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EC9997 Your Friends the Herbs

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Your Friends The Herbs



EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
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W. V. LAMBERT, DIRECTOR



YOUR FRIENDS, THE HERBS

Here's to Herbs--good to see,
Good to taste--good to smell,
And very good for the budget, as well.

Our colonial forefathers called them "yarbs". Although herb with the "h" sounded is the more approved pronunciation, "erb" is also acceptable.

Herbs are friendly things even though they're quite modest and a bit shy. You really have to know them well to appreciate all the things they are ready and eager to do for you. Everyone who enjoys preparing and eating delicious food should be as "at home" with herbs as with salt, pepper, and vanilla.

Look in your cupboard. There you will find the magic ingredients you use to add life and flavor to your everyday foods. Various herbs, seeds, and spices are already as familiar to you as salt and sugar.

Spices are parts of fragrant tropical plants. You know cinnamon well. It is the dried bark of an evergreen tree of the laurel family. The "cinnamon" we use is really cassia which we prefer over cinnamon since its flavor is stronger. Cloves are the dried, unopened buds of an evergreen tree. Ginger is the root of a perennial plant which grows in the tropics and semi-tropics. Herbs are leaves of aromatic plants which grow in temperate areas. It is with herbs that this lesson deals. Seeds are the fruit or seeds of herb plants. How well we know the use of celery, dill, anise, caraway, and poppy seeds!

Herb-Accented Recipes

Using herbs in cooking is easy. You probably use them more often than you realize. Bay leaves, sage, dried parsley flakes and other herb products may be on your "spice" shelf. Now you are accustomed to using fresh parsley, mint, and celery leaves but have you ever used oregano, rosemary, marjoram or basil?

Try out several of the recipes given in this circular and see which herbs you like best with particular foods. Individual tastes play an important role whenever you use herbs.

The suggestions and recipes given in this lesson are a means of barely starting you on the road to becoming an even more imaginative cook than you already are. You can become an expert in the use of herbs and there are endless combinations possible. The French are noted for their herb-accented recipes. But remember the best cooks use herbs with discretion.

Herb Lore

1. The use of herbs in cooking is simple since there are no hard and fast rules for their individual use or for combinations of herbs. You'll like some herbs and some combinations better than others.
2. A good starter set for your adventure in herb cooking should include sweet marjoram, sage, oregano, thyme, tarragon, rosemary, basil, and summer savory.
3. Savory herbs are FLAVORING AGENTS. Use them sparingly--their oils are strong. First, try using 1/4 teaspoon of dried herbs in a recipe serving four.

Remember, "it's easier to add than subtract." Herbs should accent a dish, not stand out themselves. You shouldn't be able to taste the herb. A good rule to remember: one half teaspoon of dried herbs is as potent in flavor as 2 teaspoons of the fresh herbs. Powdered herbs are even more potent in flavor---1/4 teaspoon is equal to 2 teaspoons of fresh herbs.

4. Do not use one herb too often. As your understanding of the various herbs and their possible combinations increases, you'll find your reputation for being a good cook growing.
5. Tie herbs in small cheese cloth bags if you do not want "specks" in your food. Then, too, you can control the flavor of stews, gravies, and soups. When you're satisfied, lift out the herbs.
6. Herbs may be steeped in hot cream, milk, water, or butter for about 15 minutes for use in uncooked dishes. If you wish, strain to avoid particles of herbs in foods.
7. Add herbs to canned soups, sauces, chops, steaks, roasts, etc., at the same time you usually add salt and pepper.
8. Cold sauces and vegetable juices for best flavor should have herbs added at least an hour before serving; preferably they should stand overnight.
9. BOUQUET GARNI---this is a mixture of various herbs---in specific proportions that go well together. These blends may be used in soups and stews. For example: One teaspoon dried parsley, marjoram, thyme; one-fourth teaspoon dried sage, two teaspoons dried celery tops.

or

A few celery tops, leeks, parsley, one bay leaf, two cloves, one clove garlic, thyme. Place in cheese cloth bag and remove when desired flavor is achieved.

You can develop your own "Bouquet Garni". Commercially prepared blends of various combinations of herbs are also available on the market.

