

Take a look at.....Herbs



What is a herb?

Herbs are a plant with savory or aromatic properties that can be used to add flavour and garnishing to food. They are a good alternative to using salt, which we need to reduce in our diets. Herbs are the leafy parts of plants that do not have woody stems and can be easily grown at home on a windowsill, like the ones above. They can be planted into bigger pots as they grow.

How is a spice different from a herb?

Spices come from the bark, bud fruit, roots, seeds or stems of various plants or trees.

Which are the most popular herbs?

There are many popular herbs. These are 5 of the most popular.

1) Mint

Mint can be used infused in hot water to make refreshing tea, chopped and added to many dishes (lovely with new potatoes and peas), or used to make mint sauce. There are many varieties of mint to choose from with leaves that

smell completely different. It is a vigorous plant that will spread all over if planted straight into the ground. Mint dies back over winter. It can be picked from late spring to mid-autumn. It is best used fresh, but leaves can be preserved for using over the winter. Pick some shoots, wash, add to ice cube trays, fill with water and freeze. Get a cube out as required.

2) Chives

Chives are easy to grow and have a sharp, strong taste. They are great chopped in salads and go well with potatoes and eggs. Their pink flowers are edible and look pretty as garnish for salads. Cut the leaves as required. The more they're cut, the more new leaves will be produced. As with mint, they too can be frozen in ice cubes.

3) Parsley

Full of flavour, parsley leaves are used as a garnish or chopped into sauces, butters, dressings and stuffings. Cut single leaves or bunches low down on the stems and use fresh. It can also be frozen.



4) Thyme

Thyme has a beautiful aromatic foliage, adding a pleasant smell to the air in summer. Its edible leaves are used fresh or dried to flavour soups, stews, fish, meat, sausages, stuffings and vegetable dishes. As they are evergreen, thyme can be picked all year round. Use scissors to snip off sprigs. Use fresh or dried for later use.

5) Basil



This is a very popular herb and essential in Italian cooking. The flavoured leaves are great in tomato dishes and a main ingredient of pesto. Keep plants bushy by pinching the tips of branches regularly. Remove any flowers that start to develop. Remove leaves as required or harvest whole plants if lots are needed for example a sauce.