

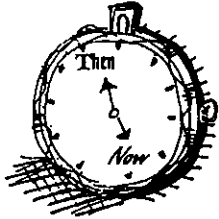
4H
Ontario



Ontario 4-H Council

SPICE of LIFE

Herbs and spices
have a long
flavourful history!



Learn all about it ~

~ get gardening ~



~ cook up a storm ~



~ eat some
fine foods ~



~ and make
some
cool
crafts!

Learn lots! Have fun!

4-H SPICE OF LIFE

(The **ZESTY** new project
from 4-H Ontario)

Leaders' Guide



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The Ontario 4-H Program provides opportunities for the personal development of youth.

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THE 4-H PLEDGE

"I pledge
My HEAD to clearer thinking,
My HEART to greater loyalty,
My HANDS to larger service,
My HEALTH to better living,
For my club, my community and my country."

KIDS HELP PHONE



On the inside cover of the Members' Manual, you will see the Kids Help Phone logo and number. Kids Help Phone is available to more than 7 million children and teenagers throughout Canada. It is a national, bilingual, confidential, toll-free helpline staffed by paid, trained professionals.

Kids Help Phone provides a listening ear, emotional support, counselling, information and referrals. Children and teens can call about anything that is bothering them, including: abuse; drugs; alcohol; conflicts with parents, friends or teachers; pregnancy; sexuality; suicide; parental separation and divorce.

Please mention this number to your members and explain what it is for. Make sure they know that it is free and they don't have to give a name or address.

The Kids Help Phone gets 1,000 calls a day — 2,000 more callers get a busy signal. If you or your club or someone you know would like to make a donation to the Kids Help Phone, call 1-800-268-3062.

BE A "GREEN 4-H CLUB"

The 4-H Program uses a lot of paper. Please help us reduce costs and save a few trees by remembering these tips:

- Only 4-H members (ages 10-21) and screened volunteers should receive 4-H resources.
- If you do not plan to lead this project again, please pass on this Leaders' Guide to the next volunteer.
- Please photocopy only those resources you require.

WELCOME TO 4-H!

It has been said many times that volunteer 4-H leaders are a blend of friend, mentor, teacher and parent. What a big role to fill! But you will discover that you have many, many talents as a 4-H leader. Having an interest in youth and their development and having a willingness to take up the challenge of 4-H leadership are the first steps toward success.

Welcome to "The Spice of Life"! — a 4-H project designed to introduce members to the production and use of herbs and spices. This is not an exhaustive project on any aspect of herbs and spices. It is intended to raise the members' interest to learn more about this broad and exciting field. Throughout the project, members are referred to other resources to help them learn more.

This project provides background information on different herbs and spices as well as common ones grown in Ontario, how to harvest and preserve them, and how to use herbs and spices in cooking, crafts and relaxation.

Leaders are encouraged to invite senior members to assist them with many aspects of the delivery of this project. Seek out volunteers who may have a special interest in the different parts of this project (i.e., gardening experts, chefs, nutritionists, food advisors, art teachers, aromatherapy practitioners, etc.) and invite them to share their knowledge with the club.

BEFORE THE PROJECT BEGINS, VOLUNTEERS WILL...:

- Familiarize yourself with current provincial and local 4-H policies;
- Attend a leader training session (if scheduled);
- Advertise the project and organize a club with a minimum of 6 eligible members and 1 volunteer leader per club (except in cases deemed to be unique and approved by the local 4-H association);
- Review available resources and begin planning the club program.

DURING THE PROJECT, VOLUNTEERS WILL...:

- Attend each meeting and the Achievement Program;
- Assist members in planning and presenting the club program;
- Provide a FUN atmosphere in which members can learn and make new friends;
- Ensure the club membership list is completed and membership fees are collected. Forward these to the designated person in your area before the second meeting.
- Order awards and project name plates once membership list is completed;
- Help each member to set and achieve goals for personal development;
- Encourage members to work together as a group;
- Provide guidance in choosing and completing an Achievement Program;
- Evaluate the club program and share results with the 4-H Association.

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE

- Meeting 1: What's a Herb? What's a Spice?
- Meeting 2: Garden Seasoning
- Meeting 3: From Garden to Spice Rack
- Meeting 4: A Taste of Herbs and Spices
- Meeting 5: Craft Gallery
- Meeting 6: Rest & Relaxation

Two factors will guide you as you deliver this project: (1) the time of year, and (2) the interest of the club members. Many of the activities in this guide are best conducted in late spring to early fall. However, the Season Planner (page Intro-6) will help you to identify activities that are season-specific or those that may be done at any time of the year. You are encouraged to select activities that are seasonally appropriate and to focus your time and activities according to your members' interests.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Spice of Life Project include:

1. To increase awareness, understanding and knowledge of a variety of herbs and spices.
2. To provide members with an overview of herbs and spices, their origins and uses, both traditional and cultural.
3. To provide members with the knowledge to identify a variety of common herbs and spices.
4. To provide members with the knowledge and skills to grow herbs in indoor pots and in outdoor gardens.
5. To provide members with the knowledge and skills to preserve and store herbs and spices.
6. To provide members with the knowledge and skills to use herbs and spices in cooking and craft activities.
7. To introduce members to some cosmetic and therapeutic uses of herbs and spices.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT MEETING 4

Please note that Meeting 4 is designed to be a picnic activity with food preparation followed by picnic-style eating. It is important that you read the 'Picnic Planner' section of the Leaders' Guide (page 5) before you begin this project. There are a number of preparations that you and your club may wish to undertake well before the Meeting 4 picnic activity.

Depending on which activity your club chooses, a variety of equipment is required. Please review the equipment lists to start collecting items for the club. You may want to begin collecting small bottles with lids and empty shampoo bottles. Encourage your members to begin collecting these and other items. Hang onto your old phonebooks, too.

SEASON PLANNER FOR ACTIVITIES

The following activities may need to be changed due to time of year that the club is offered:

- Meeting 2: Guest Speaker and Demonstration (presentation part only)
- Meeting 3: Herb Drying Demonstration — may need to get herbs from local grocers, according to availability, instead of from your garden
- Meeting 4: Alternative to picnic, if event not held in summer (e.g. a chili cook-off)
- Meeting 5: Herbal Sun-Catcher, Herbal Wreath, Garden Potpourri — may need to purchase herb for craft

PICNIC PLANNER

In Meeting 4, you will have the option to hold a picnic, which will include a number of dishes prepared with herbs and spices. Several picnic-friendly recipes have been included in both the *Leaders' Guide* and the *Members' Manual*, and a menu is presented on page 24 of this guide. This is the recommended menu, but if the required ingredients are not in season or locally available (or are found to be a bit pricey), ask your club to work out an alternative menu.

The club members may wish to invite their friends to join your club during this meeting. The following Picnic Planning instructions are written with this possibility in mind. However, if your club is undertaking an ambitious achievement activity, you may want to make the picnic a less ambitious event. Making it a members-only picnic would be one way to ease the workload.

Picnic Planner: At Meeting 1

1. Announce to the club that Meeting 4 will include a picnic and that the members may each invite one friend. (Encourage them to invite a friend who may be interested in becoming involved with 4-H.)
2. Ask your club to choose a site. A community kitchen or high school home economics room would work well for this activity. Check out a few sites in advance to suggest to the club.
3. Ask the members to decide what sorts of activities they would like to have at the picnic. Ask a senior member to record these and to be in charge of co-ordinating the organization of and equipment for the activities.

Picnic Planner: At Meeting 1 (continued)

4. Ask a senior member to prepare invitations and to make enough copies so that each member has an extra to give to a friend. The invitations should state the following:
 - date
 - time (Depending on available space, you may wish to ask guests to help participate in the food preparation. Otherwise, ask guests to arrive about 1-1/2 hours after the meeting and food preparation begin.)
 - location
 - brief description
 - directions to the site
 - any special equipment or clothing the guests should bring (e.g. ball gloves, sun hats, sunscreen)

Picnic Planner: Before Meeting 2

1. Book the picnic site, if necessary. Plan where you will eat in case of bad weather.
2. Book the kitchen.
3. Arrange for tables and chairs, if necessary. (Picnic blankets are an option, too.) You may need to ask each member to bring two lawn chairs.

Picnic Planner: At Meeting 2

1. Distribute invitations and ask members to let you know the number of guests at the next meeting (Meeting 3).
2. Invite a senior member to prepare a list of items for each member to bring to the picnic, and to make one copy for each member. The list might include:
 - lawn chairs (2)
 - plates, cups, bowls, cutlery (for each member and his/her guest)
 - hat and sunscreen if the picnic is outdoors
 - equipment needed for activities (ball gloves, etc.)A copy of this list will be given to each member at Meeting 3 to remind them what they need to bring.

Picnic Planner: At Meeting 3

1. Finalize plans for the picnic.
2. Inform the members of the time they are to arrive and confirm that all parents and guardians have given their consent for this event (if held at an irregular time or location). Allow additional time for travel between the kitchen and the picnic site, if necessary.
3. Estimate the number of people who will attend your event. Ask a senior member to help you to change the recipes to feed this number of people. Then, ask the senior member to prepare a grocery list for the event.
4. Invite two senior members to help supervise and co-ordinate the event. One member should work in the kitchen, overseeing the preparation of food. The other member should work outside, co-ordinating the set-up of the picnic area and the games, activities, etc. Provide the kitchen overseer with a copy of the 'Picnic Preparation Teams' on page 25 of this guide.
5. Distribute lists of things to bring.

Picnic Planner: The Week Before the Picnic

1. Ask a senior member to confirm the booking of the picnic site and kitchen facilities. To make the picnic run smoothly, it is recommended that the kitchen facilities are at the same location as the picnic site.
2. Arrange transportation from the kitchen to the picnic site, if necessary.
3. Purchase food for the picnic. Be prepared for at least one member to bring more than one friend. If drivers are required, you may wish to arrange to feed them as well.

IF YOU ARE CONDUCTING THIS PROJECT DURING THE FALL OR WINTER...

You may wish to change the theme to a skating or toboggan party, and change the menu to include some more seasonal ingredients. Hosting a district chili cook-off competition is one way you can hook up with other clubs, and explore the flavours of a variety of herbs and spices.

Many Websites offer guidance on how to organize a chili cook-off — www.chili.org/chili.html is one of them; for others, try 'chili' and 'competition' in the key word search.

Clubs should use a basic recipe and vary it according to their own ideas and tastes (with a few basic guidelines and rules, of course). Local celebrities could be invited to taste-test and judge this competition. Then, combined with a menu of garlic bread, caesar salad and hot mulled cider (all recipes with lots of herbs and spices in them!), you could hold a feast for all participants. Recipes for chili, caesar salad and mulled cider are included in this guide.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES: GOING HERB- AND SPICE-CRAZY!

1. Your club won't have time to complete all of the activities put forth in the Members' Manual. Invite members to complete, on their own, any of the activities that your club did not have the opportunity to do in the meetings.
2. Invite members to develop their own herbal salad dressings and ask them to bring these to the picnic.
3. Invite members to design and build their own unique herb drying rack; suggest they try using only salvaged materials, or materials found in nature.
4. Invite the members, on their own or in a small group, to write a short one-act play about some aspect of herbal lore or the history of herbs and spices. Invite them to present this play to the rest of the group.
5. Invite members to make their own decorative containers for dried herbs and spices.
6. Invite the members to design and build a kitchen spice rack.

WHAT IS AN ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM?

- ! An opportunity for members to share with others the knowledge and skills they have gained during this 4-H project.
- ! An activity that involves each member in some way.
- ! A chance to inform the public about the purpose and goals of the 4-H program.

Achievement Program ideas specific to this project are suggested below. Your club may wish to choose one idea or combine a few. Involve the members in choosing the right activity and in preparing for it. Contact the local newspaper or radio station to tell them about your activity (the date, time and where it will be held). Send out a personal invitation to the group you plan to invite to the achievement program. Remember to include parents/guardians and/or family members.

Achievement Program Ideas

The Achievement Program is an opportunity to give 4-H exposure in the community-at-large. Keep this in mind as you plan your activities. This is very important for many reasons — including attracting new members and volunteers to 4-H.

Here are a few suggestions for your club:

1. Start a community garden for the residents of a local seniors' home, hospital or school. Get the residents involved in the planning, design, building and ongoing care of the garden. Set it up so that it will be maintained.
2. Organize a container garden competition with neighbouring clubs.
3. Set up a demonstration herb garden in your community. Design it to be as low-maintenance as possible, but set up a system to keep it maintained. Include signage so that it will become an educational resource for the community.
4. Organize an outdoor garden design competition with neighbouring clubs. Divide a plot of land into as many portions as necessary and have each club design, plant and nurture a herb garden.
5. Organize a craft sale to raise money for your club (or another good cause).
6. Hold a craft day at a senior citizens' home. Teach seniors some of your favourite herbal crafts.
7. Organize a chili cook-off at the community level. Invite local celebrities to judge your chili entries. Sell tickets to those who wish to sample your creations.
8. Organize a tour of local herb and spice gardens. The Royal Botanical Gardens (Hamilton, Ontario) and Richters Herb Specialists (Goodwood, Ontario) may also be good sites to visit.

4-H CLUB PROGRAM PLANNING

A successful 4-H club doesn't just happen! Careful planning is key. As a 4-H leader, you have a responsibility to do the best job you can in providing a fun, learning experience for the 4-H members. Planning will help this happen!

The 4-H Volunteers' Handbook has lots of valuable information to help you and your members plan a successful club program. Refer to 'The 4-H Meeting' section of your handbook for tips on planning great meetings, effective communication, games, judging and special events. The chart on the next page of this guide can be used to record your plans.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Many additional resources, including book references and Website addresses, are found throughout this guide and in the Members' Manual.

Books:

Coleman, Eliot, "Four Season Harvest", Camden East, Ontario: Old Bridge Press, 1992

Lima, Patrick, "The Harrowsmith Illustrated Book of Herbs", Camden East, Ontario: Camden House Publishing, 1986

Marshall Bradley, Fern and Ellis, Barbara, eds., "Rodale's All-New Encyclopedia of Organic Gardening", Emmaus, Pennsylvania: Rodale Press, 1992

McClure, Susan, "The Herb Gardener: A Guide for All Seasons", Pownall, Vermont: Garden Way Publishing, 1996

Pickles, Sheila, "The Language of Herbs", London: Pavilion Books Ltd., 1996

Websites:

Seeds of Diversity — www.seeds.ca

Evergreen Foundation — www.evergreen.ca

Other Resources:

McCormick Canada Inc. offers the following information:

- A toll-free number for inquiries on McCormick Canada Inc. products: 1-800-265-2600, weekdays from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. EST
- Free Spice and Herb Chart (while quantities last)
- Free Recipes using McCormick Canada Inc. Products (vary depending on season and promotions)

FEEDBACK

Comments and suggestions about 4-H manuals and guides are always welcome. Please send your feedback to: 4-H Resource Development Committee, Ontario 4-H Council

RR#5 Guelph, Ontario N1H 6J2

Phone/Fax: 1-800-937-5161; E-mail: lduke@ntl.sympatico.ca

Website: www.4-hontario.ca

4-H Club Program Planning Chart

(Copy as many as required for each year)

| Meeting or Event | Date | Topic, Activity or Task | People Who Could Help | Presentation Ideas to Consider |
|------------------|------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
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MEETING 1: WHAT'S A HERB? WHAT'S A SPICE?

| | |
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Leader's Notes:

MEETING 1: WHAT'S A HERB? WHAT'S A SPICE?

OBJECTIVES

1. To increase awareness, understanding and knowledge of a variety of herbs and spices.
2. To provide members with the knowledge to identify a variety of common herbs and spices.
3. To provide members with an overview of herbs and spices, their origins and uses, both traditional and cultural.

IN A NUTSHELL

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 25 minutes | Getting Started |
| 20 minutes | A Road Map to Good Meetings |
| 10 minutes | Meeting Mixer |
| 5 minutes | Roll Call |
| 25 minutes | Discussion of Meeting Mixer Back-to-Back Guessing Activity |
| 10 minutes | Understanding the Differences Between Herbs and Spices |
| 10 minutes | Picnic Planner |
| 5 minutes | Before the Next Meeting |
| 110 minutes | Total Time |

PREPARATION & EQUIPMENT

MEETING MIXER

- Straight pins and small pieces of paper (or cards) — one per member. On the paper (or cards), write the names of herbs and spices listed in the chart titled 'Some Common Herbs and Spices'.

DISCUSSION of Meeting Mixer

- One or more trays with labeled samples of the herbs and spices (both fresh and dried, if possible) listed in the chart titled 'Some Common Herbs and Spices'.

BACK-TO-BACK: Guessing Activity

- One paper plate per member, plus a variety of herbs and spices.

- Markers & flipchart or large sheets of paper.

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HERBS & SPICES

Note — Your club may wish to sample a few herb and spice delights at the onset of this club. Try serving spiced squares or cookies, herbed cream cheese (with crackers), herbed muffins, or pesto and red pepper dips.

GETTING STARTED

(25 minutes)

- Make up name tags for the members. Greet the members as they arrive and ask them to find their name tag.
- Begin with the 4-H Pledge. Post a copy so everyone can see it.
- Complete member list.
- Circulate the '4-H Health and Safety Agreement' (see 4-H Volunteer Handbook) and have members ask their parents to complete and return it.
- Club member sign
- Distribute the Members' Manuals
- Discuss the members' requirements for the project (see page Intro-2 of the Members' Manual)
- Present the different Achievement Program ideas and discuss with members. Consider type of event, date, time and location.
- Outline the various opportunities members can take part in (see Opportunities Selection Guide).

A ROAD MAP TO GOOD MEETINGS

(20 minutes)

It is important for everyone to become familiar with the basics of running a good meeting. Review with members the purpose of an agenda and the executive's responsibilities. Have the club members elect an executive. Two helpful aids are the 4-H Volunteers' Handbook and the OMAFRA Factsheet, Procedures for Meetings (89-095).

