1.5 cups sugar

2 cups fresh lemon juice (from 9-10 medium size lemons)

7 cups water

1 cup gin

1 lemon slice, for garnish

1 thyme twig, for garnish

METHOD

- In a medium size saucepan, pour water, sugar and thyme. Keep heating and bring the mixture to boil. Meanwhile, keep stirring until sugar is completely dissolved.
- Add lemon juice, gin, 6 cups of water and pour it into a jug. Refrigerate until cold.
- Serve over ice, garnish with thyme twig and lemon slice.





LAVENDER-INFUSED LEMONADE



INGREDIENTS

¼ cup dried lavender

3 cups crushed sugar

4 cups fresh lemon juice (from 17-18 medium size lemons)

3 cups water

Ice cubes

lemon slices, for garnish

fresh lavender twig, for garnish

METHOD

- In a saucepan add sugar and water. Keep heating and bring the mixture to boil. Meanwhile, keep stirring until the sugar is completely dissolved. Add lavender. Remove from heat.
- Keep it aside for around 8-10 minutes.
- Pour it in the jug removing lavender. Let it cool.
- Add lemon juice.
- Serve over ice, garnish with fresh lavender twig and lemon slice.



HONEY SAGE GIN FIZZ



INGREDIENTS

For honey sage syrup

½ cup honey

½ cup water

6 fresh sage leaves

For fizz

3 ounces gin

2 tbsp honey sage syrup

2 tbsp lemon juice

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup club soda

Ice cubes

fresh sage leaves, for garnish

METHOD

How to make honey sage syrup

- To make honey sage syrup, take a medium size pan, add water, honey and sage leaves. Keep heating over medium-high heat and bring the mixture to boil.
- Reduce the heat and now let it over medium heat for about 1-2 minutes, until the honey is completely dissolved. Meanwhile, keep stirring.
- Remove from heat. Let it cool for 30-40 minutes.

Honey sage gin fizz

- Pour together honey sage syrup, lime juice and gin.
- Serve over ice. Garnish with fresh sage leaves.





PINEAPPLE BASIL COCKTAIL





INGREDIENTS

4 basil leaves, rolled and sliced into stripes

¼ fresh lime

¼ cup pineapple juice

1.5 ounce gin

Ice cubes

Club soda

1 slice lime, for garnish

1 slice pineapple, for garnish

1 twig basil, for garnish

METHOD

- In a glass put ¼ lime and basil. Mix together well.
- Add pineapple juice, gin, ice cubes and top with club soda.
- Garnish with basil twig, lime and pineapple slices.



Conclusion

Herbs are nature's surprise packages that contain a lot of flavor. If you are not using herbs in your food, you are missing out on some of the most amazing cooking experiences of life. Fresh herbs can take a dish from good to great in no time. You just need to have a proper knowledge of dealing with herbs like; how to grow, harvest, dry, store, freeze, cut, use in cooking, etc. Once you start using herbs in your life, you will truly appreciate this great gift of nature. You will be hooked up for life.