

## Finding Some Unusual Herbs to Spirit Up Your Garden

### Say Hello to Some Members of the Basil Family

- **Lettuce Leaf Basil:** - very large, crinkled leaves, make great faux lettuce for sandwiches; use with summer's best juicy tomatoes; layer into lasagna or use for appetizer wraps.
- **Thai Basil** - slender leaves; anise and licorice-like and slightly spicy, is more stable under high or extended cooking temperatures than that of sweet basil, seeds used to thicken Indian and Asian sweets and drinks.
- **Lemon Basil** - leaves tend to be narrower with slightly serrated edges, use in Arabic, Indonesian, Lao, Malay, and Persian and Thai cuisine.
- **Cinnamon Basil** – has distinctive cinnamon aroma; will complement Asian dishes
- **Rosie Basil** – has mild pleasing flavor; deep purple leaves with anise notes; used for decorations and looks attractive in salads
- **Red Genovese** –same aroma and flavor as traditional Genovese; adds color to any dish and makes a gorgeous pesto.

### Look at Flavors from the Other Side of the World

- **Lemon Grass-** tropical island plants in the grass family; used widely as culinary herb in Asian cuisines; subtle citrus flavor; dried, powdered, or use fresh in teas, soups, curries or for beef and seafood.
- **Dwarf Curry** -it has a light curry aroma and attractive feathery leaves; grows on dry, rocky or sandy ground around the Mediterranean; difficult to grow; most recommendations say **DO NOT USE IT IN RECIPES** as it is bitter tasting; might be nice to use as a decorative touch.

### The Herb for All Seasons

- **Summer Savory** is an annual, but similar in use and flavor to the perennial Winter Savory. It's used more often than more bitter flavored winter savory; the main flavoring in fowl dressing, use to make stews and add to meat pies. Summer savory is a characteristic ingredient of herbes de Provence. Summer savory is preferred over winter savory for use in

sausages because it's sweeter, has a more delicate aroma; important in Bulgarian cuisine.

- **Winter Savory** - is a perennial herb; has a strong spicy flavor; goes particularly well with any type of mushroom or in white sauces, and is delicious in potato salads. Use small amounts when adding this herb to a regular salad. It has a rich herbaceous aroma when crushed.

### **Meet a Mild Mint Family Favorite**

- **Kentucky Colonel Mint** – delicious spearmint for Mint Juleps; this mint is by far the most delicious culinary herb with a strong, minty scent. Think about using it for Middle Eastern main dishes, refreshing ice tea, or even apple mint jelly.
- **Lemon Balm** - related to mint family; leaves have lingering lemon scent, refreshing, use in fruit or green salads; use in stuffing, flavor for lamb, pork, chicken or fish. Find it in pickled herring and well-known liqueurs like Chartreuse or Benedictine.

### **Most Photographed**

- **Borage**- Plant has an “herby” beautiful appearance with fuzzy leaves and star-shaped blue flowers. It has a cucumber flavor but if used for a salad, cut the leaves up small because of their hairy whiskers. Use the flowers to float in punch or dip in beaten egg white, dust with sugar to decorate cakes or desserts.

### **A Little French Twist**

- **French Tarragon** –needs well drained soil, sunshine and some shade; has licorice anise aroma and tart lingering flavor; add to French dishes and use to make vinegar for salad dressings.
- **Chervil** – delicate, shade loving, grassy, flavored anise scented, usually blended with other mild herbs.

- **Fresh Fines Herbes** – finely chopped chervil, chives, tarragon, parsley leaves marry well with many dishes. They are used in seasoning delicate dishes such as chicken, fish, and eggs and need a relatively short cooking period.
- **Chives** – smallest member of onion family; enjoy its leaves minced into favorite dishes.

### **The Plant with Two Names**

- **Coriander** is also known as Cilantro. It has a fresh grassy like aroma and clean lemony appetizing taste. The seeds are usually called coriander seeds and taste more like lemon, orange, and sage, entirely different from the leaves. Great in Latin American, Asian, and Middle Eastern recipes.

### **It's Time for Thyme**

- **Thyme – There** about 100 varieties, but you want to use thyme or lemon thyme. The aroma is pungent and warming, with a fresh sharpness. Lemon thyme has an appealing lemon tang. Used in Western and Eastern cuisine for traditional dishes. Adds a wonderful depth of flavor. If you need a flavor, add some thyme.

For more information see Wikipedia.org

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fines\\_herbes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fines_herbes)

*Spice & Herb Bible* by Ian Hemphill and Klate Hemphill

*The Cook's Herb Garden* by Jeff Cox & Marie-Pierre Moine