MEETING MIXER

(10 minutes)

Pin one herb/spice card on the back of each member's shirt, being careful not to let the members see which herb or spice is on their own backs. Members may then ask one yes-or-no question per member, in an attempt to guess the name of their herbs and spices. The types of questions include: "Is the plant green?" "Does it have a very spicy smell?" As the members guess correctly, have them sit down. To help them determine their herb or spice, members may need a copy of the chart, 'Some Common Herbs and Spices'.

ROLL CALL

(5 minutes)

What is your favourite herb or spice? How did you last use it?

Choose one of the 2 following activities to conduct with your club:

1. Discussion based on Meeting Mixer (25 minutes)

Place trays of herbs and spices in various parts of your meeting room. Ask members to circulate to inspect each tray. Encourage members to look, smell, touch and taste each herb and spice. Once members have explored all the trays, ask the following questions for several of the herbs and spices:

- a) Did you smell the ROSEMARY? What did it smell like? Did it remind you of anything else?
- b) Did you taste the ROSEMARY? What did it taste like? Did you like it?
- c) What part of the plant do you think it came from?
- d) How do you think ROSEMARY is used?

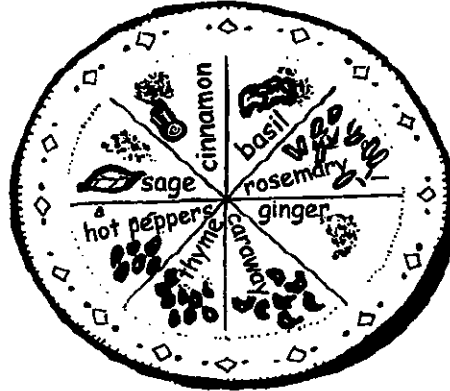
TRY THIS VARIATION:

This activity may also be conducted as a sort of scavenger hunt. Using trays of herbs and spices, members may be asked to find and name herbs and spices that are used in specific ways (or that smell, taste, look and feel a certain way). For example:

- Find something that smells like pizza (e.g., oregano, basil)
- Find something that looks like pine needles (e.g., rosemary)
- Find something that tastes like your favourite cookie (e.g., ginger or cinnamon)
- Find something that feels soft and feathery (e.g., sage)
- Find something you might use in bath oil or cologne (e.g., lavender)

2. Back-to-Back — Guessing Activity (25 minutes)

Using a ballpoint pen, mark 8 pie-shaped spaces (as you would cut a pie) on each paper plate — one plate per member. In each space, write the name of one herb or spice. On each plate, you should have the names of 4 herbs and 4 spices. Place a pinch of each herb or spice in the corresponding space on each paper plate.



1. Ask members to form pairs, and to sit back-to-back. Give each member a paper spice plate.
2. One member from each pair will now describe one herb or spice to his or her partner. The other member will try to guess which item is being described. Both members should be invited to rely on their senses of taste, sight, smell and touch to describe and guess the individual herbs and spices.

EXAMPLE: "The item I am describing tastes 'hot'. It is the colour 'orange'. It feels 'powdery'. It smells quite 'strong'." The guessing member can try each item on the plate to determine which herb or spice is being described.

3. Once a member is able to correctly guess a described herb or spice, the 'guessing' member becomes the 'describing' member and will describe another item for the other person to try to guess.
4. Have the member pairs switch back and forth between guessing and describing until all the herbs and spices on the plate have been identified. When all members have completed this activity, ask members to regroup and discuss the different qualities of the herbs and spices they have been describing.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- Did the members enjoy the flavours of these herbs and spices?
- Were there any herbs and spices that they strongly disliked?
- How would they use these herbs and spices in their cooking?
- Would they use any of these items in a perfume or bubble bath? Why or why not?

**UNDERSTANDING
THE
DIFFERENCES
BETWEEN
HERBS & SPICES**
(10 minutes)

Referring to the chart, 'Some Common Herbs and Spices', and based on the previous discussion, each member must decide whether the label pinned to his or her back (from the Meeting Mixer activity) is a herb or a spice.

Ask individual members:

- Do you have a herb or a spice?
- Why? (Probe by asking what part of the plant it came from, what it tasted like, and how it is used.)

Write their answers on a large piece of paper with a blank copy of the 'Herb or Spice Table' (provided on pages 8-9).

After all members have responded, ask the group if it can list a few guidelines to distinguish between a herb and a spice (e.g., leaves and flowers tend to be herbs; bark and roots tend to be spices; seeds may be herbs or spices, depending on their pungency).

Some Common Herbs and Spices

| Herb/Spice | Looks & Tastes | Culinary Uses | Origins | Grown in Ontario? |
|-------------------|--|--|---|-------------------|
| BASIL | Dark green leaves have fresh, aromatic flavour | Use leaves in salads, salad dressings, pesto, tomato sauce | Southern Asia, Middle East | Yes |
| BAY LEAF | Large, dull green leaves (dried) with subtle, spicy flavour | Use leaves in soups, stews, sauces | Middle East, Southern Europe | |
| BLACK PEPPERCORNS | Small, black, dried berries with mildly hot flavour | Use ground berries to give cooking a spicy 'kick' | South Asia | |
| CARAWAY | Dried seeds are long, thin & dark brown, with aromatic, spicy flavour. Leaves are feathery with mild licorice flavour. | Seeds are used to flavour cakes, breads, soups, stews & meats. Fresh young leaves may also be used as salad greens. | Temperate areas of Asia (e.g., Iran & Turkey) | |
| CHIVES | Long, thin, tubular leaves and pink or purple flowers. Onion-like flavour. | Leaves used fresh or dried in salads or as a seasoning (e.g., on baked potatoes). Flowers can be used fresh (in salads) or to flavour vinegar for salad dressings. | Unknown | Yes |
| CINNAMON | Bark used to make brown powder, flakes ('quillings') or rolled sticks. Pungent, sweet, spicy flavour. | Bark used in baking (especially with apples), but may also be used with meat stews (especially lamb) and Indian curries. | Sri Lanka | |
| CURRY | Yellow to orange powder or paste. Characteristic of Indian cuisine; spicy and usually quite hot, curry is actually a blend of turmeric, ginger, pepper, coriander, cumin, chilies, cloves, cinnamon & nutmeg. | Powder or paste used to flavour meat, fish and vegetable dishes. | India | |
| DILL | Feathery green leaves have a distinctive flavour characteristic of dill pickles. Seeds are small, flat, oval, greenish-brown, with a strong licorice taste. | Leaves used in soups, breads, salads, dips and fish dishes. Seeds used in breads, stews and with cabbage & root vegetables. | Eastern Mediterranean, Western Asia | Yes |
| GARLIC | White and/or purple bulb with papery skin. Bulb may be broken into segments (cloves) and peeled. Cloves have pungent, aromatic flavour and aroma. | Cloves may be used whole, chopped or crushed. Flavours soups, sauces, salad dressings and meat dishes. | Central Asia, near Caspian Sea | Yes |

(continued on next page...)

Some Common Herbs and Spices (continued)

| Herb/Spice | Looks & Tastes | Culinary Uses | Origins | Grown in Ontario? |
|-------------|--|--|--|-------------------|
| GINGER | Knobby, branched root with thin, brown skin; yellow inside. Fresh, sweet, spicy flavour. | Use dried or fresh, ginger root in desserts or other sweet dishes, as well as in curries, stews, stir-fry & meat dishes. | Tropical Asia | |
| HOT PEPPERS | Various sizes, shapes & colours (green, red, yellow, orange). Usually smaller than bell peppers. Hot, spicy flavour. | Pepper & seeds used to add 'fire' to soups and stews. Regular ingredient in Mexican and Indian foods. | Latin America | Yes |
| NUTMEG | Whole nutmeg is a slightly oblong, 3 cm-long, brown nut with sweet, spicy flavour. | Used ground in cheese & spinach dishes, cakes, eggnog, custard & fruit dishes. | East Indies | |
| OREGANO | Rich, aromatic, green-leafed herb | Use leaves, fresh or dried, to flavour soups, stews, sauces; great in Italian tomato sauces | Mediterranean Europe | Yes |
| PAPRIKA | Dried, ground flesh of hot or sweet red peppers | Use to season eggs, meat & poultry stews, fish, soups, vegetables, rice & cream sauces. | Mexico and now grown mainly in Spain & Hungary | |
| PARSLEY | Subtly aromatic, leafy green; small, curly or flat leaves (depending on variety) | Use leaves (dried or fresh) in omelettes, salads, soups & pasta dishes. Garnish may be used to freshen breath. | Southern Europe | Yes |
| ROSEMARY | Aromatic herb with needle-like leaves and small, light blue flowers | Use leaves to flavour meat dishes, tomato sauces, potato dishes & breads. | Mediterranean Europe | Yes |
| SAGE | Silvery grey leaves; aromatic, spicy flavour. | Leaves often used in chicken dishes and to flavour soups. | Mediterranean Europe | Yes |
| THYME | Small leaves of various colours (green, silvery grey, yellow-green, white-green) | Leaves used in meat dishes and salad dressings | Mediterranean Europe | Yes |

Some Common Herbs and Spices

| Herb/Spice | Looks & Tastes | Culinary Uses | Origins | Grown in Ontario? |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------|---------|-------------------|
| BASIL | | | | |
| BAY LEAF | | | | |
| BLACK PEPPERCORNS | | | | |
| CARAWAY | | | | |
| CHIVES | | | | |
| CINNAMON | | | | |
| CURRY | | | | |
| DILL | | | | |
| GARLIC | | | | |

(continued on next page...)

Some Common Herbs and Spices (continued)

| Herb/Spice | Looks & Tastes | Culinary Uses | Origins | Grown in Ontario? |
|-------------|----------------|---------------|---------|-------------------|
| GINGER | | | | |
| HOT PEPPERS | | | | |
| NUTMEG | | | | |
| OREGANO | | | | |
| PAPRIKA | | | | |
| PARSLEY | | | | |
| ROSEMARY | | | | |
| SAGE | | | | |
| THYME | | | | |

Herb or Spice Table

(Leaders' Key for Activity: 'Understanding the Differences Between Herbs & Spices')

| Type | Part of Plant | Herb or Spice? |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| BASIL | Leaf | Herb |
| BAY LEAF | Leaf | Herb |
| BLACK PEPPERCORNS | Dried Berry | Spice |
| CARAWAY | Seed | Spice |
| CHIVES | Leaf | Herb |
| CINNAMON | Bark | Spice |
| CURRY | Mixture of seeds, roots & bark | Spice |
| DILL | Leaf | Herb |
| GARLIC | Bulb | Herb or Spice |
| GINGER | Root | Spice |
| HOT PEPPERS | Dried Fruit | Spice |
| NUTMEG | Seed | Spice |
| OREGANO | Leaf | Herb |
| PAPRIKA | Dried Fruit | Spice |
| PARSLEY | Leaf | Herb |
| ROSEMARY | Leaf | Herb |
| SAGE | Leaf | Herb |
| THYME | Leaf | Herb |

PICNIC PLANNER

At Meeting 1

1. Announce to the club that Meeting 4 will include a picnic and that the members may each invite one friend. (Encourage them to invite a friend who may be interested in becoming involved with 4-H.)
2. Ask your club to choose a site. A community kitchen or high school home economics room would work well for this activity. Have a few sites checked out in advance to suggest to the club.
3. Ask the members to decide what sorts of activities they'd like to have at the picnic. Ask a senior member to record these suggestions and to be in charge of co-ordinating the organization of and equipment for the activities.
4. Ask a senior member to prepare invitations and to make enough copies so that each member has one to give to a friend. The invitations should state the following:
 - date
 - time (Depending on space available, you may wish to ask your guests to participate in the food preparation. Otherwise, ask guests to arrive approximately 1-1/2 hours after the meeting and food preparation begin.)
 - location
 - brief description
 - directions to the site
 - any special equipment or clothing the guests should bring (e.g., ball gloves, sun hats, sunscreen)

Before Meeting 2

1. Book the picnic site, if necessary. Plan where you will eat in case of bad weather.
2. Book the kitchen.
3. Arrange for tables and chairs, if necessary. (Picnic blankets are an option, too.) You may need to ask each member to bring two lawn chairs.

**BEFORE THE
NEXT MEETING**
(5 minutes)

Ask members to look for information on herbs and spices in and around their homes (in gardening books, cookbooks, in gardens, etc.). Members should bring this information to the next meeting for the roll call activity.

Instruct all members to bring to the next meeting a container suitable for planting. Refer to page 12 of *Meeting 2 in the Members' Manual* for information on suitable containers. For the purposes of this next activity, containers should be about 20cm x 20cm.

If your club plans to hold Meeting 2 in a garden centre (as part of a field trip, for example), arrange transportation, meeting time and permission from parents or guardians.

With the group, decide on an appropriate token of thanks for next week's guest speaker. Arrange for one or more of the members to prepare or purchase the gift, and for one member to introduce the speaker, and another member to thank the speaker.

MEETING 2: GARDEN SEASONING

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Objectives | page 13 |
| In a Nutshell | page 13 |
| Preparation and Equipment | page 13 |
| Roll Call | page 14 |
| Guest Speaker | page 14 |
| Outdoor Garden Plan | page 14 |
| Achievement Activity (Optional) | page 17 |
| Picnic Planner | page 17 |
| Before the Next Meeting | page 17 |

Leader's Notes:



MEETING 2: GARDEN SEASONING

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide members with the knowledge and skills to grow herbs in indoor pots and outdoor gardens.
2. To help members become familiar with the cultivation, harvesting and use of a variety of herbs.

IN A NUTSHELL

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| 5 minutes | Roll Call |
| 70 minutes | Guest Speaker (and Demonstrations) |
| 15 minutes | Outdoor Garden Plan |
| Optional | Achievement Program Planning |
| 10 minutes | Picnic Planner |
| 5 minutes | Before the Next Meeting |
| 105 minutes | Total Time |

PREPARATION & EQUIPMENT

GUEST SPEAKER (and Demonstrations)

Arrangements should be made well ahead of this meeting. Approach potential speakers and garden centres at least 1 month ahead of time.

A garden centre may be willing to donate materials such as soil, seeds and containers. Consider why it would be of value to their company to support 4-H in this way. This will form the basis of your approach to ask them to speak to the club.

GARDEN PLANNING

- Arrange for guest speaker (from a local garden centre or gardening club) to lead an interactive demonstration on seed starting, transplanting and growing requirements for some common herbs. Alternatively, the club could visit the garden centre and conduct the activity there.
- Three litres of potting soil per member, gravel, a variety of herb seedlings (5 to 7 types) and seeds (ensure that those selected are from herbs known to start well from seed) — your guest speaker should provide some assistance in the selection of these herbs.
- Extra containers for forgetful members
- Potting tools (trowels, etc.), water in watering cans
- Large workspace — preferably outdoors, but have an indoor location as back-up in case of bad weather
- Small token of thanks for the guest speaker
- Four or more sheets of large paper or flipchart paper
- Coloured markers

ROLL CALL

(5 minutes)

Name a herb or spice you found growing in or around your home.
Name a herb or spice that you would like to grow. Why?

GUEST SPEAKER

(70 minutes)

Ask a member (selected at last meeting) to introduce the guest speaker. If possible, the guest should provide a short biography in advance.

The guest speaker may then lead the club in a demonstration of techniques involved in seed starting and seedling transplanting, with special consideration to the growing requirements of individual herbs. The speaker will also lead the members in designing and planting their own container gardens.

If the meeting is held at a garden centre, it may be possible to include a tour of the greenhouses and other facilities.

At the end of the demonstration, ask one of the members to thank the guest speaker and to present him or her with a small gift.

OUTDOOR GARDEN PLAN

(15 minutes)

Divide members into 4 groups, with at least one senior member per group, if possible. Ask them to use the information presented on pages 9-10 of the Members' Manual to design an outdoor herb and spice garden. You may wish to present a quick overview of these points (see page 15) to your club. Garden designs should be sketched with coloured markers on sheets of flipchart paper. Gardening and herb books provide good examples and suggestions for garden designs.

Invite each group to describe their garden to the rest of the club. Ask them to respond to the following:

- Why did you choose this layout?
- Why did you choose these types of plants?
- Is there a theme in your garden?

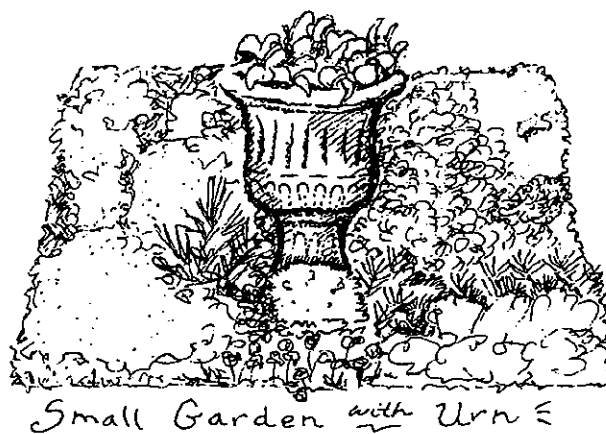
To the overall group, ask if anyone has anything to add or suggest.

Points to consider as your members design their gardens:

1. **Get your creative juices flowing.** Gardening books are an excellent place to begin picturing your ideas (visions) — giving you neat ideas to explore in your own herbal beds.
2. **Start small.** Think along the lines of a 5-year plan and let your garden grow with your knowledge and experience.
3. **Consider the style, or look, you're aiming for.** Keep this in the back of your mind as you set your design and select your plants.
4. **Consider the size required for your garden.** How big an area do you want? Can you maintain it easily? Will it be an area that you will need permission to use?
5. **Pick a sunny site with good, well-drained soil.** If this is not available, choose a shady site with poor soil. Almost nothing can thwart the efforts of a determined gardener (armed with some shade-tolerant herbs and a little compost, that is!).

The Kidney-shaped Garden lends an informal air, while the Small Garden with Urn provides a strong central focal point.