10. Leaves of fresh herbs should be chopped or cut very fine to extract the full flavor.
11. The delicate aroma and flavor of herbs may easily be lost by cooking too long. Add dried herbs to stews and soups during the last hour of cooking.
12. Herb Butters. One of the best ways for beginners to learn to use the different herbs is to combine them with fats. Fresh unsalted butter is especially satisfactory. It readily absorbs delicate herb flavors. Salted butter, margarine, pork drippings and rendered chicken fat can also be used. Fresh herbs should be cut finely and blended with the butter. Proportions are approximately 1 well-packed level tablespoon of fresh green herbs or 1/2 teaspoon of dried herbs to 4 tablespoons (2 oz.) of butter. Dried herbs may be allowed to stand for a few minutes with a little lemon juice before mixing with the butter.

Herb butters may be stored several days in your refrigerator. Keep covered.

Good combinations for herb butter are made with parsley or chive, singly, together, or combined with one or more other herbs.

13. Remember too, that commercial herb companies have free and low-cost pamphlets and cook books to help you develop your skills in the use of herbs. Here are two that we know about:

House of Herbs, Inc., Salisbury, Connecticut

Spice Islands Company, 610 Folsom St., San Francisco 7, Calif.

HERB-ACCENTED RECIPES

HERBS do add new interest to everyday meals. Try making savory herb bread, peppery herb sauces for meat, or add zest to the salad bowl of tossed greens with a dressing made of herb vinegar.

The following recipes give tempting ways you can use herbs. REMEMBER the herb amounts given may be too much or too little for your taste. After a little experimentation, you will know how much you prefer . . . as you adjust the amounts of salt, pepper and vanilla in recipes so you will find yourself adjusting some of these.

SAVORY HERB BREAD

"Wonderful flavor! Serve hot when possible."

- 1 cup lukewarm milk
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 cake compressed yeast
- 1 egg
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon crumbled dry sage (or rubbed sage)
- 2 teaspoons caraway seeds
- 2 tablespoons soft shortening
- 3 to 3 3/4 cups sifted all purpose flour

1. Mix together in large mixing bowl milk, sugar, salt, and yeast; stir until yeast is dissolved.
2. Stir in egg.
3. Mix in the soft shortening to which you have added the nutmeg, sage, and caraway seeds.
4. Add the flour in 2 additions, using the amount needed to make the dough easy to handle.
5. When dough begins to leave sides of bowl, turn out onto lightly floured board and knead until dough is smooth and elastic and does not stick to board.
6. Place in greased bowl, turning once to bring greased side up.
7. Cover with damp cloth and let rise in warm, draft-free spot (80-85° F.) until almost double (1 1/2 to 2 hours). Let rise only once.
8. Shape into loaf and place in 9 x 5 x 3 inch pan; let rise until double (50 to 60 minutes).
9. Bake in preheated 375° F. oven 45 to 50 minutes.
10. Yield: 1 loaf.

VEGETABLES

"Dress them up with herb accessories"

Baked Cauliflower 1/

Break into flowerets..... 1 head cauliflower
Cook 20 minutes or until tender.
Combine in greased 9-inch casserole 1 1/2 cups drained, canned tomatoes
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
Cover with cauliflower.
Combine 3/4 cup grated cheese
3/4 cup cracker crumbs
Sprinkle over cauliflower.
Bake in 400° oven 20 minutes.
Serves 6 to 7.

Broccoli and Cheese Souffle 1/

Melt in saucepan..... 3 tablespoons butter
Blend in 3 tablespoons flour
Add 1 cup milk
2 tablespoons finely chopped onion
Cook, stirring constantly, until thickened. Remove from heat.
Add..... 1 cup grated cheese
3 slightly beaten egg yolks
1 tablespoon dried marjoram*
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon paprika
Stir until the cheese is melted.
Stir in 1 1/2 cups cooked, chopped broccoli
Fold in..... 3 stiffly beaten egg whites
Pour into greased 10 x 6 x 11/2-inch baking pan.
Top with 1/2 cup buttered cracker crumbs
Bake in 350° oven 45 minutes.
Serves 6.
(Spinach or asparagus may be used instead of broccoli)
*Experiment with 1 teaspoon and increase to 1 tablespoon if your taste so dictates.

Corn'n' Peas With Summer Savory 1/

Cook over low heat for 3 to 4 minutes 3 tablespoons butter
1/4 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped celery
Add..... 2 cups cooked peas
2 cups drained whole-kernel corn
2 tablespoons chopped parsley
1/2 teaspoon dried summer savory
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
Heat thoroughly and add 1/2 cup sour cream before serving.
Serves 6.

