

# LANDON'S

## GREENHOUSE & NURSERY

56 LANDON LANE \* 505 COLLEGE MEADOWS  
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*Where Quality Counts*

### Tips & Recipes for Cooking with Herbs

- Use more fresh herbs in recipes than dried, about three to one.
- Most herbs are at their peak of flavor and tenderness just before they flower.
- Oregano is one of the few herbs that has greatest pungency when dried.
- If you really use a lot of a particular annual herb such as basil or cilantro consider succession planting in small amounts to provide an ongoing supply.
- Basil and parsley can be cut and kept in a glass of water like cut flowers for a week or more.
- Basil does not refrigerate well. It soon turns black.
- Use scissors rather than a knife to cut chives and tarragon.
- Whether you add an herb at the start of cooking or at the end depends on the herb and the effect you want. Strong resinous herbs like oregano, thyme, savory, and rosemary do best when allowed to mellow during the cooking process. More delicate and aromatic herbs such as cilantro and mint should be added after the cooking process. Basil is often added to sauces at the start and then livened up with more chopped leaves just before removing from the heat.

#### 1. Easy Dressing for Salad Greens

3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil

3 Tbsp. vinegar (wine or balsamic)

2 tsp Dijon mustard

1 tsp honey or sugar

½ tsp salt

1 clove minced garlic

1 Tbsp. mixed fresh herbs (Can use more or less to taste.

Try tarragon, chives, parsley, thyme, dill, basil, rosemary or oregano)

Fresh ground pepper to taste

#### 2. Pesto to freeze or use

4 cloves garlic, peeled

4 cups packed basil leaves

1 tsp salt

¼ cup pine nuts

½ cup grated fresh Parmesan cheese

6 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil

Drop garlic through food chute with food processor on, process until minced. Add basil, salt, nuts, and cheese and process for about 10 seconds. With processor on, slowly pour oil through food chute and process just until blended. If planning to use soon, pesto can be kept in a jar and stored in the refrigerator for a week or more. Cover the top of the pesto with olive oil to seal and prevent darkening. To freeze pesto leave out the nuts and cheese, place pesto in the squares of an ice tray, top each square with olive oil to seal, and freeze. Once frozen the cubes of pesto can be placed in a freezer bag to store.

Try other herbs besides basil for pesto. Try sage, parsley and walnut pesto to stir into a bowl of hearty white bean soup or make a southwest pesto with cilantro, pumpkin seeds, garlic, and a little fresh green chili and Jack cheese.

### **3. Fresh Salsa**

3 cups chopped tomatoes (home grown of course!)

½ cup chopped peppers & chilies (green bell, Anaheim, & jalapeno in combination according to your hotness tolerance)

¾ cup chopped onion

Juice of 1 lime

¼ cup chopped cilantro

½ tsp salt

½ tsp black pepper

### **4. Tabbouli Salad**

1 cup of bulgur (cracked wheat)

2 cups boiling water

Pour boiling water over the bulgur in a large bowl. Let stand 1 hour. Drain well in colander and return to bowl and add:

½ to 1 ½ cups of chopped fresh parsley

2 tsp of chopped fresh mint (more if you like)

¼ chopped fresh chives

1 to 3 diced tomatoes

2 Tbsp. sliced black olives (optional)

¼ cup celery (optional)

1 medium cucumber, diced (optional)

Dress with:

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

¼ cup lemon juice

1 tsp salt

¼ tsp pepper

## 5. **Homemade Stuffing** (to serve with or stuff turkey or chicken)

Makes enough 5-6 people

10 cups of bread, cut to ½ inch cubes (can be combination of whole wheat bread & corn bread)

1 Tbsp. olive oil + 1 Tbsp. butter

1 ½ cups celery, diced (about 2 stalks)

¾ cup onion, diced

1 Tbsp. chopped fresh thyme

1 Tbsp. chopped fresh sage or 1 tsp dried rubbed sage

¾ tsp salt

½ tsp pepper

½ cup toasted chopped pecans

3 to 4 cups chicken broth

Toast bread in single layer on a baking sheet for 20 minutes at 375° or until golden brown. Cook celery, onion & herbs in oil & butter until tender. Combine herbs mix, bread, salt, pepper, and pecans. Add enough broth to moisten. Place in baking dish and heat in 350° oven for 30 minutes or stuff bird and cook immediately.

#### **6. Easy Focaccia Bread with Herbs** (from inspiredtaste.net)

½ cup extra virgin olive oil

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 Tbsp. chopped fresh thyme

1 Tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary

¼ tsp black pepper

1 cup warm water

2 ¼ tsp active dry yeast (1 envelope)

¼ tsp honey

2 ½ cups (350 grams) all-purpose flour

1 tsp salt

In a cold medium saucepan or skillet, combine olive oil, minced garlic, thyme, rosemary and black pepper. Place pan over low heat then cook, stirring occasionally 5 to 10 minutes or until aromatic, but before the garlic browns. Set aside and allow to cool.

In a large bowl, combine the warm water, yeast, and honey. Stir a few times then let sit for 5 minutes. Now, add 1 cup of the flour and a ¼ cup of the infused garlic-olive oil mixture. Stir 3 to 4 times until the flour has moistened. Let sit for another 5 minutes.

Stir in the remaining 1 ½ cups of flour and the salt. Once the dough comes together, transfer to a floured surface and knead the dough 10 to 15 times until smooth. Transfer to a large oiled bowl, cover with plastic or a warm damp towel and let rise for 1 hour. (I set my bowl in a sink of warm water.)

After 1 hour, heat oven to 450° F. Then, use two tablespoons of the remaining garlic-olive oil mixture to oil a 9 X 13 inch baking pan. Transfer dough to the baking pan then press it down into the pan. Use your fingers to dimple the dough then drizzle the top

with the remaining 2 tablespoons of the garlic-olive oil mixture. Let the dough rise for 20 minutes until it puffs slightly then bake 15 to 20 minutes or until golden brown. Transfer focaccia bread to a cooling rack and cool.