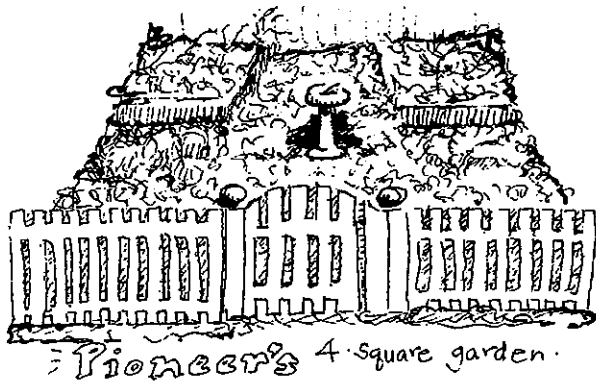
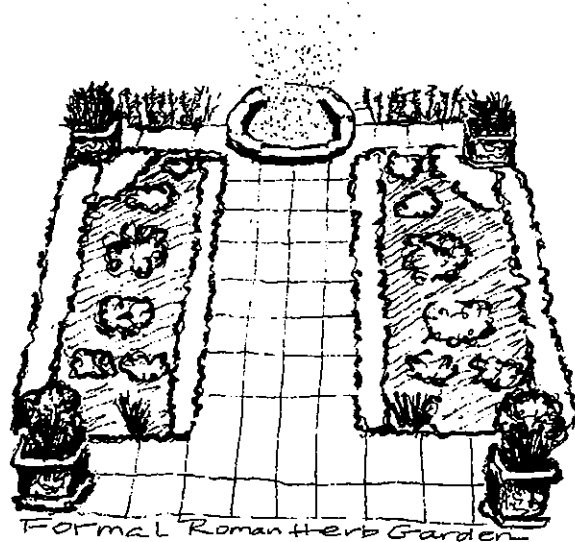
6. **Measure your site and sketch it on squared grid paper** (you might encourage members to do this before Meeting 2). Do not let the squares limit the shape of your garden — circles, ovals and octagons are some of the countless possibilities.
7. **Draw your design scheme.** Here are some examples of garden design ideas to get you thinking:



DESIGNING AN OUTDOOR HERB GARDEN

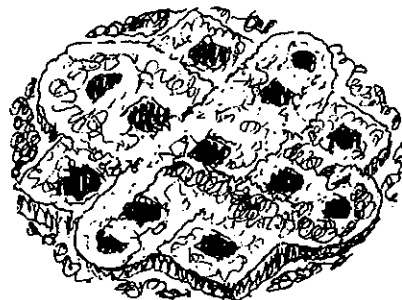
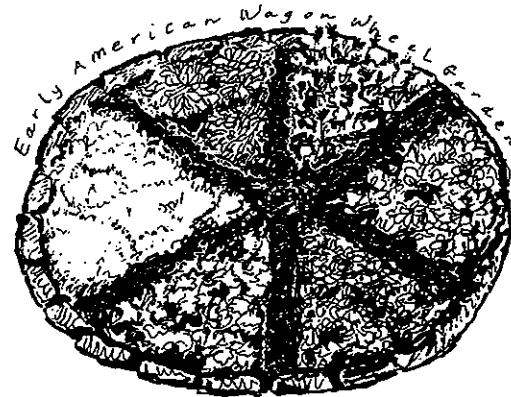
(Continued)

This Formal Roman Herb Garden features containers at the 4 corners and a small fountain at the far end.



The Pioneer's 4-Square Garden is surrounded by a white picket fence.

The Early American Wagon Wheel design uses the spokes of a wheel to create pie-shaped wedges for herb plantings. Bricks or stones could also be used to define the space; then simply fill in with your choice of herbs.



The first Knot Gardens were made 500 years ago. There are many variations in pattern and design; devise your own!

8. **Placement.** Position individual plants, pathways, seating areas and garden ornaments. Give consideration to:
- colour
 - plant height
 - flowering sequence
 - access to herbs you intend to harvest.
- Note the types of materials you intend to use for your pathways (such as mulch, inlaid brick, stones, wood blocks, etc.).

The following books are just a few among many that could help your club develop ideas on garden design:

1. "The Herb Gardener: A Guide for All Seasons" by Susan McClure
2. "Fresh Herbs" by Barbara Radcliffe Rogers

ACHIEVEMENT ACTIVITY

(Optional)

Use this time to plan and prepare for your achievement activity.

PICNIC PLANNER

(10 minutes)

1. Distribute invitations and ask members to let you know at the next meeting (Meeting 3) how many guests they will be inviting to the picnic.
2. Invite a senior member to prepare a list of items for each member to bring to the picnic, and to make one copy of the list for each member. The list might include:

- lawn chairs (2)
- plates, cups, bowls, cutlery (for each member plus guest)
- hat and sunscreen if picnic is outdoors
- equipment needed for activities (ball gloves, etc.)

A copy of this list will be given to each member at Meeting 3.

BEFORE THE NEXT MEETING

(5 minutes)

Ask each member to bring 2 small (about 200 ml), clean bottles or jars to the next meeting. These bottles/jars should seal well (screw-cap is best) and preferably be somewhat decorative. These will be used to make herb and spice oils and vinegars.

Ask members to bring a variety of flowers and herbs (for drying) to the next meeting.

MEETING 3: FROM GARDEN TO SPICE RACK

| | |
|--|---------|
| Objective | page 18 |
| In a Nutshell | page 18 |
| Preparation and Equipment | page 18 |
| Roll Call | page 19 |
| Herb Drying Demonstration | page 19 |
| Judging Activity | page 19 |
| Dried and Pressed Ornamental Herbs | page 20 |
| • Pressed Herbs | page 20 |
| • Dried, Hanging Herbs | page 21 |
| Making Herb & Spice Vinegars | page 21 |
| • Good Solo Herbs & Spices for Vinegar | page 22 |
| • Good Herb-and-Spice Combinations | page 22 |
| Making Herb and Spice Oils | page 23 |
| • Oil-friendly Herbs | page 23 |
| • Oil-friendly Spices | page 23 |
| • Suggested Combinations | page 23 |
| Achievement Activity (Optional) | page 24 |
| Before the Next Meeting : | |
| Picnic Planning for Meeting 3 | page 24 |
| • The Week Before the Picnic | page 24 |

Leader's Notes:

MEETING 3:

FROM GARDEN TO SPICE RACK

OBJECTIVE

1. To provide members with the knowledge and skills to preserve and store herbs and spices.

IN A NUTSHELL

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 5 minutes | Roll Call |
| 20 minutes | Herb-Drying Demonstration |
| 15 minutes | Judging Activity |
| 20 minutes | Making Herb & Spice Vinegars & Oils |
| 20 minutes | Dried & Pressed Ornamental Herbs |
| Optional | Achievement Program Planning |
| 20 minutes | Before the Next Meeting: Picnic Planning for Meeting 4 |
| 100 minutes | Total Time |

PREPARATION & EQUIPMENT

HERB-DRYING DEMONSTRATION

- Elastic bands
- Paper towels
- Scissors
- A variety of cut herbs (in winter, these may be available from the produce section of your grocery store).

JUDGING ACTIVITY

See judging guidelines in the "4-H Judging Handbook" (4-H 1550 91)

DRIED & PRESSED ORNAMENTAL HERBS

NOTE: Your club may wish to do this activity in order to have pressed herbs to use for making herbal sun-catchers and dried flower bunches to use in wreath-making (both in Meeting 5).

- Herbs and flowers (See Meeting 2: Before the Next Meeting)
- Old telephone books (the fatter, the better) — ask your local telephone company for copies OR use stacks of flat, corrugated cardboard
- Paper towels
- Elastic bands
- Scissors
- String
- Tweezers

PREPARATION & EQUIPMENT (Continued)

MAKING HERB & SPICE VINEGARS

NOTE: You may choose to have half your club prepare a vinegar and the other half prepare an oil (see below).

- Vinegar (red wine or apple cider preferred), about 200 ml per member
- Assortment of herbs and spices from the chart listed in Meeting 1 on pages 6-7 (about 10-15 different types)
- Small bowls — one for each herb and spice
- Extra bottles with lids for forgetful members
- Ladle
- Funnel
- Decorative labels (one per member, plus a few extras)

MAKING HERB & SPICE OILS

NOTE: You may choose to have half your club prepare an oil and the other half prepare a vinegar (see above).

Gauge the amount of oil needed accordingly.

- Canola oil (200 ml per member) — it is also possible to use other oils, such as olive oil
- Assortment of herbs and spices from the chart listed in Meeting 1 on pages 6-7 (about 10-15 different types)
- Small bowls — one for each herb or spice
- Extra bottles with lids for forgetful members
- Ladle
- Funnel
- Decorative labels (one per member, plus a few extras)

PICNIC PLANNING FOR MEETING 4

- Invitations (photocopied), one per member

ROLL CALL (5 minutes)

What is your favourite type of salad dressing?
Can you name one herb or spice that it contains?

HERB-DRYING DEMONSTRATION (15 minutes)

Ask the senior members to prepare a demonstration of a variety of herb-drying techniques. Inform seniors that the demonstration should take no longer than 15 minutes, and invite them to arrive at the meeting 20 minutes early to prepare. Seniors should refer to pages 17-18 of the Members' Manual for information on herb-drying.

JUDGING ACTIVITY (15 minutes)

Use the "4-H Judging Handbook" (4-H 1550 91 ME) to conduct a judging activity. Ask members to judge the different methods of drying that were presented by the senior members, and to indicate the pros and cons of each method. Members may set their own judging criteria for this activity. See also the Volunteer Handbook section, 'Helping 4-H Members Judge'.

DRIED & PRESSED ORNAMENTAL HERBS

(20 minutes)



This activity will come in handy if you choose to make herbal sun-catchers and herbal wreaths in Meeting 5. If herbs are scarce at this time of year, grasses and other woodland material may also be used. Check for early herbs in your area. In winter, you may have to buy fresh herbs from the grocery store and additional dried plant material from craft stores.

Depending on the size of your club, you may wish to divide the group in half for this activity — with one-half pressing herbs and the other half, drying. Herbs should be shared among all members.

Pressed Herbs

MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:

- Herbs and flowers (See 'Before the Next Meeting' in Meeting 2)
- Old telephone books (the fatter, the better) — ask your local telephone company for copies OR use stacks of flat, corrugated cardboard
- Paper towels
- Scissors
- Tweezers

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Between the pages of a telephone book or between sheets of cardboard, have members lay out 2 layers of paper towels.
2. Use scissors and tweezers to position herbs and flowers in attractive patterns (e.g., flowers and leaves open and greenery spread out, avoiding overlap as much as possible)
3. Note that members should try to keep the arrangements smaller than 10 cm by 10 cm.
4. When a herb has been positioned, 2 more layers of paper towels should be carefully placed on top, and a few more pages of the telephone book turned and ready for your next herb.
5. If using cardboard, follow the above technique, but create stacks of cardboard, with paper towels and herbs between them.
6. Once all herbs have been pressed, carefully move the telephone book(s) or stack(s) of cardboard to an airy, warm place where it will not be disturbed. Place heavy weights on top.
7. Check herbs every week to monitor drying progress.

Dried, Hanging Herbs

MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:

- Scissors
- Elastic bands
- String

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Separate herbs by type.
2. Bundle herbs of one type together and securely wrap stems with elastic bands.
3. Find a dry, airy place where you can hang your herbs upside-down to dry. Use string to fasten to a ceiling hook, pot rack or ladder supported by roof beams (garage) or clothes-drying rack.
4. Herbs are ready when stems snap near base.

MAKING HERB & SPICE VINEGARS

(20 minutes)

Ensure that each member has a small bottle (or jar) with a lid for this activity, and that the bottles are very clean.

Place vinegar (200 ml multiplied by the number of members) in a saucepan over low heat. Cover and heat slowly.

Place herbs and spices in labelled bowls.

Arrange the following charts on the table where the members can refer to them. Invite the members to create their own vinegar combinations by inserting an assortment of herbs and spices into their bottles. There should be a maximum of 1/3 herbs, with the remainder of space filled with vinegar, although fewer herbs will still result in a well-flavoured vinegar.

Once members have put their herbs and spices into the bottles, use a ladle and funnel to pour in the warm vinegar. Close lids tightly.

Members may now prepare labels indicating the flavour of their vinegar and the date of preparation.

The vinegar should be placed in a cool, dark place to steep for 2 weeks. (Members should leave vinegars with leaders until Meeting 4). Herb and spice vinegars may be used in salad dressings and marinades, and are a good substitute for butter when poured over steamed vegetables. It is recommended that once the vinegar has steeped, it should be kept in the refrigerator.

Good Solo Herbs & Spices for VINEGAR

HERBS

Basil
Bay Leaf
Borage Flowers
Chili Peppers
Chive Flowers
Dill Seeds & Leaves
Fennel
Ginger
Lavender
Mint
Nasturtium Flowers
Rose Petals
Rosemary
Savory
Tarragon
Thyme

SPICES

Anise
Black Peppercorns
Caraway Seeds
Cardamom Seeds
Celery Seeds
Cloves
Coriander Seeds
Dried Hot Peppers
Green Peppercorns
Juniper Berries
Mustard Seeds
Nutmeg

Good Herb-and-Spice Combinations

Blueberry / Cinnamon
Oregano / Marjoram
Nutmeg / Cloves / Mustard Seeds / Peppercorns / Orange Zest
Savory / Thyme
Tarragon / Rosemary
Dill / Fennel / Basil / Thyme
Variety of Chili Peppers
Ginger / Chive Blossoms / Savory
Orange Zest / Lemon Mint Leaves
Parsley / Thyme / Basil

MAKING HERB & SPICE OILS

(20 minutes)

Ensure that each member has a small, clean bottle (or jar) with a lid for this activity.

Place herbs (dried, preferably) and spices in labelled bowls.

Arrange the following charts on the table where the members can refer to them. Invite the members to create their own oil combinations by inserting an assortment of herbs and spices into their bottles, using no more than 15 ml of herbs or spices per 200 ml bottle.

Once members have put their herbs and spices into the bottles, use a ladle and funnel to pour in the oil. Close lids tightly.

Members may now prepare labels indicating the flavour of their oil and the date of preparation.

The oil should be placed in a cool, dark place to steep for 2 weeks. (Members should leave oils with leaders until Meeting 4). Oils may be used in salad dressings, marinades and cooking. It is recommended that the oils be kept in the refrigerator, even though they may appear 'cloudy'.

Oil-friendly Herbs

| | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| Basil | Bay Leaf | Chives |
| Cilantro | Dill | Marjoram |
| Mint | Oregano | Rosemary |
| Tarragon | Thyme | Sage |

Oil-friendly Spices

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Anise | Caraway Seeds |
| Cardamom Seeds | Cinnamon |
| Cloves | Coriander Seeds |
| Cumin Seeds | Hot Chili Peppers |
| Juniper Berries | Nutmeg |
| Peppercorns | |

Suggested Combinations

Coriander Seeds/Allspice/Cloves/Cinnamon/Hot Chili Peppers/Gingerroot

Bay Leaf / Thyme / Basil / Oregano

Rosemary / Peppercorns / Dried Red Pepper Flakes

Cilantro / Cumin Seeds / Hot Chili Peppers

ACHIEVEMENT ACTIVITY

(Optional)

Use this time to plan and prepare for your achievement activity.

BEFORE THE NEXT MEETING

(20 minutes)

Picnic Planning for Meeting 3

1. Finalize plans for the picnic.
2. Ask a few members to 'donate' their herb/spice oil and vinegar to the picnic. These will be used to prepare salad dressing.
3. Inform the members of the time that they should arrive; confirm that all parents and guardians have given their consent for this event (if held at an irregular time in an irregular location). Allow additional time for travel from the kitchen to the picnic site, if necessary.
4. Estimate the number of people who will attend the event. Ask a senior member to help you to change the recipes to feed this number of people. Then, ask the senior member to prepare a grocery list for the event.
5. Invite 2 senior members to help supervise and co-ordinate the event. One member should work in the kitchen, overseeing food preparation. The other member should work outside, co-ordinating the set-up of the picnic area and the games, activities, etc. (Note: This member may have been selected at Meeting 1.)
6. Distribute lists of things to bring.

The Week Before the Picnic

1. Ask a senior member to confirm the booking of the picnic site and kitchen facilities. (To make the picnic run smoothly, it is recommended that the kitchen facilities be at the same location as the picnic site.)
2. Arrange transportation from the kitchen to the picnic site, if necessary.
3. Purchase food for the picnic. Be prepared for at least one member to bring more than one friend. If drivers are needed, you may wish to arrange to feed them as well.

MEETING 4: A TASTE OF HERBS AND SPICES

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Objective | page 25 |
| In a Nutshell | page 25 |
| Preparation and Equipment | page 25 |
| Roll Call | page 25 |
| On the Day of the Picnic | page 26 |
| • Proposed Menu | page 26 |
| • Kitchen Guidelines | page 26 |
| Picnic Preparation Teams | page 27 |
| Picnic Preparation | |
| • Snack Team & Recipes | page 28 |
| • Pesto-Pasta Salad Team & Recipes | page 30 |
| • Salad Team & Recipes | page 34 |
| • Iced Mint Tea Team & Recipe | page 36 |
| • Dessert Team & Recipe | page 37 |
| Too Cold for a Picnic? | page 39 |
| • Basic Chili Recipe | page 39 |
| • Mulled Cider Recipe | page 41 |
| • Caesar Salad Recipe | page 42 |
| Before the Next Meeting | page 43 |

Leader's Notes:

MEETING 4:

A TASTE OF HERBS & SPICES

OBJECTIVE

1. To provide members with the knowledge and skills to use herbs and spices in cooking.

IN A NUTSHELL

| | |
|-------------|---------------------|
| 5 minutes | Roll Call |
| 115 minutes | Picnic Preparations |
| ? minutes | Picnic Fun |
| ? minutes | Total Time |

PREPARATION & EQUIPMENT

BEFORE THE MEETING:

Review each recipe for the required ingredients, equipment and preparation needs before the meeting.

