

# CULINARY HERB BLENDS



Herbs have been used in food preparation and preservation for thousands of years and for reasons beyond just taste. Many culinary herbs, such as sage, thyme, oregano, rosemary, and lavender belong to the mint, *Lamiaceae*, family. They contain vitamins just like other leafy greens in addition to many polyphenols and constituents that promote good health.

Experiment with different herb combinations based on your own preferences. One can develop a sense for which herbs blend well with others. Some have a more dominant flavor while other subtle herbs can help round out a blend.

Snip fresh herbs regularly throughout the growing season and add generous amounts to your food. Remember to also dry some for the winter months.

The following are some of the traditional culinary blends:

***fines herbes*** - minced fresh herbs, such as tarragon, chives, chervil and parsley

***herbes de Provence*** - a favorite dried herb blend of sage, oregano, marjoram, thyme, summer savory, rosemary and lavender flowers

***bouquet garni*** - small bundles of herbs that are added to foods that cook over a period of time, such as stews, broths, beans, sauces, etc. They can be bunched together and tied with kitchen string or bundled and tied into fine cheesecloth. A traditional bouquet garni is thyme, parsley and bay leaf. (I like to add juniper berries and seaweed to mine.)

***herb salts*** - favorite herbs blended with salt to make a nice marinade, rub, or finishing salt. I like blending rosemary with lemon zest and sea salt.

***umami*** - a blend of herbs that give a dish extra 'deliciousness'. The one I make is with dried powdered herbs: parsley, thyme, astragalus root, dried shiitake mushrooms, and kombu(seaweed).

Yours in green abundance,

*Rebecca*

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