1/ Courtesy of Farm Journal.

Green Beans, Spanish Style 1/

Melt in saucepan.....	3 tablespoons butter
Add and cook until tender	2/3 cup chopped onion
Add.....	1 cup water
	1/2 cup chili sauce
	1/2 teaspoon dried dill
Blend and add	1 1/2 tablespoons corn starch
	2 tablespoons water
Cook, stirring, until thickened.	
Combine with	3 cups cooked green beans.
Serves 6.	

Green Beans With Toasted Almonds 1/

Cook 15 minutes	3 cups canned or frozen green beans
Melt	1/3 cup butter
Add	1/2 cup slivered almonds
Toast lightly, shaking pan.	
Add	1/2 teaspoon salt
	1 tablespoon chopped chives
Pour over green beans.	
Serves 6.	

Savory Green Beans 2/

"They're colorful with red pimiento, piquant with summer savory---"

1 No. 2 can (2 1/2 cups) green beans	1/4 cup butter or margarine
1/2 teaspoon summer savory	1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons finely chopped	Dash pepper
pimiento	2 slices bacon

Drain green beans. Combine beans, savory, pimiento, butter, salt, and pepper. Cook over low heat. Fry bacon until crisp and chop. Garnish beans with bacon bits. Makes 4 servings.

Fluffy Beets 1/

Shred coarsely 4 cups raw beets
Combine with..... 2 tablespoons butter
 1 tablespoon sugar
 1 teaspoon salt
 1/2 cup water

Cook until beets are tender, about 10 to 12 minutes.

Blend..... 1 tablespoon flour
 1 cup thick sour cream
Add..... 1 teaspoon dried summer savory

Fold into cooked beets. Heat through.
Serves 6.

1/ Courtesy of Farm Journal.

2/ Courtesy of Better Homes and Gardens.

Fried Onions With Herbs 2/

Sweet marjoram is the secret; perfect partners for beef roast or broiled steaks--

2 tablespoons butter or margarine	Dash pepper
4 medium onions, sliced	1/4 - 1/2 teaspoon sweet marjoram
1/2 teaspoon salt	Dash cayenne

Melt butter. Add onions and sprinkle with salt and spices. Stir until well blended. Fry over low heat 10 to 15 minutes until onions are tender and browned. Makes 4 servings.

LUNCHEON OR SUPPER TREATS

Herb Scrambled Eggs 2/

"Thyme and fresh chives are seasoners"

4 slightly beaten eggs	1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1/4 cup cream	1 tablespoon chopped chives
1/2 teaspoon salt	Dash thyme
Dash of pepper	
2 tablespoons fat	

Combine eggs, cream and seasonings. Heat fat in heavy pan; pour in egg mixture and cook slowly until partially set, stirring lightly. Add herbs; cook until set. Serve with little pork sausages. Garnish with parsley. Makes 4 servings.

Scrambled eggs "touched up" with some tarragon and a bit of Worcestershire Sauce are another treat.

Three-herb Spaghetti Sauce 2/

Spaghetti gets a tangy topping; herb trio which makes it so good is basil, rosemary and sage.

2 stalks celery	1 cup tomato juice
3 1/2 cloves garlic	1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1 medium onion	2/3 cup consomme
1 tablespoon salad oil	1 teaspoon salt
1 pound ground beef	1/4 teaspoon basil
2 8-ounce cans (2 cups) tomato sauce	1/4 teaspoon rosemary
2 3-ounce cans (1 cup) mushrooms	1/4 teaspoon ground sage
	1 16-ounce package spaghetti

Grind celery, garlic, and onion. Brown in oil. Add ground beef and cook till brown. Add tomato sauce, diced mushrooms, tomato juice, nutmeg, consomme, salt, basil, rosemary, and sage. Cook over low heat at least 2 hours, stirring occasionally. Serve over cooked spaghetti. Makes 6 servings.

Pizza Pie 3/
"Pizza's Fun and Most Delicious!"