ROLL CALL

(5 minutes)

What are some examples of how herbs and spices are used in everyday life (from morning to night)?
How are they used?

Some notes about this meeting:

- picnic theme
- encourage new members
- A Saturday date?
- picnic site
- Be prepared!

This meeting allows members to taste herbs and spices in a variety of dishes. The menu follows a picnic theme and, for this reason, your club may choose to follow up the meeting by holding an actual picnic. This picnic could also be used as an opportunity to encourage new members to join the club. A "Bring-a-Friend" event could be coordinated, inviting members' friends to join in.

Holding this meeting on a Saturday would provide enough time for both the food preparation and the picnic. Should you choose to hold an outdoor picnic, it is important that you locate food preparation activities at or near a good picnic site — and be prepared for rain or shine!

ON THE DAY OF THE PICNIC

Proposed Menu

- Salsa, guacamole and tortilla chips
- Cold pesto-pasta salad
- Tossed green salad with strawberry vinaigrette, herbal vinaigrette and creamy dill salad dressing
- Iced herbal teas
- Ginger cookies
- Breads and rolls

* Barbequed hot dogs, hamburgers and veggie burgers (or roasted corn) would work well with the above menu. If your club chooses to include any of these items, members may wish to approach a local grocer to request that these items be donated. (Remember to thank all sponsors!) Condiments, buns and butter would also be required.

* As well, a barbeque and volunteer Grill Master would be needed to prepare these foods.

Kitchen Guidelines

To help keep things organized and on track, you may wish to post a list of 'rules' — OR you may want to have members brainstorm and create a list of kitchen rules on their own. Some suggestions include:

- Wash hands well before starting.
- Keep work areas and kitchen clean.
- Wash dishes as you finish using them.
- Be prepared to share your kitchen equipment.
- Once finished in the kitchen, report to _____, who will tell you where your assistance is needed.
- If you are no longer needed in the kitchen, report to _____ outside, who will help you to set up the picnic area and games.

Ask one or more senior members to help oversee the kitchen activities and food preparation. Using the following list, assign members (and guests) to teams and tasks. Note that senior members — NOT the overseer(s) — should assist each team.

The kitchen overseer(s) will ensure that:

- teams are on track and on time, and
- foods are suitably refrigerated or stored prior to serving.

The kitchen overseer(s) will also:

- co-ordinate the serving of the meal, when all food has been prepared and guests are ready to eat.

PICNIC PREPARATION TEAMS

**NOTE:
DESSERT TEAM
NEEDS TO
START FIRST!**

Assign groups of members to prepare each dish, with one senior member per group.

Give each group a work-space in the kitchen and the required equipment.

Groups that finish early can help to clean up, and to arrange the set-up of the picnic.

NOTE: This recipe takes longer than the others, so this team should start as soon as possible.

Remember to preheat the oven!

A) SNACK Team - 4 members (15 minutes)

- 2 members to prepare salsa:

_____ and _____

- 2 members to prepare guacamole:

_____ and _____

- Serve salsa & guacamole with tortilla chips (in large serving bowl).

B) PESTO-PASTA SALAD Team - 5 members (30 minutes)

- 2 members to prepare Basic Pesto:

_____ and _____

- Another member to boil enough pasta to serve members & guests:

- 2 members to prepare vegetables to add to the salad:

_____ and _____

C) GREEN SALAD Team - 4 members (20 minutes)

- 2 members to prepare the salad:

_____ and _____

- 2 members to prepare the salad dressings:

_____ and _____

D) ICED MINT TEA Team - 2 members (10 minutes)

- 2 members to prepare the tea:

_____ and _____

- Several batches may be required.

- This team can help set out buns and butter once they have finished preparing the tea.

E) DESSERT Team - 3 people (25 min. preparation; 25 min. baking)

- 3 people to assist one another in preparing these cookies:

_____ / _____ / _____

- This team may wish to place cookies in the oven as the picnic starts — but remember to take cookies out of the oven after 25 minutes.

PICNIC PREPARATION

(115 minutes)

SNACK Team - 4 members (15 minutes)

- 2 members to prepare salsa:

_____ and _____

- 2 members to prepare guacamole:

_____ and _____

- Serve salsa & guacamole with tortilla chips (in large serving bowl).

SALSA - 10 servings

Yield: 1250 ml

Prep. Time: 20 minutes

Good with nachos or as a topping on other entrées.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 tomatoes, finely diced (about 1.5L)
- 25 ml finely diced onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 mild chili pepper, finely diced
- 25 ml fresh cilantro, finely chopped
- 15 ml lime juice
- 2 ml salt
- 2 ml freshly ground black pepper

EQUIPMENT:

- Cutting board
- Sharp knife
- Measuring cup and spoons
- Garlic press
- Medium-sized serving bowl
- Wooden spoon
- Serving spoon

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, combine diced tomatoes, onion, garlic clove, chili peppers, cilantro, lime juice, salt and pepper. With wooden spoon, mix together, stirring gently. Taste and adjust seasonings if necessary.
3. Place in serving bowl, cover and refrigerate until ready to use. Serve with guacamole and tortilla chips.

* SAFETY NOTE:

Hot peppers can sting! Members may wish to wear rubber gloves when working with hot peppers — or, at least, wash their hands very well after handling hot peppers.

* ADDITIONAL NOTE:

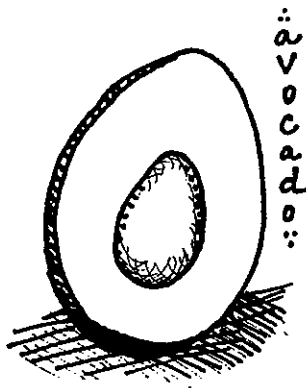
For a hotter flavour, substitute jalapeno peppers for mild chili peppers. Also, pickled hot peppers or dried crushed chili peppers may be used in place of fresh hot peppers.



PICNIC

PREPARATION

(Continued)



GUACAMOLE - 10 servings

Yield: 375 ml

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

A mild guacamole that can be served as a dip with tortilla chips or as a topping over tacos.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 ripe avocados
- 10 ml lemon juice
- 100 ml yogourt
- 2 ml salt
- 1 clove garlic, minced

EQUIPMENT:

- Paring knife
- Dessert spoon
- Fork
- Medium-sized mixing bowl
- Measuring cup and spoons
- Garlic press
- Spatula
- Small- to medium-sized sealable serving bowl

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. Cut avocados in half and remove seeds. Use a spoon to remove each avocado from its skin; place in medium-sized bowl.
3. Use a fork to mash avocado until smooth.
4. Add yogourt, lemon juice, garlic and salt. Stir well to combine. If desired, add a small amount of salsa to the guacamole. Combine well.
5. Place in sealed container until ready to use. (Note important TIP at left.)

TIP! ~ Prevent

Avocado from Darkening

If not serving guacamole immediately after preparing it, bury 1 avocado seed in the mixture to prevent darkening — this really works! Cover and refrigerate. Remove seed from mixture before serving.

PICNIC

PREPARATION

(Continued)

PESTO-PASTA SALAD Team - 5 members (30 minutes)

• 2 members to prepare Basic Pesto:

_____ and _____

• Another member to boil enough pasta to serve members & guests:

• 2 or 3 members to prepare vegetables to add to the salad:

_____ and _____

• Serve chilled.

BASIC PESTO - Enough for 10 servings of pasta salad

Yield: 250 ml

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

The blend of fresh basil, garlic and cheese makes this flavour so special!

INGREDIENTS:

- 500 ml (packed) fresh basil leaves
- 4 small (OR 2 large) cloves of garlic
- 75 ml olive oil
- 175 ml grated Romano or Parmesan cheese (fresh is best, but dried will do)

EQUIPMENT:

- Food processor or blender
- Spatula
- Measuring cups
- Container with lid

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. Wash basil leaves and dry well.
3. In food processor or blender, combine basil leaves, garlic, olive oil and grated cheese.
4. Process or blend at high speed until all is blended, stopping occasionally to scrape down sides. Process or blend until all ingredients form a thick paste.
5. Place in container with lid and refrigerate until ready to use.

PICNIC

PREPARATION

(Continued)



• PESTO ~ PASTA •

BASIC PESTO (Continued)

SERVING SUGGESTIONS:

1. Mix in with hot, cooked pasta as an alternative to tomato sauce (see next page).
2. Spread pesto on English muffin halves or slices of Italian bread. Top with 15 ml salsa and sprinkle with grated mozzarella cheese. Broil in oven until cheese melts.
3. Combine 10 ml of pesto with 125 ml cream cheese. Spread over small tortillas, roll up and slice into small appetizers. This mixture is also delicious spread over crackers.

PICNIC PREPARATION

(Continued)

FUSILLI PASTA - Enough for 10 servings of pasta salad

Yield: About 2.25L

Prep. Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 3L water
- pinch of salt
- 1.5L uncooked fusilli (spiral) pasta — about half of a 900 g package fusilli (spiral) pasta
- 25 ml canola oil

EQUIPMENT:

- 1 large pot
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Wooden spoon
- Colander

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. In a large pot, pour in water and add salt.
3. Bring to a boil over high heat. Add pasta and stir.
4. Continue to boil for 10-12 minutes, stirring occasionally, until tender.
5. Strain the pasta using the colander.

A pesto-pasta salad is part of the picnic. The instructions on the following page show you how to use the pesto and pasta prepared above, combine them and create a pesto-pasta salad for the picnic.

PICNIC PREPARATION

(Continued)

PESTO-PASTA SALAD - Enough for 10 servings

Yield: About 2.5L

Prep. Time: 5 minutes

The light pesto flavour makes this salad suitable for any occasion.

INGREDIENTS:

- 125 ml prepared pesto
- Prepared pasta
- 250 ml diced green or red pepper (about 1 large)
- 250 ml chopped English cucumber (about half of 1 cucumber)
- 250 ml pitted black olives
- 16 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 50 ml herbal vinaigrette or canola oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

EQUIPMENT:

- Cutting boards
- Sharp chopping knives
- Large salad bowl
- Serving spoons

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. Rinse freshly cooked pasta thoroughly with cold water. (See recipe on previous page.)
3. Place pasta in salad bowl and toss with oil to prevent sticking.
4. Stir in 125 ml of prepared pesto.
5. Add chopped green or red pepper and cucumber, olives and cherry tomatoes halves. Stir gently to combine.
6. If mixture is too dry, add 50 ml of herbal vinaigrette or enough oil to moisten. Taste and adjust seasonings.
7. Refrigerate until serving time or until chilled thoroughly.

PICNIC PREPARATION

(Continued)

GREEN SALAD Team - 4 members (20 minutes)

- 2 members to prepare the salad:

_____ and _____

- 2 members to prepare the salad dressings:

_____ and _____

- Serve salad with vinaigrette on the side.

TOSSED GREEN SALAD with SLIVERED ALMONDS and ORANGE WEDGES

Yield: 3L

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

The orange and almonds give this salad a delicious flavour.

Omit the almonds if there are allergy concerns.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 head of Romaine lettuce
- 1 head of Boston OR Bibb lettuce
- 2 oranges, peeled and sliced into wedges
- 50 ml (or to taste) thinly sliced red onion
- 125 ml slivered almonds (optional)

EQUIPMENT:

- Lettuce spinner
- Large salad bowl
- Salad servers
- Chopping knife
- Cutting board

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. Wash lettuce, drain and dry well (or spin in lettuce spinner), removing all excess water.
3. Tear lettuce into bite-sized pieces and place in salad bowl. (There should be about 3L.)
4. Place sliced red onion on top, separating into rings. Sprinkle with slivered almonds (if using). Cover and refrigerate until serving time.
5. At serving time, add orange wedges. Toss lightly. Serve with Herbal or Strawberry Vinaigrette.

NUT ALERT!
Omit the almonds from this recipe if there are any concerns about allergies among the picnic 'diners'.

PICNIC

PREPARATION

(Continued)

HERBAL VINAIGRETTE (Makes 1 bottle)

Yield: 225 ml

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

Marinating Time: 10 minutes

This is a very light vinaigrette which is delicious served on salad greens of any type.

INGREDIENTS:

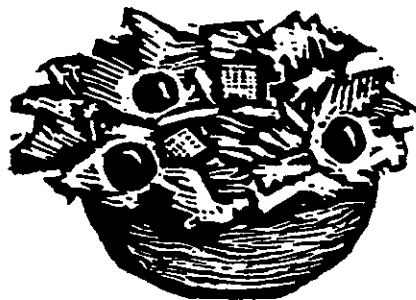
- 175 ml olive oil OR canola oil
- 50 ml red wine vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 ml each dried thyme, basil and oregano
- 2 ml dried mustard (optional)
- 1 ml salt
- Pinch of pepper

EQUIPMENT:

- 500 ml container with tight-fitting lid
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Garlic press

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. In 500 ml container, combine oil, vinegar, garlic, thyme, basil, oregano, mustard (if using), salt and pepper.
3. Tighten lid and shake thoroughly. Taste and adjust seasonings if necessary.
4. Allow to marinate at least 10 minutes before serving.
5. Will keep, refrigerated, for 1 week.



PICNIC

PREPARATION

(Continued)

ICED MINT TEA Team - 2 members (10 minutes)

- 2 members to prepare the tea:

_____ and _____

- Several batches may be required.

ICED MINT TEA - serves 10 people

Yield: 1L (about 4 x 250 ml servings)

Prep. Time: 20 minutes

A refreshing iced tea with the fragrance and flavour of mint.

INGREDIENTS:

- 250 ml (packed) fresh mint leaves
- 25 ml loose tea or 2 tea bags
- 2 strips lemon peel
- 1L boiling water
- 125 ml granulated sugar
- 75 ml lemon juice
- Ice cubes
- 4 lemon slices
- 4 sprigs fresh mint

* For large groups and hot days, a cooler (equipped with ice pack) can be used to hold the iced mint tea.

EQUIPMENT:

- Electric kettle
- Large heat-proof bowl OR large 2L glass measuring cup
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Paring knife
- Strainer
- Cutting board
- Serving pitcher or jug and serving glasses

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. Fill kettle about half-full with water and bring to a boil.
3. In large 2L heat-proof measuring cup or bowl, combine mint leaves, tea and lemon peel.
4. Cover with 1L boiling water and steep for 15 minutes.
5. Strain through strainer into serving pitcher or jug. Stir in sugar. Let cool, refrigerate and cool completely. Mix in lemon juice and refrigerate until serving time.
6. At serving time, pour into serving glasses with ice. Garnish with lemon slices and fresh sprigs of mint. (If doubling or tripling this recipe, fill a large pitcher or punch bowl 1/4-full of ice cubes and add mint tea. Float lemon slices and mint sprigs on top.)

This recipe is from the Canadian Living Cookbook, copyright Elizabeth Baird.

PICNIC

PREPARATION

(Continued)

NOTE: This recipe takes longer than the others, so this team should start as soon as possible.

Remember to preheat the oven!

DESSERT Team - 3 people (25 min. preparation; 25 min. baking)

• 3 people to help each other in preparing these cookies:

• This team may wish to place cookies in the oven as the picnic starts — but remember to take cookies out of the oven after 25 minutes.

GINGER COOKIES

Yield: about 40 cookies

Prep. Time: 20 minutes

Baking Time: 30 minutes

These spicy ginger cookies are an old-time favourite.

INGREDIENTS:

- 175 ml shortening
- 250 ml granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 50 ml molasses
- 500 ml all-purpose flour
- 10 ml baking powder
- 5 ml ground cinnamon
- 10 ml ground ginger
- 5 ml ground cloves
- 1 ml salt
- Granulated sugar for rolling the dough in

EQUIPMENT:

- Oven
- Baking sheets
- Wooden spoon
- Large mixing bowl
- Medium-sized mixing bowl
- Small mixing bowl
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Hand mixer
- Spatula
- Oven mitts
- Lifter
- Wire cooling racks
- Serving plate OR storage container

GINGER COOKIES (Continued)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. Preheat oven to 180° C.
3. Lightly grease baking sheets.
4. In large bowl, cream together shortening and sugar with hand mixer until well combined.
5. Add egg and molasses, beating until light and creamy. Scrape down sides of bowl with spatula, if needed.
6. In medium-sized bowl, combine flour, soda, salt, ginger, cinnamon and cloves, stirring until well combined.
7. Add flour mixture to creamed mixture in large bowl. With wooden spoon or spatula, blend together until well combined.
8. Place about 50 ml of granulated sugar in small mixing bowl. Shape cookie dough into small balls, about 2.5 cm in diameter. Roll in sugar, just to coat.
9. Place about 5 cm apart on greased baking sheets.
10. Bake at 180° C for 10 to 12 minutes or until slightly soft on top. Do not overbake. Cookies should be slightly soft when removed from oven.
11. Let cool on baking sheets for about 2 minutes before removing to racks to cool completely.

TOO COLD FOR A PICNIC?

If you are doing this project during the fall or winter, you may wish to change the theme to a pumpkin-carving, skating or toboggan party, and modify the menu.

Hosting a district chili cook-off is one way you can hook up with other clubs, and explore the flavours of a variety of herbs and spices. Many Websites offer guidance on how to organize a chili cook-off. Ask one of the youth leaders or senior members to do a Web search to find out more information — the Website <http://www.chili.org> is one to try. Try 'chili' and 'competition' in the key word search.

Clubs should use a basic recipe and vary it according to their own ideas and tastes (with a few basic guidelines and rules, of course). Local celebrities could be invited to taste-test and judge this competition. Then, combined with a menu of garlic bread, caesar salad and hot mulled cider (all recipes containing lots of herbs and spices!), you could hold a feast for all the participants.

BASIC CHILI RECIPE

Yield: 1.5L

Prep. Time: 20 minutes

Cooking Time: 1 hour

There's nothing like a hot bowlful of chili on a cold winter's day! Served with a caesar salad, fresh wholewheat buns and mulled apple cider, this makes a wonderful winter treat.

