

Try Me!

# Herbs

MEATLESS MONDAY

## Basil, *Ocimum basilicum*



- It is sometimes known as Saint Joseph's Wort.
- Basil is native to India; it has been cultivated there for more than 5,000 years.
- It is featured in Italian cuisine and also plays a major role in cuisines throughout the world.
- Basil comes from the Greek word meaning "king". Basil is considered the "king of herbs" by many cookery authors.

## Chives, *Allium schoenoprasum*



- It is the smallest species of edible onion and has a mild onion flavor.
- Use it in salads, soups, mashed potatoes, cream cheese, butter, and vegetables.

- Chives were used in China nearly 5,000 years ago. They are native to Europe, Asia, and North America.
- They have insect repelling properties that can be used in gardens to control pests.
- Romanian Gypsies believed that bunches of chives hung around a house would ward off disease and evil.

## Dill, *Anethum graveolens*



- Dill is used in pickling, salad dressing, and fish dishes.
- Fresh dill is available during the summer and early fall.
- Dill is native to Russia, western Africa, and the Mediterranean.
- Leaves are wispy and fernlike and have a soft, sweet taste.

- Both the leaves and seeds are used for seasoning. The seeds are oval in shape.
- Since it is very fragile, even if stored properly, dill will only keep fresh for about two days.

## Mint, *Mentha*



- It is native to Europe, Asia, and Africa.
- This fast growing herb thrives in a wide range of conditions.
- Mint is used in candy, chocolate, tea, beverages, jams, lamb dishes and in breath freshening products.
- It is very popular in aromatherapy. It was also known as the first room deodorizer in Europe. It was strewn across the floors to

cover the smell of hard-packed soil.

- It is used as an environmentally friendly insecticide to kill some common pests like wasps, hornets, ants and cockroaches.

## Oregano, *Origanum vulgare*



- This herb is related to marjoram. It has a balsamic, aromatic flavor.
- Greeks and Romans hold oregano as a symbol of joy and happiness. In fact, it was a tradition for Greek and Roman brides and grooms to be crowned with a laurel of oregano.
- Oregano has been cultivated in France since the Middle Ages and is an important

herb in Mediterranean cooking.

- GIs returning from Italy in the early 20th century brought this fragrant herb to the United States.

Poster created by: Syracuse University Food Services

## Parsley, *Petroselinum crispum*



- Its name is derived from the Greek word meaning "rock celery" (parsley is a relative to celery).
- It is a biennial plant that will return to your garden year after year once it is established.
- It is a good source of Vitamin C and A.
- Two most popular types are curly parsley and Italian flat leaf parsley. The Italian variety

has a more fragrant and less bitter taste than the curly variety.

- Select parsley that is deep green in color. Leaves that are yellow indicate that it is over mature or damaged.

## Rosemary, *Rosmarinus officinalis*



- It is native to the Mediterranean and other parts of Europe.
- It has a strong pine fragrance and is related to the evergreen family.
- Use it to flavor chicken, lamb, pork, salmon, tuna, soups, and sauces.
- Rosemary contains substances that may stimulate the immune system, increase circulation, and improve digestion.

- It may also improve concentration by increasing the blood flow to the head and brain.

## Sage, *Salvia officinalis*



- This perennial plant has woody stems, grayish leaves, and blue to purplish flowers.
- It is native to the Mediterranean.
- Both leaves and flowers are edible.
- Used in ancient times to ward off evil.
- It has a savory, slightly peppery flavor used in sausages, stuffing, cheese, and soups.
- It is known for its healing properties.

## Tarragon, *Artemisia dracunculus*



- Tarragon is a perennial herb.
- It has gray-green leaves and a distinctive anise or licorice flavor. Only the leaves are edible.
- Use with seafood, fruits, poultry, eggs, vegetables, and sauces.
- Tarragon can easily dominate other flavors so take care when adding it to your foods.
- Try adding it to artichokes, béarnaise

sauce, carrots, chicken, eggs, fish, potatoes, spinach, or tomatoes.

- To prepare, strip the leaves from the stalks then use whole or chop.

## Thyme, *Thymus vulgaris*



- Thyme is native to the Mediterranean and Northern Europe.
- Fresh thyme has a vibrant gray-green color.
- Use it in bean, egg, and vegetable dishes.
- In ancient Greece, thyme was used as incense in sacred temples.
- Thyme was also used as a symbol of courage in Medieval times. It was ritual for women to give their knights a scarf that had

a sprig of thyme placed over an embroidered bee.

★ Thank you to Syracuse Banana for the fresh herbs used in the photography.

References: <http://wikipedia.org>; <http://www.whfoods.com>; <http://herbsociety.org>