2 6-ounce cans tomato paste	Olive Oil
1 clove garlic	1/2 pound grated cheddar cheese
3 to 4 sticks celery	1/2 pound pork sausage rolled in small balls
1 small green pepper, seeded and cut in strips	Grated Parmesan-Style cheese
2 cans water (tomato paste cans)	Oregano
Pastry for 2 8-inch pie shells	

1. Cook tomato paste, garlic, celery, green pepper, and water together in pressure cooker at 10 pounds for 20 minutes, or simmer for 1 hour.
2. Force mixture through sieve; save sauce.
3. Roll pastry to 1/8-inch thickness and place in pie tins coated with olive oil. Brush pastry with olive oil.
4. Pour sauce into unbaked pie shells; sprinkle with grated cheddar cheese.
5. Place sausage balls over sauce; sprinkle with Parmesan cheese, then with Oregano.
6. Bake Pizza in preheated 450° F. oven 15 minutes.
7. Place in broiler 2 to 3 minutes, or until Pizza is brown and bubbly.
8. Serve at once to your hungry guests!

Chili Con Carne 2/

2 cups dried red Mexican beans	2 tablespoons chili powder
2 cups water	1 tablespoon paprika
1 No. 2 can (2 1/2 cups) tomatoes	4 dried chili peppers
1 1/2 cups chopped onion	1 teaspoon thyme
2 cloves garlic, minced	1 teaspoon sage
2 teaspoons salt	1/2 pound ground pork
	1 1/2 pounds ground beef

Soak beans overnight; drain. Add water, tomatoes, onion, garlic, and seasonings. Brown meats in hot fat; cover; cook slowly about 4 hours. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

Cheese Hamburgers With Tomato-Herb Sauce 2/

The cheese and good seasonings are mixed with the meat. Herbs are in the delicious sauce--

1 1/2 pounds ground beef	1 1/2 tablespoons chili sauce
1/4 pound coarsely grated American cheese	1 1/2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
1/4 teaspoon pepper	1 cup soft bread crumbs
3/4 teaspoon salt	2 well-beaten eggs
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard	

Blend all ingredients thoroughly and form into 6 patties 1 inch thick and 3 inches in diameter. Broil slowly, brushing with Tomato-Herb Sauce: Fry 3 cloves of finely chopped garlic in 1/4 cup salad oil. Add 1 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, 1/4 teaspoon oregano, 1 No. 1 can (1 1/4 cups) tomato puree, and 1/4 cup strained honey. Simmer 30 minutes. Brush over Cheese Hamburgers and serve additional sauce with the cooked patties. Makes 6 servings.

2/ Courtesy of Better Homes and Gardens.

3/ Courtesy of Gas Company Home Economics.

Flavor-best Fried Chicken 2/
"The herb blend is perfection ----"

1 3-to 3 1/2 pound ready-to-cook frying chicken, disjointed	1/2 teaspoon rosemary
1/2 teaspoon thyme	2 tablespoons fresh minced parsley
1/2 teaspoon marjoram	1 teaspoon salt
Flour	1/4 teaspoon pepper
Fat	1/2 cup hot water

Sprinkle chicken with thyme and marjoram; let stand 1/2 to 1 hour. Roll in flour and brown on both sides in 1/4 inch hot fat. Remove each piece as it browns and place in shallow baking pan. Sprinkle with rosemary, parsley, salt, and pepper. Pour the hot water into frying pan; stir thoroughly. Pour over chicken. Bake uncovered in moderate oven (375°) about 45 minutes. Makes 6 servings.

SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN SALADS

Fine Herb French Dressing 2/

"Just the blend for a tossed green salad; tarragon makes it delightful eating."

1 teaspoon salt	1 1/2 teaspoons chopped gherkins
1 1/2 teaspoons pepper	1 1/2 teaspoons chopped chives
6 tablespoons wine vinegar	1 teaspoon tarragon
3/4 cup salad oil	1 teaspoon chopped parsley
1 1/2 teaspoons chopped ripe olives	

Combine all ingredients; shake vigorously. Makes about 1 1/4 cups.

"Here's a quickly made taste treat"

A simple salad combination is one of fresh sliced tomatoes, Bermuda onions, and cucumbers sprinkled with fresh or dried tarragon leaves. Serve with a home-made French dressing---your favorite, of course!

"New Use for Sage"

Sage flavored cottage cheese is good. Put 1 to 2 teaspoons dry sage into one cup cream. (Amount depends upon how well you like sage). Stand in refrigerator for 2 hours or longer. Strain into cottage cheese, blending with salt and pepper to taste. Serve cottage cheese in a fresh tomato cup or with sliced or quartered tomatoes.

2/ Courtesy of Better Homes and Gardens.

Material in this circular was gathered and compiled by Mrs. Angeline Camp.