INGREDIENTS:

- 25 ml canola oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped (about 125 ml)
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 500 g ground beef
- 796 ml canned tomatoes (large can)
- 398 ml canned kidney beans
- 1 bay leaf
- 15 ml sugar
- 25 ml chili powder
- 2 ml ground pepper
- 1 ml salt or to taste

EQUIPMENT:

- Cutting board
- Sharp chopping knife
- Garlic press
- Large, heavy saucepan
- Can opener
- Strainer
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Wooden spoon
- Serving ladle and serving bowls

TOO COLD FOR A PICNIC?

(Continued)

BASIC CHILI RECIPE (Continued)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. In a large saucepan over medium heat, add oil and sauté onions until translucent, about 2-3 minutes.
3. Add beef and stir until evenly browned. If necessary, drain off any excess fat.
4. Stir in tomatoes, drained kidney beans, bay leaf, sugar, chili powder, pepper and salt.
5. Bring to a boil, stir, then reduce heat to simmer.
6. Cover and simmer over low heat for 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Taste and adjust seasonings if necessary.

TOO COLD FOR A PICNIC?

(Continued)

MULLED CIDER

Yield: 3L (about 24 x 125 ml servings)

Prep. Time: 7 minutes

Cooking Time: 30-60 minutes

The soothing aroma and flavour of this mulled cider provides all the warmth you'll need on a cold winter's day.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3L apple cider OR apple juice
- 12 whole cloves
- 6 cinnamon sticks
- 1 whole ginger (or large chunk of gingerroot)
- 1 whole nutmeg
- Lemon slices (optional)

EQUIPMENT:

- Large, heavy saucepan and stove OR crockpot
- Cheesecloth or j-cloth
- String
- Serving ladle
- Mugs

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. Using cheesecloth and string, create bundle of mixed herbs and spices: whole cloves, cinnamon sticks, ginger and nutmeg. Set aside.
3. In large saucepan or crockpot, pour in cider and add spice bag.
4. Heat over medium heat until mixture just begins to get hot, then turn down to low heat. Simmer for at least 30-60 minutes until hot, fragrant, and flavours have blended. (The longer cider simmers, the deeper the flavour will be.)
5. Serve in mugs, topping each serving with a slice of lemon (if using).

TOO COLD FOR A PICNIC?

(Continued)

CAESAR SALAD

Yield: 2.5L (about 6 x 500 ml servings)

Prep. Time: 20 minutes

A rich, creamy dressing that can also be used as a dip for fresh vegetables. Dressing will have a slightly thinner consistency if made in a food processor.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 egg
- 1 clove garlic
- 50 ml fresh parsley (25 ml dried)
- 15 ml red wine vinegar
- 15 ml lemon juice
- 5 ml anchovy paste (optional)
- 2 ml dry mustard
- 1 ml each salt and pepper
- 1 ml Worcestershire sauce
- Pinch hot pepper sauce
- 250 ml olive oil OR canola oil
- 1 head Romaine lettuce (about 2.5L torn lettuce leaves)
- 6 slices crisp bacon, crumbled
- 125 ml grated Parmesan cheese
- 125 ml croutons

EQUIPMENT:

- Blender OR food processor
- Cutting board
- Sharp chopping knife
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Spatula
- 500 ml container with tight-fitting lid
- Lettuce spinner
- Large salad bowl
- Salad tongs

TOO COLD FOR A PICNIC?

(Continued)

CAESAR SALAD (Continued)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. In blender, combine egg, garlic, parsley, vinegar, lemon juice, anchovy paste, dry mustard, salt, pepper, Worcestershire sauce and hot pepper sauce.
3. With blender running on high speed, slowly pour in olive oil in a steady stream, blending until thickened and smooth.
4. Taste and adjust seasoning, if necessary. Pour into container, tighten lid and refrigerate until serving time.
5. Wash lettuce, drain and dry well (or spin in lettuce spinner), removing excess water.
6. Tear lettuce into bite-sized pieces; place in salad bowl.
7. Sprinkle with crumbled bacon and Parmesan cheese. Cover and refrigerate until serving time.
8. Just before serving, sprinkle with croutons.
9. Mix in just enough dressing (you will have some left over) to coat the lettuce.
10. This dressing will keep, refrigerated, for 2 days.

BEFORE THE NEXT MEETING

(5 minutes)

If your club chooses to make bouquet garni (Meeting 5), ask members to bring a clean, 250 ml glass jar with lid to the next meeting.

MEETING 5: CRAFT GALLERY

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Objective | page 44 |
| In a Nutshell | page 44 |
| Preparation and Equipment | page 44 |
| Roll Call | page 45 |
| Herbal Sun-Catcher | page 46 |
| Orange Pomander | page 47 |
| Herbal Wreath | page 47 |
| Garden Potpourri | page 49 |
| Bouquet Garni | page 49 |
| Spicy Trivet | page 50 |
| Quick & Easy Flavour | page 51 |
| Achievement Activity (Optional) | page 52 |
| Before the Next Meeting | page 52 |

Leader's Notes:

MEETING 5: CRAFT GALLERY

OBJECTIVE

1. To provide members with the knowledge and skills to use herbs and spices in craft activities.

IN A NUTSHELL

There are far more craft ideas in this project than there is time available. For this meeting, you may want to select one or more crafts to do with your club. Estimated times are listed, and may be used to help in selecting activities.

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 5 minutes | Roll Call |
| Optional - 30 minutes | Herbal Sun-Catcher |
| Optional - 20 minutes | Orange Pomander |
| Optional - 60 minutes | Herbal Wreath |
| Optional - 20 minutes | Garden Potpourri |
| Optional - 20 minutes | Bouquet Garni |
| Optional - 60+ minutes | Spicy Trivet |
| Optional - 20 minutes | Quick & Easy Flavour |
| Optional | Achievement Activity |
| 5 minutes | Before the Next Meeting |
| Aim for 120 minutes | Total Time |

PREPARATION & EQUIPMENT

HERBAL SUN-CATCHER

- Two 10 cm by 10 cm pieces of clear glass (per member) — hardware stores sell glass and are usually willing to cut it to size for you
- 3 metres of floral wire (per member)
- Assortment of pressed herbs from Meeting 3
- Wire cutters
- Masking tape

ORANGE POMANDER

This activity is well-suited to junior members. Perhaps a senior member could guide this activity.

- Oranges (1 per participant)
- Whole cloves (several spice bags)
- Ground cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger
- Thimbles and nails or clean meat skewers (optional)
- Glue gun
- Ribbon and other decorations

HERBAL WREATH

- Dried moss for wire or Styrofoam wreaths (enough to firmly pack wire wreaths or to cover Styrofoam).
- Assorted dried whole herbs from Meeting 3
- Assorted dried flowers, fruits and decorations (cinnamon sticks, rose hips, pine cones, twigs, ribbons, buttons, shells, etc.).
- Floral wire and wire-cutters
- Scissors
- Glue gun

GARDEN POTPOURRI

- Assortment of dried herbs, spices, twigs, pine cones, leaves & flowers (from Meeting 3)
- Orris root (fixative), 5 ml per 250 ml of potpourri — available from craft supply shops
- Measuring spoons
- Plastic containers with lids

BOUQUET GARNI

- Dried parsley (5 ml per bouquet garni)
- Bay leaves (1 leaf per bouquet garni)
- Dried thyme (5 ml per bouquet garni)
- Cheesecloth (1 or 2 packages, depending on number of members)
- White string or thread
- Labels
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Clean glass jars in 250 ml size, with lids (1 per member), for forgetful members

SPICY TRIVET

- Fabric and matching thread
- Bean bag filling (split peas, barley, rice, dried beans, etc.)
- Cinnamon sticks
- Whole cloves
- Peppercorns
- Dried rosemary
- Dried mint leaves
- Sewing machine, iron, ironing board
- Pins and needles
- Scissors

QUICK & EASY FLAVOUR

- Dried, powdered spices listed in the chart on pages 6-7 of this guide
- Small clean spice jars with lids
- Labels and coloured markers
- Glass paints and pens (optional)
- Decorations for jars (ribbon or string) and jar covers (fabric, brown paper, etc.)
- Scissors
- Glue gun (if needed)

ROLL CALL

(5 minutes)

Name 1 quality of herbs and spices that would make them suitable for use in craft projects (e.g. colour, scent, texture, etc.).
Suggest a craft that might use herbs and spices.

HERBAL SUN- CATCHER

(30 minutes)

MATERIALS:

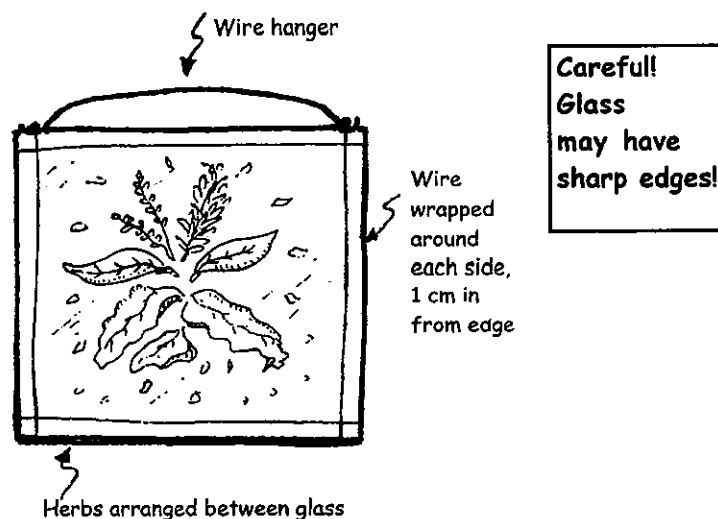
- Two 10 cm by 10 cm pieces of clear glass (per member)
- 3 m of floral wire, cut into 4 lengths of 70 cm & 1 length of 20 cm (per member)
- Assortment of pressed herbs from Meeting 3

EQUIPMENT:

- Wire-cutters
- Masking tape

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Place pressed herbs on 1 piece of 10 cm by 10 cm glass. Position herbs as you intend them to be displayed.
2. Place second glass square on top of the arranged herbs. Secure edges with masking tape.
3. Working one end at a time, wrap 70 cm length of floral wire 1 cm in from each end of the 'sandwiched' glass piece. Tie off wires and neatly tuck in ends.
4. Remove masking tape.
5. Use final piece of floral wire to create hanger, looping ends through top of wires on the 2 vertical sides of the sun-catcher.
6. Display sun-catcher in a window or on a wall. Note that a lot of direct sunlight will eventually cause the herbs to fade.



ORANGE POMANDER

(20 minutes)

NOTE: This makes a lovely scented winter decoration.

MATERIALS:

- Oranges (1 per participant)
- Whole cloves (several bags)
- Dried cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger
- Ribbon and other decorations

EQUIPMENT:

- Glue gun
- Thimbles and nails or clean meat skewers (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Aim to completely cover the orange (that is, to have very little orange showing). Use clean meat skewer to make small holes, so that the cloves go easily into the orange. Stud the orange with whole cloves, filling in spaces as you go along.
2. Roll orange in powdered spices and dust off.
3. Use glue gun and ribbon to decorate the orange.
4. Allow to cure (air-dry) for several weeks, then use to scent drawers, closets or to decorate your home.

HERBAL WREATH

(60 minutes)

MATERIALS:

- 1 small wreath base per member (straw, Styrofoam, wire or grapevine)
- Dried moss for wire or Styrofoam wreaths (enough to firmly pack wire wreaths or to cover Styrofoam). Ask craft supply shop for assistance in determining amount required.
- Assorted dried whole herbs from Meeting 3
- Assorted dried flowers, fruits and decorations (cinnamon sticks, rose hips, pine cones, twigs, ribbons, buttons, shells, etc.). Other dried flowers and decorations may be purchased from a craft supply shop.
- Floral wire

EQUIPMENT:

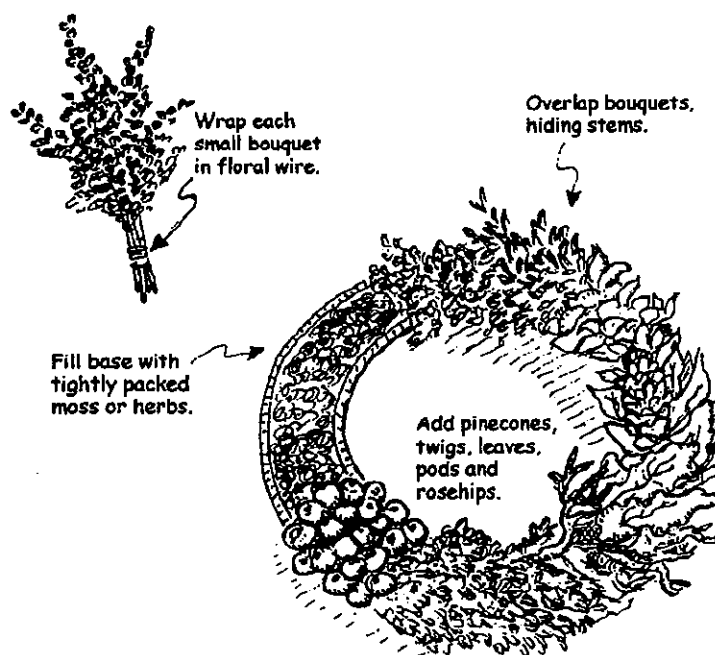
- Wire-cutters
- Scissors
- Glue gun

HERBAL WREATH

(Continued)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Fill wire bases with tightly packed moss or herbs; cover Styrofoam bases with a layer of dried moss.
2. Choose a colour scheme with suitable background colours (e.g., silvery sage, lemon thyme, dark green rosemary). Then, select contrasting accent pieces — usually flowers, fruits and other colourful decorative pieces.
3. Using floral wire, create short, spreading bouquets of these combined colours. Place bigger, spreading pieces toward the rear and smaller accent pieces toward the front. Working in a set direction (either clockwise or counter-clockwise), use wrapped floral wire to attach bouquets along the front and sides of the wreath. Be sure to position each new bouquet so it overlaps the stems of the previous bouquet. For the final bouquets, tuck their stems under the first bouquets that were attached to the wreath.
4. Using glue gun, attach additional accent pieces such as cinnamon sticks, chili peppers, bay leaves and dried flowers.
5. Hang wreath out of direct sunlight.



GARDEN POTPOURRI

(20 minutes)

NOTE: The Members' Manual has ingredient lists for garden & woodland potpourri, as well as other herb and spice potpourri suggestions.

MATERIALS:

- Assortment of dried herbs, spices, twigs, pine cones, leaves & flowers (from Meeting 3)
- Orris root (fixative), 5 ml per 250 ml of potpourri — available from craft supply shops

EQUIPMENT:

- Measuring spoons
- Plastic containers with lids

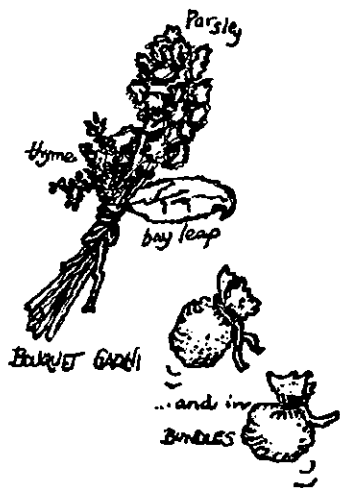
INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Become familiar with the scents of the herbs and spices available for this activity. Decide on those you like and those you don't like.
2. Place an assortment of ingredients — 15 ml at a time — into plastic container. Do not exceed 250 ml of total dried herb/spice/floral ingredients.
3. Add 5 ml of orris root. Seal the container, making it airtight. Shake the container to mix the contents.
4. Potpourri will be ready to use after 2 or 3 days. Place in an open or porous container where the resulting scent can be enjoyed!

BOUQUET GARNI

(20 minutes)

NOTE: Each member can make 3 to 5 bouquets, depending on the amount of herbs, spices & cheesecloth. Bouquet garnis are designed to be added to casseroles, stews and sauces; remove before serving.



MATERIALS (for each bouquet):

- 5 ml of dried parsley
- 1 bay leaf
- 5 ml dried thyme
- Cheesecloth (1 or 2 packages, depending on number of members)
- White string or thread
- Labels (1 per member)

EQUIPMENT:

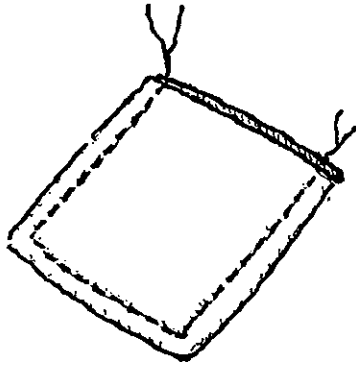
- Scissors
- Ruler
- 250 ml clean glass jar with lid (1 per member)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Cut cheesecloth into squares, 10 cm by 10 cm.
2. Place herbs onto centre of cheesecloth squares. Hold corners of fabric together; seal the herb bundle with a tight string knot.
3. Place bouquet garni into clean glass jar; label with ingredients and date. To give as a gift, place a piece of brown paper or pretty fabric over the lid and tie with brown twine, ribbon or cord.

SPICY TRIVET

(60+ minutes)



MATERIALS (per member):

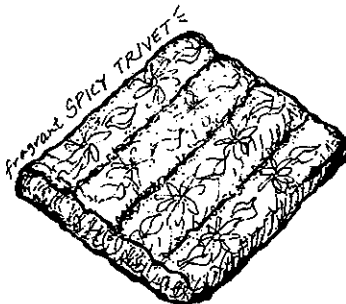
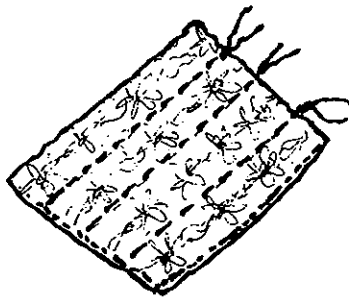
- Two 22 cm by 22 cm cotton fabric rectangles
- Matching thread
- 500 ml split peas, lentils, barley, oats, wheat, rice or other such filling as for bean bags
- Half a cinnamon stick
- 15 ml cloves (slightly crushed)
- 6 peppercorns
- 20 ml rosemary
- 10 ml dried mint leaves

EQUIPMENT:

- Sewing machine, iron, ironing board
- Pins
- Needle
- Scissors

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Assemble materials and equipment.
2. Place mixture of whole spices in a sturdy plastic bag. Use rolling pin to crush spices until they are just cracked.
3. Combine bean bag filling, herbs and spices. Mix well.
4. Cut cotton fabric rectangles; iron. Place right sides of fabric together and pin edges.
5. With a 1 cm seam allowance, straight-stitch 3 side seams. Leave one of the sides open (not sewn).
6. Turn fabric right side out; iron.
7. Starting from the sewn side opposite to the open, unsewn side, use a straight-stitch to sew 3 straight rows, 5 cm apart. Stop 1 cm from unstitched end — this will create 4 open-ended tube-like sections.
8. Fill each tube with spice mixture.
9. Fold open end of trivet over twice, in 2 very small folds. Secure with pins. Top-stitch fold in place with short, straight stitches.



QUICK & EASY FLAVOUR

(20 minutes)

NOTE: This activity offers members a bit of variety — straying slightly from typical crafts. You may be able to purchase special glass paints and pens from an art or craft supply store. These can be used to decorate and label the jars.

MATERIALS:

- Small clean spice jars with lids
- Labels and coloured markers
- Glass paints and pens (optional)
- Decorations for jars (ribbon or string) and jar covers (fabric, brown paper, etc.)
- Dried, powdered spices listed below:

BARBEQUE SEASONING

Marjoram
Basil
Celery Seed
Thyme
Onion Powder

CHINESE 5-SPICE MIX

Anise
Cinnamon
Cloves
Fennel
Peppercorns

JAMAICAN JERK SEASONING

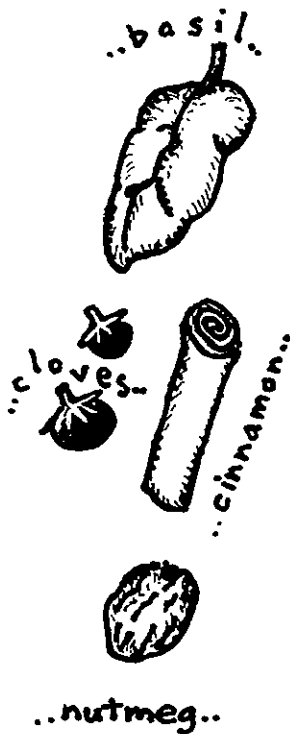
Allspice
Brown Sugar
Cinnamon
Garlic
Ginger
Ground Chilies
Mustard

INDIAN CURRY

Chilies
Cinnamon
Cloves
Coriander
Cumin
Ginger
Nutmeg
Pepper
Turmeric

CAJUN SEASONING

Basil
Black Pepper
Cayenne Pepper
Cumin
Garlic
Onion Powder
Oregano
Paprika



EQUIPMENT:

- Scissors
- Glue gun (if needed)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Invite members to prepare spice mixtures, using approximately equal amounts of each spice.
2. Members may then decorate their spice jars using the materials provided.
3. Suggest that members give their creations (as a gift) to someone who likes to cook.

ACHIEVEMENT ACTIVITY

(Optional)

Use this time to plan and prepare for the Achievement Activity.

BEFORE THE NEXT MEETING

(5 minutes)

Bring a clean, small (between 30 ml and 50 ml) glass jar, with lid, to the next meeting. Members should be able to reach into the jar with their fingers, and touch the bottom. Also bring an empty shampoo bottle to the next meeting — any size will do, but small is best.

MEETING 6: REST AND RELAXATION

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Objective | page 53 |
| In a Nutshell | page 53 |
| Preparation and Equipment | page 53 |
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| Roll Call | page 54 |
| Herbal Lip Balm | page 55 |
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| • Herbs by Hair Type | page 56 |
| Lather Up! | page 57 |
| Aromatherapy Hand Massage | page 58 |
| Achievement Activity (Optional) | page 59 |

Leader's Notes:

MEETING 6: REST & RELAXATION

OBJECTIVE

1. To introduce members to some cosmetic and therapeutic uses of herbs and spices.

IN A NUTSHELL

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 5 minutes | Roll Call |
| 20 minutes | Herbal Lip Balm |
| Optional - 10 minutes | Herbal Shampoo |
| 30 minutes | Lather Up! |
| 15 minutes | Aromatherapy Massage |
| Aim for 120 minutes | Total Time |

PREPARATION & EQUIPMENT

HERBAL LIP BALM

NOTE: See instructions for amounts.

- Beeswax, shredded
- Aloe vera oil, petroleum jelly, liquid vitamin E, witch hazel (all available at pharmacy)
- Dried herbs and spices (cinnamon, cloves, comfrey, lavender, calendula, etc.)
- Cheesecloth (available at grocery, craft & hardware stores)
- Small, clean glass jars or plastic containers with lids
- Microwave oven required
- Microwavable container and wooden or plastic spoon

HERBAL SHAMPOO

NOTE: See instructions for amounts.

- Unscented shampoo or liquid castile soap
- Liquid glycerine (if using castile soap)
- Dried herbs from table on page 49 of this guide (with funnel and cheesecloth) OR variety of herbal tea bags (pure herb type; no perfumes or additives)
- Measuring cups
- Clean, small (if possible) shampoo bottles with lids — bring extra for forgetful members

LATHER UP!

NOTE: See instructions for amounts.

- Unscented glycerine soap (one bar per member)
- Finely ground herbs and/or spices
- Double-boiler saucepan
- Plastic or wooden stirring spoon
- Grater

AROMATHERAPY MASSAGE

- 30 ml carrier oil per member (basic oil to carry the scent; best options are grapeseed and almond, available at health food stores OR sunflower, canola or olive oil will do)
- Squeeze bottle (empty, clean shampoo bottle)
- Lavender essential oil (a very safe essential oil) with stopper lid
- Paper towel or clean cloths
- Background music (optional)

SAFETY

Please read this
IMPORTANT
information!

Ensure that all members have completed the "4-H Health and Safety Form" (found in the "Volunteer's Handbook") and that you have reviewed these forms to confirm that there are no members with epilepsy or asthma. If there are, it may be advisable to avoid the following activities that use essential oils and aromatherapy.

Here are a few additional cautionary notes you need to know about:

- The oils of a plant are not necessarily safe just because they are natural. Many poisonous substances come from natural sources. Be informed!
- Some essential oils are not safe for people who suffer from epilepsy or asthma, or for pregnant women. In addition, some people may have allergic reactions to particular types of essential oils.
- You should avoid getting essential oils (1) in your eyes — if this happens, go to the doctor, or (2) on your skin — use a vegetable oil to remove; do not use water.
- If you spill essential oils, clean up right away using vegetable oil — do not use water.

Be sure to read up on every essential oil you intend to use. Follow all cautionary advice. A good place to start is with the Website of the National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy at:
<http://www.naha.org>

A good reading resource is "The Complete Book of Essential Oils and Aromatherapy" by Valerie Ann Worwood. Resources such as these will also identify the qualities and appropriate use of essential oils.

Lavender is the essential oil recommended for use in this project — this is because it is a very safe essential oil.

ROLL CALL

(5 minutes)

What is your favourite scent?

Name 1 herb or spice that may have been used to make this scent.

HERBAL LIP BALM

(20 minutes)



MATERIALS (makes enough for ten 30 ml jars of lip balm):

- 15 ml shredded beeswax
- 15 ml aloe vera oil
- 250 g jar of petroleum jelly
- 10 drops of liquid vitamin E
- 15 ml witch hazel
- 15 ml dried herbs and spices (try cinnamon and cloves; or comfrey, lavender and calendula)

EQUIPMENT:

- Cheesecloth
- Small, clean glass jars or plastic containers with lids (1 per member)
- Microwave oven
- Microwave-safe container
- Wooden or plastic stirring spoon (metal spoon may affect the flavour of the oil)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Place petroleum jelly in a large, microwave-safe container with lid. Heat until very soft.
2. Add beeswax, herbs and/or spices to the container. Continue heating in 30-second intervals at medium heat until melted. Use a wooden or plastic spoon to stir between each heating. Strain herbs and spices by pouring the liquid through two layers of cheesecloth.
3. Stir in aloe vera, vitamin E and witch hazel. Pour into containers.
4. Allow to fully cool, then cap. Your lip balm is now ready to enjoy!

HERBAL SHAMPOO

(10 minutes)

NOTE: Instead of a herbal tea infusion, you may wish to try a herbal infusion. To make a herbal infusion, simply pour boiling water over fresh herbs; after the herbs have fully infused (the aroma will make this obvious), strain the liquid — this is your herbal infusion — and discard the herbs.

NOTE: If members dye their hair, they should first test a shampoo (on hair ends) to ensure that colour will not be affected. With hair dyes, mild shampoos for light hair colours are best.

MATERIALS:

- 1 bottle (2 for a large club) unscented shampoo or liquid castile soap
- Small bottle of liquid glycerine (if using castile soap)
- Dried herbs from table below OR variety of herbal tea bags. To obtain materials, look in pharmacies or health food stores — the tea bags should be made with only 1 herb, depending on hair type, with no perfumes or additives.
- Boiling water

EQUIPMENT:

- Measuring cups
- Funnel and cheesecloth (for loose herbs only)
- Clean shampoo bottles with lids (1 per member)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Before the meeting, prepare herbal infusions in boiling water (about 500 ml per type of tea). Allow to cool. Strain liquids through cheesecloth (and funnel) into pouring jugs. Label.
2. Ask members to select a herbal tea infusion according to their hair type, or the qualities they hope to bring out in their hair. (See chart, "Herbs by Hair Type", below.) Members should pour 100 ml of the infusion into their shampoo bottles.
3. To the infusion, add 50 ml shampoo; if using liquid castile soap, add a few drops of liquid glycerine to help contents stay mixed.
4. This herbal shampoo may be used in the same way as any other shampoo. Lather, rinse, repeat (if necessary).
5. Inform members that they may make a vinegar rinse to follow their shampoo. Directions for the vinegar rinse may be found on page 52 of the Members' Manual.

HERBS BY HAIR TYPE

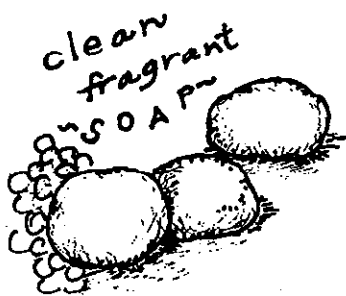
| Normal to Oily | Normal to Dry | Itchy Scalp | Lighter Hair | Darker Hair |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| Basil | Nettle Leaves | Calendula | Chamomile | Rosemary |
| Nasturtium Flowers | Onion Bulb | Chamomile | Calendula | Sage |
| Yarrow | Peppermint | Comfrey | Marigold | Parsley |
| Lemon Balm | Chamomile | | | Catnip |
| Thyme | Red Clover | | | Calendula |
| Lemongrass | Comfrey | | | Onion Bulb (brings out auburn tones) |
| Rosemary | | | | |

LATHER UP!

(30 minutes)

NOTE: Your club may wish to do one of these simple variations:

- Opaque soap scraps may be used in place of glycerine bars.
- Chunks of coloured soap may be dropped into the soap pot after the cooling stage — resulting in a colourful mosaic.
- Powdered milk, clay or oatmeal may also be added to the mix, each with its own soothing qualities.



MATERIALS:

- 1 bar unscented glycerine soap (per member)
- Water
- 15 ml finely ground dried herbs and/or spices (per bar of soap used)

EQUIPMENT:

- Double-boiler saucepan
- Plastic or wooden stirring spoon
- Grater

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Grate soap bars. Place in top of double-boiler (with water in bottom of pot and heat on gentle simmer).
2. Add small amount of water to soap, to help soap melt and to work soap into a melted, gel-like substance.
3. Simmer soap; stir gently. Avoid over-stirring to prevent creation and collection of air bubbles.
4. Remove from heat. Stir in the finely ground herbs and spices. Once cool enough to handle, form soap into firm, round balls. If desired, add a few whole dried herbs and spices — but none with very sharp edges.
5. Soap should be placed in a cool spot to cure for 2 to 3 weeks. The excess liquid evaporates and soap hardens.
6. Once the soap has reached the desired hardness, it is ready to use. You'll notice that the scent of the herb will improve and increase with age.

AROMATHERAPY HAND MASSAGE

(15 minutes)

***NOTE:** Inform members with allergies or sensitive skin that they may not wish to use the oil for their massage — although lavender oil is a very safe essential oil.

There are additional herbal activities listed in the Members' Manual.

MATERIALS:

- 30 ml carrier oil (almond oil or another light, non-greasy oil) per member
- Lavender essential oil with stopper lid*
- Squeeze bottle, about 500 ml (old shampoo bottle may work well)
- Paper towel or clean cloths

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Members may try this beginner massage on their own hands.
2. Tell members that the recipe for massage oil can also be used for bath oil.
3. Explain that essential oils are the pure oils of a plant, with an intense scent. **Note that these oils may not be consumed, and should only be used when diluted with a carrier oil such as almond, sunflower or grapeseed oil. (In a pinch, canola or olive oil will do.)**
4. Ask a junior member to pour a suitable volume (30 ml multiplied by the total number of members) of carrier oil into the shampoo bottle. To this quantity, ask the member to add 1 drop of lavender essential oil per 3 members. Lavender oil is noted for reducing stress.
5. Invite members to try the massage as follows. You may wish to create a calming, relaxing environment, with soothing music in the background and everyone comfortably seated. Read out the instructions on the following page.

AROMATHERAPY HAND MASSAGE

(Continued)

- Place a dollop (about 10 ml) of massage oil in your hand. Rubbing both of your palms together, spread the oil liberally over the inside surface of your hands.
 - Begin by gently, yet firmly, pulling each of the fingers of one hand. Start at the base, where fingers meet hand, and with long, continuous strokes, work your way toward the end of each finger. Repeat 2 or 3 times per finger.
 - Now massaging the hand, place your thumb on the fleshy ridge at the base of your other thumb, and grasp the hand. Use your thumb to apply gentle pressure to the area. Hold for 2 seconds, release and repeat, repositioning your thumb so that you eventually work your way over the entire fleshy area beneath the thumb.
 - Using small, circular motions, use your thumb to massage the area around the palm. Start near the wrist and work around the palm until you are rubbing the space between the thumb and forefinger.
 - Finish by rubbing your thumb back and forth in the palm, starting with firm strokes and ending with light, soft strokes. Now get more oil, change hands and repeat.
6. Members may wish to leave the massage oil on their hands, using paper towels or cloths to wipe off any excess.

ACHIEVEMENT ACTIVITY

(Optional)

Use this time to plan and prepare for the Achievement Activity.

Project Summary - 4-H Spice of Life

(Please complete this evaluation form at the end of the project)

A. Member Comments:

I joined this club because _____

I really enjoyed _____

I didn't enjoy _____

If I were to take this project again, I would change _____

I learned _____

I'm glad _____

B. Parent/Guardian Comments:

C. Leader Comments:

4H
Ontario



4-H

SPICE OF LIFE

Congratulations on successfully completing this 4-H project!

DATE

CLUB LEADER'S SIGNATURE

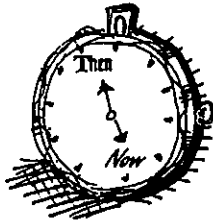
4H
Ontario



Ontario 4-H Council

SPICE of LIFE

Herbs and spices
have a long
flavourful history!



Learn all about it ~

~ get gardening ~



~ cook up a storm ~

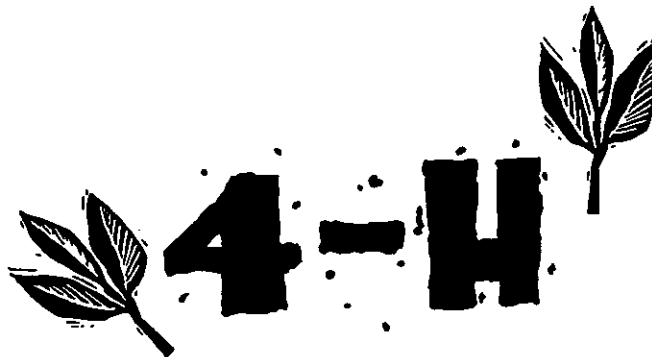


~ eat some
fine foods ~



~ and make
some
cool
crafts!

Learn lots! Have fun!



SPICE OF LIFE

(The **ZESTY** new project
from 4-H Ontario)



Members' Manual



Order No. 4-H 2220 00 ME / ISBN 0-7778-9277-4

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Ontario 4-H Program provides opportunities for the personal development of youth.

This project was written by
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INTRODUCTION

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THE 4-H PLEDGE

"I pledge
My HEAD to clearer thinking,
My HEART to greater loyalty,
My HANDS to larger service,
My HEALTH to better living,
For my club, my community and my country."

WELCOME, 4-H MEMBERS!

4-H is a program for youth that also involves adult volunteers, parents/guardians and the community. The aim of 4-H is to develop your skills, knowledge and attitudes in the spirit of fun and friendship. The Ontario 4-H Program values the concept of "learn to do by doing" and will continue to support opportunities for experiential learning. The program also values and encourages grassroots involvement and shared decision-making of all participants.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Spice of Life Project include:

1. To increase awareness, understanding and knowledge of a variety of herbs and spices.
2. To provide members with an overview of herbs and spices, their origins and uses, both traditional and cultural.
3. To provide members with the knowledge to identify a variety of common herbs and spices.
4. To provide members with the knowledge and skills to grow herbs in indoor pots and in outdoor gardens.
5. To provide members with the knowledge and skills to preserve and store herbs and spices.
6. To provide members with the knowledge and skills to use herbs and spices in cooking and craft activities.
7. To introduce members to some cosmetic and therapeutic uses of herbs and spices.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A member will complete a project satisfactorily by:

- participating in at least 2/3 of his/her own club meeting time;
- completing project requirements to the satisfaction of the club leader(s);
- taking part in an Achievement Program.

**GET
INVOLVED!**

Be willing to let your name stand for an executive position.
It is a rewarding and fun experience.
After your club's elections, complete this club executive chart:

4-H Club Executive

| Executive Position | Name | Telephone / E-mail |
|--------------------|------|--------------------|
| President | | |
| Vice-President | | |
| Secretary | | |
| Treasurer | | |
| Press Reporter | | |
| Other | | |

4-H Club Membership

| Members | Telephone / E-mail Address |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Leaders | Telephone / E-mail Address |
| | |
| | |
| 4-H Association Contact Person | Telephone / E-mail Address |
| | |

4-H Meeting Schedule

| Meeting Number | Date | Time | Place |
|---------------------|------|------|-------|
| Meeting 1 | | | |
| Meeting 2 | | | |
| Meeting 3 | | | |
| Meeting 4 | | | |
| Meeting 5 | | | |
| Meeting 6 | | | |
| Achievement Program | | | |

Comments and suggestions about 4-H manuals and guides are always welcome. Please send your feedback to: 4-H Resource Development Committee, Ontario 4-H Council

RR#5 Guelph, Ontario N1H 6J2

Phone/Fax: 1-800-937-5161; E-mail: lduke@ntl.sympatico.ca

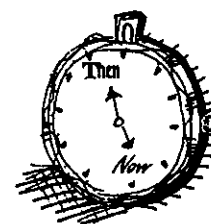
Website: www.4-hontario.ca

MEETING 1: WHAT'S A HERB? WHAT'S A SPICE?

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
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| What's a Herb? What's a Spice? | page 1 |
| A Few Familiar Faces | page 2 |
| Some Common Herbs and Spices | page 2 |
| Around the World | page 4 |
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Member's Notes: (You can use this space for drawings, pictures, notes about the project, events — whatever you want. Have fun!)

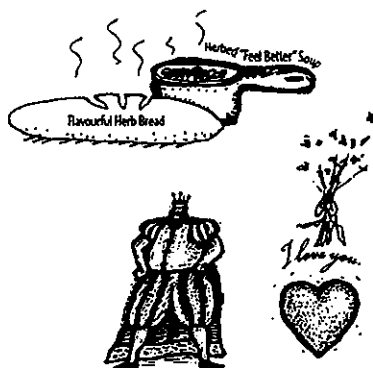
MEETING 1: WHAT'S A HERB? WHAT'S A SPICE?



Herbs and spices
have a long
flavourful history!

ROLL CALL

What is your favourite herb or spice?
How did you last use it?



Give honour here
with a herbal feast...
a crown of laurel...
...and some really nice mint leaves to freshen the breath...

For as long as history has been recorded, people have grown herbs and spices and used them to flavour their foods, cure their ills and honour their gods, their kings and queens, and their sweethearts.

In your own backyard, you can grow many of the herbs and spices you need to prepare foods that explode with flavour, create beautiful crafts and, perhaps, cast a spell or two!

This 4-H project is about herbs and spices: their history, cultivation and use. Enjoy this zesty adventure!

WHAT'S A HERB? AND WHAT'S A SPICE?

You could ask 100 botanists, gardeners and chefs this question and get 100 different answers.

One definition has it that an herb comes from the leaves or flowers of a plant, while a spice comes from the bark or roots. This leaves the seeds, which are sometimes considered herbs (fennel and caraway, for example) and other times are classed as spices (nutmeg, mustard and pepper).

A better definition is one designed for cooking and reflects how the plant was used. First, we define herbs and spices as those plant parts which are used **exclusively** for flavouring or seasoning. This excludes things like citrus fruits which are sometimes used for flavour, but are edible all on their own.

To distinguish between herbs and spices, ignore where they came from and consider how they are used.

- Herbs are used to provide mild, subtle flavours.
- Spices add a strong, robust taste.

Put another way, herbs support the main flavour of foods, while spices tend to accent foods.



A Few Familiar Faces ~ Most of us know what garlic looks like, and we can certainly recognize its smell, but what about caraway or paprika? Can you tell the difference between basil and oregano? These charts will get you started — reacquainting you with some familiar faces, and introducing you to some new ones.

Some Common Herbs and Spices (continued on next page)

| Herb/Spice | Looks & Tastes | Culinary Uses | Origins | Grown in Ontario? |
|-------------------|--|--|---|-------------------|
| BASIL | Dark green leaves have fresh, aromatic flavour | Use leaves in salads, salad dressings, pesto, tomato sauce | Southern Asia, Middle East | Yes |
| BAY LEAF | Large, dull green leaves (dried) with subtle, spicy flavour | Use leaves in soups, stews, sauces | Middle East, S. Europe | |
| BLACK PEPPERCORNS | Small, black, dried berries with mildly hot flavour | Use ground berries to give cooking a spicy 'kick' | South Asia | |
| CARAWAY | Dried seeds are long, thin & dark brown, with aromatic, spicy flavour. Leaves are feathery with mild licorice flavour. | Seeds are used to flavour cakes, breads, soups, stews & meats. Fresh young leaves may also be used as salad greens. | Temperate areas of Asia (e.g., Iran & Turkey) | |
| CHIVES | Long, thin, tubular leaves and pink or purple flowers. Onion-like flavour. | Leaves used fresh or dried in salads or as a seasoning (e.g., on baked potatoes). Flowers can be used fresh (in salads) or to flavour vinegar for salad dressings. | Unknown | Yes |
| CINNAMON | Bark used to make brown powder, flakes ('quillings') or rolled sticks. Pungent, sweet, spicy flavour. | Bark used in baking (especially with apples), but may also be used with meat stews (especially lamb) and Indian curries. | Sri Lanka | |
| CURRY | Yellow to orange powder or paste. Characteristic of Indian cuisine; spicy & usually quite hot, curry is a blend of ginger, cumin, pepper, coriander, chilies, cloves, turmeric, cinnamon & nutmeg. | Powder or paste used to flavour meat, fish and vegetable dishes. | India | |
| DILL | Feathery green leaves have a distinctive flavour characteristic of dill pickles. Seeds are small, flat, oval, greenish-brown, with a strong licorice taste. | Leaves used in soups, breads, salads, dips and fish dishes; seeds used in breads, stews & with cabbage & root veggies. | Eastern Mediterranean, Western Asia | Yes |
| GARLIC | White and/or purple bulb with papery skin; bulb may be broken into segments (cloves) and peeled. Cloves have pungent, aromatic flavour and aroma. | Cloves may be used whole, chopped or crushed, to flavour soups, sauces, salad dressings and meat dishes. | Central Asia, near Caspian Sea | Yes |

Some Common Herbs and Spices (continued)

| Herb/Spice | Looks & Tastes | Culinary Uses | Origins | Grown in Ontario? |
|-------------|--|--|--|-------------------|
| GINGER | Knobby, branched root with thin, brown skin; yellow inside. Fresh, sweet, spicy flavour. | Use dried or fresh, ginger root in desserts or other sweet dishes, as well as in curries, stews, stir-fry & meat dishes. | Tropical Asia | |
| HOT PEPPERS | Various sizes, shapes & colours (green, red, yellow, orange). Usually smaller than bell peppers. Hot, spicy flavour. | Pepper & seeds used to add 'fire' to soups and stews. Regular ingredient in Mexican and Indian foods. | Latin America | Yes |
| NUTMEG | Whole nutmeg is a slightly oblong, 3 cm-long, brown nut with sweet, spicy flavour. | Used ground in cheese & spinach dishes, cakes, eggnog, custard & fruit dishes. | East Indies | |
| OREGANO | Rich, aromatic, green-leafed herb | Use leaves, fresh or dried, to flavour soups, stews, sauces; great in Italian tomato sauces | Mediterranean Europe | Yes |
| PAPRIKA | Dried, ground flesh of hot or sweet red peppers | Use to season eggs, meat & poultry stews, fish, soups, vegetables, rice & cream sauces. | Mexico and now grown mainly in Spain & Hungary | |
| PARSLEY | Subtly aromatic, leafy green; small, curly or flat leaves (depending on variety) | Use leaves (dried or fresh) in omelettes, salads, soups & pasta dishes. Garnish may be used to freshen breath. | Southern Europe | Yes |
| ROSEMARY | Aromatic herb with needle-like leaves and small, light blue flowers | Use leaves to flavour meat dishes, tomato sauces, potato dishes & breads. | Mediterranean Europe | Yes |
| SAGE | Silvery grey leaves; aromatic, spicy flavour. | Leaves often used in chicken dishes and to flavour soups. | Mediterranean Europe | Yes |
| THYME | Small leaves of various colours (green, silvery grey, yellow-green, white-green) | Leaves used in meat dishes and salad dressings | Mediterranean Europe | Yes |

AROUND THE WORLD

Herbs and spices have been grown and used since the dawn of civilization. The Chinese are known to have had a very advanced tradition of herbal medicine, ranging as far back as 3700 BC. The Egyptians entombed their mummies with basil, rosemary and garlic. The pyramids were built by slaves fed a diet rich in garlic and onions.

More recently, the spice trade — combined with the search for precious metals and other goods — fuelled the race to colonize lands in Africa, the Far East and the Americas. The Portuguese, Italians, Dutch and Belgians fought many wars over dominance of the spice trade.



Every region of the world has contributed different herbs and spices to the global stew pot.

- From **Asia**, we get cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, pepper and ginger.
- We all recognize the smell of curry from **India**.
- From the **Americas** come allspice, vanilla and chilies.
- **Mediterranean** herbs include oregano, cilantro, mustard, fennel and poppy seeds.
- Northern and Eastern **Europe** is the home of caraway, dill and juniper.

HERBAL LORE

I'm a nice guy
~ really!
It's just this
condition I
have...



The production and use of herbs and spices has been closely connected to the history of human civilization. Owing to their long-standing history, it seems only natural that their mystical and magical powers have been spelled out in mythology and legends.

As anyone who has seen a Dracula movie knows, vampires cannot stand garlic. It turns out that **porphyria** — a rare disease whose symptoms include pale skin, sensitivity to light and enlarged incisors (pointy teeth) — could explain the strange, vampire-like behaviour of some individuals. Research now shows that a substance found in garlic aggravates this disease. Count Dracula, as you may guess, is known to have suffered from porphyria.

MEETING 2: GARDEN SEASONING

| | |
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Member's Notes: (You can use this space for drawings, pictures, notes about the project, events
– whatever you want. Have fun!)

MEETING 2: GARDEN SEASONING

ROLL CALL

Name a type of herb or spice you found in the kitchen or growing outside your home.

Name a herb or spice that you would like to grow. Why?



There's nothing quite like the aroma, the flavour and the satisfaction you'll get from your own home-grown herbs. Whether you have only a little space on your windowsill or a huge garden plot, you, too, can create your own herbal landscape and become a master herb gardener.

Seeds and seedlings of many herbs are widely available at nurseries, garden centres and grocery and hardware stores. You can begin by sowing a few seeds of your favourite herbs and expanding your knowledge and abilities from there.

- Garden experts,
- how-to guides,
- books,
- garden centres and
- Websites provide an abundance of easy-to-reach information. This expertise, combined with good seed and plant stock, will have you sowing and harvesting in no time.

The table on the following page provides an overview of some of the more common herbs that are grown in Ontario. This will give you an idea of what's out there and what it looks like, as well as some general savvy about how herbs are grown.

Where to from here? A bit of digging will lead you to discover some more exotic, less well-known herbs you may wish to include in your gardening escapades.

- Lemon balm,
- chamomile,
- lavender and
- fennel are just a few examples of some of the more out-of-the-way, yet interesting herbs that can put down roots in your garden.

Some Common Herbs Grown in Ontario

| Herb | What does it look like? | Growing Know-How |
|-------------|--|---|
| SWEET BASIL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knee-high, bushy plant • Oblong, pointed green or purple leaves • Spikelets of small white, pink or purple flowers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full sun • Well-drained, moist, rich soil • Annual |
| CHIVES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-shin-high, dark green, grass-like clump • Pink to purple, pom-pom flowers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full sun • Average to rich, well-drained soil • Perennial |
| DILL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thigh-high, wispy green plant • Small yellow flowers in palm-width clusters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full sun • Well-drained, medium-rich soil • Annual |
| GARLIC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulbs are size of child's fist • Knee- to thigh-high, green tubular stalks • Showy white or purple globe-shaped flowers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full sun • Rich, well-drained soil • Annual |
| MINT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knee-high, bushy plant with dark green fragrant leaves • Flowers form spikelets of pink or creamy white fuzzy blossoms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich, moist, well-drained soil • Perennial |
| OREGANO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knee-high, bushy plant with dark green leaves • Flowers may be small, white and tubular, or 'clouds' of tiny white, pink or purple flowers on wiry stems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full sun or light shade • Well-drained, average soil • Perennial or annual |
| PARSLEY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shin-high, spreading leafy plant with curly or flat leaves (depending on variety) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full sun to partial shade • Rich, moist, well-drained soil • Perennial |
| ROSEMARY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-spreading shrub with glossy, aromatic needle-like leaves • Tiny white or lavender flowers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full sun • Average, well-drained soil • Perennial (but not winter-hardy in Ontario) |
| SAGE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leathery, grey-green leaves on slightly woody stems • Shin-high, bushy plant • Attractive spikes of blue-purple flowers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full sun • Well-drained soil • Perennial |
| THYME | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small, glossy green leaves along slender woody stems • Clusters of pretty white or purple flowers • May be a shin-high, spreading bush or a low creeper (depending on variety) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full sun • Well-drained, sandy soil • Perennial |

TIP! ~ Spreading Herbs

Most herbs tend to be spreaders — meaning that they can soon take over your garden by seed or by root.

Keep varieties separate and slow down the spreading process by:
 (1) planting herbs in sunken containers OR
 (2) sinking pieces of wood or stiff plastic into the soil around them.



Mint is a notorious spreader!

SEED & PLANT SOURCES

For most common herbs, you can purchase seeds or plants from your local hardware or grocery store. As adventure creeps in, you may find yourself checking out garden centres and leafing through the pages of seed catalogues.

Search for great information on sources of herbs in Ontario:

- on the Web
- at the library
- in the telephone book.

Two cheaper, more exciting ways to get seeds:

- Trade with your neighbours
- Get involved in seed exchanges through gardening clubs or through the Seeds of Diversity (Canadian Branch) — see their Website at <http://www.seeds.ca>

TOGETHER WE STAND

TIP! ~

Companion Planting

Companion planting, in very simple terms, is the use of one plant to aid the growth of another.

In the right combinations, herbs have the potential to offer their herb, vegetable and floral neighbours a lot of support. Whether you hope to:

- ward off pests,
- provide climbing support,
- keep weeds down or
- provide nutrients,

you can boost your garden's yields with **companion planting**.

Examples of companion planting include:

- Garlic repels aphids (along with many other pests).
- Thyme provides groundcover to choke out weeds.
- Dill protects tomatoes from tomato hornworm.
- Basil repels all sorts of pesky insects.

NATURAL PEST REPELLENTS

Insect-repelling herbs can be used to make great natural pest sprays. Garlic spray is a good example.

To make **GARLIC SPRAY**:

1. Chop several cloves of garlic and barely cover with mineral oil.
2. Leave to steep overnight.
3. Next day, strain out the garlic pieces.
4. To use, dilute with 20 parts water to 1 part garlic oil. Place mixture in a spray bottle and mist plants as needed. Adding a few drops of dish soap to the brew will help the spray stick to plants.

Protect the Monarch Butterfly!

Most of us have seen the orange-and-black beauty of the Monarch butterfly. Mexico is doing its part to protect the Monarch's wintering grounds. In Ontario, we can help, too. By preserving the plants that the Monarch depends upon, you can create a bit of butterfly habitat in your own garden.

- Wild lupin,
 - golden alexander,
 - aster,
 - goldenrod,
 - black-eyed Susan,
 - grey-headed coneflower and
 - Joe-pye weed
- are all favourite foods of butterflies.



Not all insects are pests!
Some bugs are our buddies ~
such as the ladybug and
Monarch butterfly.

For a list of resources on butterfly gardening, see the Evergreen Foundation Website at: <http://www.evergreen.ca>

Encourage beneficial insects

Ladybugs and other beneficial insects will eat many of the pests living in your garden. They will be attracted to your garden if you provide a variety of flowers blooming throughout the growing season. Ladybugs especially enjoy:

- the nectar and pollen of ~ mints,
thyme,
savory, and
rosemary, and
- the flowers of ~ dill,
fennel and
angelica.

DESIGNING AN OUTDOOR HERB GARDEN

Even the wildest-looking gardens usually have a lot of planning and thought behind them. When creating your design, consider:

- colour
- size and height
- time of season the plant blooms
- attracting wildlife
- pest prevention.

Begin the planning process by deciding how you intend to use your garden.

- If you hope to spend time basking in the glow of your herbal blooms, you may wish to prepare a design which includes seating in a peaceful, shaded spot.
- If, on the other hand, you wish your garden to assume a purely practical purpose as a kitchen herb garden, you'll want your plot located close to the kitchen.

In any case, your purpose (whether practical, beautiful or otherwise) is your framework, giving you the basis of your garden design.

DESIGNING AN OUTDOOR HERB GARDEN

(Continued)

Armed with your framework (and a sense of possibility), follow these steps before you start putting seeds, seedlings and plants in the ground:

1. **Get your creative juices flowing.** Gardening books are an excellent place to begin picturing your ideas (visions) — giving you neat ideas to explore in your own herbal beds.
2. **Size.** Start small. Think along the lines of a 5-year plan and let your garden grow with your knowledge and experience.
3. **Style.** Consider the style, or look, you're aiming for. Keep this in the back of your mind as you set your design and select your plants.
4. **Space.** Consider the size required for your garden. How big an area do you want? Can you maintain it easily? Is it an area that you will need permission to use?
5. **Sun.** Pick a sunny site with good, well-drained soil. If this is not available, choose a shady site with poor soil. Almost nothing can thwart the efforts of a determined gardener (armed with some shade-tolerant herbs and a little compost, that is!).
6. **Sketch it.** Measure your site and sketch it on squared grid paper. Do not let the squares limit the shape of your garden — circles, ovals and octagons are some of the countless possibilities.
7. **Draw your design scheme.** Here are some examples of garden design ideas to get you thinking:

The Kidney-shaped Garden lends an informal air, while the Small Garden with Urn provides a strong central focal point.



Kidney-shaped Garden

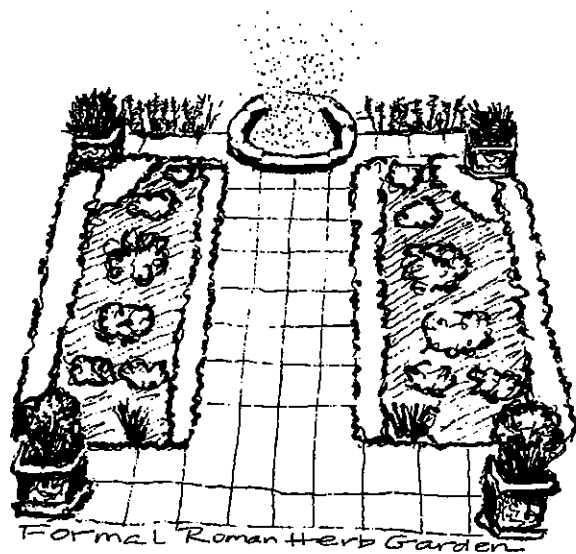


Small Garden with Urn

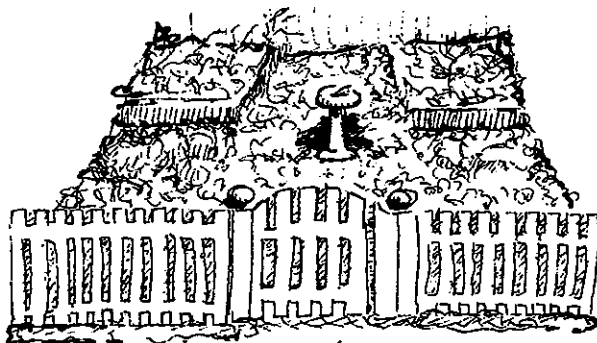
DESIGNING AN OUTDOOR HERB GARDEN

(Continued)

This Formal Roman Herb Garden features containers at the 4 corners and a small fountain at the far end.



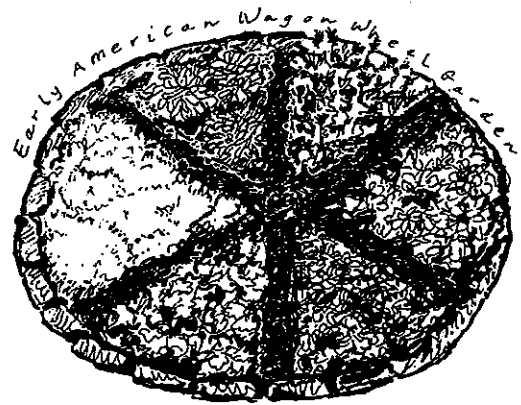
Formal Roman Herb Garden



Pioneer's 4-Square garden.

The Pioneer's 4-Square Garden is surrounded by a white picket fence.

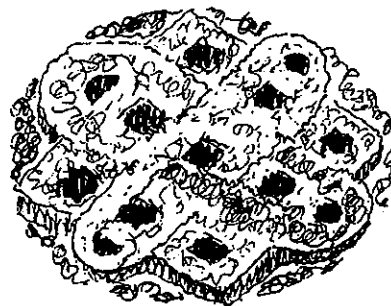
The Early American Wagon Wheel design uses the spokes of a wheel to create pie-shaped wedges for herb plantings. Bricks or stones could also be used to define the space; then simply fill in with your choice of herbs.



Early American Wagon Wheel Garden



Knot Gardens



The first Knot Gardens were made 500 years ago. There are many variations in pattern and design; devise your own!

DESIGNING AN OUTDOOR HERB GARDEN

(Continued)

8. **Placement.** Position individual plants, pathways, seating areas and garden ornaments. Give consideration to:
- colour
 - plant height
 - flowering sequence
 - access to herbs you intend to harvest.

Note the types of materials you intend to use for your pathways (such as mulch, inlaid brick, stones, wood blocks, etc.).

The Colours of Herbs

| | |
|--------------|---|
| BLUE | Blue balsam, mint, borage, lavender, violets |
| BRIGHT GREEN | Dill, fennel, golden sage, lovage |
| DEEP GREEN | Rosemary, winter savory |
| ORANGE | Calendula, nasturtium |
| PINK | Chives, clove pink, pot marjoram, rose, saffron, yarrow |
| PURPLE | Bronze fennel, opal basil, perilla, purple sage |
| RED | Bee balm, pineapple sage |
| SILVER-GREY | Artemisia, costmary, horehound, lamb's ears, lavender, sage |
| WHITE | Garlic chive, woodruff |
| YELLOW | Chamomile, costmary, dill, goldenrod, tansy, yarrow |

The following books are just a few among many that could help you brainstorm ideas on garden design:

1. "The Herb Gardener: A Guide for All Seasons" by Susan McClure
2. "Fresh Herbs" by Barbara Radcliffe Rogers

OPTICAL ILLUSIONS

If you want your space to appear larger than it is, these tricks will fool the eye and create the illusion of depth:

1. Put in a curved path.
2. Use various shades of green and few bright blossoms.
3. Place tall plants along the sides and at the rear.

In a small space, you can also set the stones of your path farther apart and plant something like creeping thyme to grow between the flagstones. On the other hand, if you have a large garden, you will want a focal point like a sun-dial, statue, birdbath or a raised bed in the centre or at one end. A focal point will tie together the various parts of a large garden and make it a cozier place to be.

CONTAINER GARDENING

Don't have enough yard space for a permanent herb garden?

Want to experiment with different layouts?

Perhaps you have a patio or a back deck where you could have pots — or maybe you have a windowsill where you could hang a box.

By planting your herbs in containers, you can:

- move plants around according to your decorating whims;
- experience different layouts and colour combinations; and
- add colour to a paved or cemented outdoor sitting area.

A few things to keep in mind as you plan a container garden:

1. **Avoid wet feet** (for your plants, that is!). It is essential that all your containers have drainage holes; without them, soil becomes water-logged and plants may die. If you have a pot you really like, but it does not have drainage holes, try drilling a hole in the bottom or planting into a smaller pot, with holes, and setting the smaller pot into the larger, decorative one.
2. **Size is important.** When you match plants to containers, consider whether the plants and their root systems will be too big, too small or just right for your container. The width should be 6 cm bigger than the width of a root ball (that mat of tangled roots clutching the soil). Your pot should be at least 20 cm deep for most herbs — deeper if your herbs have very long roots.
3. **Use the right stuff.** You can use terra cotta, concrete, plastic, fibreglass, wood or metal pots. Weird and wacky things can also be used: wheelbarrows, old milk cans and wooden crates. Just remember that the soil should not come in direct contact with metal, because metal will rust and release poisons into your soil. Containers with old soil should be well-cleaned to prevent disease.
4. **Keep plants fed and watered.** You will have to be more careful watering and feeding your container garden than you would a regular garden. Pots dry out more quickly and nutrients in a small amount of soil can quickly run out.
5. **Keep the soil light.** Regular garden soil will not work very well in pots. Buy a potting mix or make your own with 1 to 2 parts good-quality garden soil, 1 part peat moss or compost, plus 1 part perlite or builder's sand. Add 15 ml bone meal per litre of mix.
6. **Let there be method to your madness.** Similar to designing a regular garden, you should consider what you want from a container garden. You might want to make a salad garden with lettuce, dill, chives, cherry tomatoes, basil and some edible flowers; a herbal tea garden; or perhaps a grouping of your favourite Italian seasonings to hang in a box outside your kitchen window. Use your imagination and go for it!



CONTAINER GARDENING

(Continued)

Types of Containers

| Container Type | Pros | Cons |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Terra cotta | Attractive, good drainage | Breakable. Dries out very quickly. |
| Concrete | Long-lasting | Heavy |
| Plastic & Fibreglass | Lightweight, inexpensive, holds water well | Can become brittle with age |
| Wood | Attractive & rustic | Can rot or show water damage (prevent this by using rot-resistant wood such as cedar) |
| Metal | Strong & lightweight | May rust; must be lined (soil should not touch metal) |

For more tips and ideas on container gardening, here are a couple of suggestions:

1. "Rodale's Encyclopaedia of Organic Gardening" by Fern Marshall Bradley and Barbara W. Ellis, editors
2. "The Herb Gardener: A Guide for All Seasons" by Susan McClure
3. "Container Gardening" by Cynthia Bix

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE GREAT INDOORS

Anything that can be grown outdoors can be grown indoors. However, when you are dealing with real plants in real houses cared for by real people, some things work better than others!

Here is a list of what is easy, difficult and darned near impossible to grow indoors:

Right at home in your home:

- Basil, bay, chives, marjoram, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, scented geraniums, tarragon, thyme, winter savory

A little tougher to grow:

- Chamomile (needs lots of light), chervil (needs lots of light), coriander (sparse watering), sage (sparse watering)

Don't try this at home:

- Anise, hyssop, borage, caraway, comfrey, dill, feverfew, yarrow

WATER



TIP! ~

When to Water

One easy rule to remember about watering is: "when in doubt, don't". One day without water is not going to hurt a plant if it is not already very dry — but one week of soggy soil most certainly will do damage.

Too much water is the Number 1 cause of death with houseplants.

When you give plants too much water:

- the soil gets waterlogged and packed down,
- fungus and mould start to grow, and
- the roots die by drowning and suffocation.

This means that there is water everywhere and no roots to drink it.

The second most common cause of death for houseplants is — you guessed it! — underwatering. The trick is to be very careful to give your herbs just the right amount of water.

1. Before you water, test the soil by sticking your finger in the soil, up to the first knuckle (away from the base of the plant to avoid damaging the roots).
2. If you reach damp soil, do not water.
3. If the soil beneath is dry, water.
4. You should check your plants every day. Make it part of your routine before or after school.

AIR

Just like soil, air can be too dry. In fact, the air in your house will almost always be too dry for your herbs — especially in winter. The easiest way to remedy this is to use a spray bottle to give your plants a light misting with water once a day (or as often as you can).

LIGHT

Your herbs will need a lot of light — at least 6 hours of direct sunlight every day. This will be hard to provide during the winter, unless you have a bay window or a greenhouse. Cozy your herbs right up against a south-facing window (without touching the glass) and give them all the light that you can.

MEETING 8: FROM GARDEN TO SPICE RACK

| | |
|--|---------|
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| Drying | page 17 |
| Preserving Herbed & Spiced Vinegars | page 19 |
| Preserving Herbed & Spiced Oils | page 20 |
| Food Poisoning Alert! | page 20 |
| How Do I Cook with This? | page 21 |
| Im-Press-ive Herbs (Pressing Fresh Herbs for Craft Projects) | page 21 |

Member's Notes: (You can use this space for drawings, pictures, notes about the project, events — whatever you want. Have fun!)

MEETING 3:

FROM GARDEN TO SPICE RACK

ROLL CALL

What is your favourite salad dressing?
Can you name 1 herb or spice it contains?

As important as how you grow your herbs is how you harvest, preserve and store them. After spending all that energy starting seeds, planting seedlings, weeding and watering, you'll want to get the harvest steps right so that you can revel in the fruits of your labour. Your chart, "Some Common Herbs and Spices" (in Meeting 1), will help you to select the plant parts that are suitable for harvesting and eating.

THE HARVEST

Every herb and spice has its own special harvesting needs. The following guidelines will give you a good general starting point, regardless of the type of herb or spice you're harvesting.

TIP! ~

Harvesting Leaves

- Handle leaves as little as possible; bruising or crushing leaves releases the oils that contain the flavour of the herb.

- If the leaves are very dirty, wash them with a fine mist and let them dry.

TIP! ~

Plants with Crowns

When harvesting plants that grow from a central root crown (such as chives), cut stems close to the ground rather than taking a little bit off each stem.

Leaves

Leaves can be picked throughout the growing season; some say this can begin as soon as you put a seedling in the ground. Most herbs — especially basil — thrive with constant, light harvesting. Snipping off the top of the basil plant, just as it shows signs of flowering, will encourage the plant to split into 2 stems, creating a healthy, bushy plant with lots of stems and lots of leaves. This is what you're aiming for!

Herbs tend to have their best flavour before the plant flowers. Leaves on flowering plants tend to have a slightly bitter taste. To stretch out the harvest period, pinch or snip off flowers just as the buds begin to appear.

Harvest large-leafed herbs (such as sage) by pinching off individual leaves. Harvest herbs with very small leaves (such as thyme) by cutting off lengths of the stem. Harvesting all types (big leaves, small leaves, flowers) should be done just after the morning dew has evaporated or just before the evening dew has fallen.

You can harvest as much as 3/4 of most herbs and still have a living, productive plant to show for it. After a good harvesting spree, however, it's wise to give herbs a bit of time to recover.

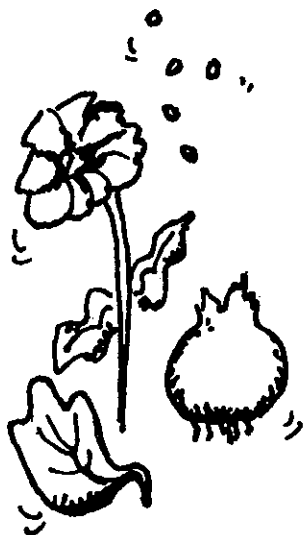
THE HARVEST

(Continued)

TIP! ~

Seed Flavour

The flavour of seed is often quite distinct from the herbaceous part of the same plant. Dill seed, for example, has a flavour a bit like dill weed, but with a licorice-like twist.



Flowers

Flowers should be picked carefully, just as the flower has opened or begun to open. Be very careful not to damage the blossoms, as most flowers are quite delicate. Avoid old, damaged or wilted blossoms; these should either be removed (to encourage repeated flowering) or left on the plant (for seed collection).

Bulbs

Harvest bulbs (such as garlic and onions) in late summer when the leaves have died back. Pull the bulbs out of the ground by getting a firm grasp of the dead leaf stalks. You may need to loosen the soil first; do this gently with a garden fork.

Seeds

Saving seeds is a rewarding way to cut gardening costs; many seeds can also be used as cooking spices. Whether you are adding to your spice rack or collecting seeds for next year's garden, the harvest procedure is the same. Timing is very important. Seeds must be collected after they have fully ripened, but before they fall to the ground. As a rule of thumb, there should be no green showing in the seeds when you collect them, and the pods should be very dry and crunchy.

To collect seeds, remove the flower stalk from the plant and invert it over a container or paper bag. Place the container in an airy room to dry for a few days. As plants dry, the seeds will fall out, conveniently landing in your container or bag. Seeds should then be stored in a well-sealed, clean, dry jar and kept in a cool, dark place.

Roots

Edible roots (such as horseradish and angelica) should be dug up in autumn, when the upper plant parts have completely died back. Because roots are underground, they will not be damaged by a couple of frosts. With horseradish, frost will actually improve the flavour.

These books, among others, will get you started in your discovery of the harvesting needs of herbs and spices:

1. "The Harrowsmith Illustrated Book of Herbs" by Patrick Lima
2. "Rodale's All-New Encyclopaedia of Organic Gardening" by Fern Marshall Bradley and Barbara W. Ellis, editors

PRESERVATION & STORAGE



TIP! ~

Label Your Wares!

What is obviously basil now — as you handle the herb for storage — may later appear to be oregano or mint.

Labels should include the:

- name of the herb or spice
- date of harvest.

DRYING

There is, of course, nothing like the flavour and aroma of fresh herbs. Unfortunately, fresh herbs aren't always close at hand. This means that you may wish to put some herbs away — in storage — to use when you're ready to conjure up a taste of your garden.

- **Drying** is the most common method used to preserve herbs and spices.
- Freezing is sometimes the better option.

Your choice of preservation technique will depend on the type of herb or spice you are working with.

Drying is best for...

| | |
|----------|---------|
| fennel | lovage |
| mint | oregano |
| rosemary | savory |
| tarragon | thyme |

Freezing is best for...

| | |
|---------|-------------|
| basil | chervil |
| chives | cilantro |
| dill | lemon balm |
| parsley | hot peppers |
| sage | sorrel |

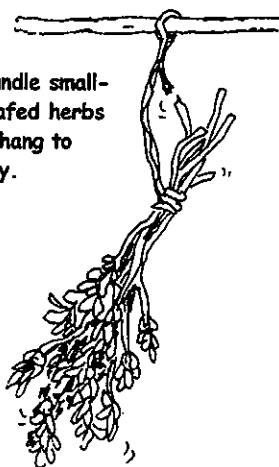
That's not to say you can't dry dill or freeze fennel — feel free to experiment!

Use any method that removes moisture quickly, but that will not get herbs so hot that the flavourful oils (also known as **essential oils**) evaporate. Once dried, store in a cool, dark environment in a well-sealed container. This will help preserve the flavour of the herb. Follow the guidelines for harvesting, then proceed as follows:

- Quick-drying helps preserve flavour, but **don't get your herbs too hot** or you may lose the flavourful essential oils. 35°C to 45°C is the optimal temperature range for air drying, but you can also dry herbs quite successfully at lower temperatures.
- **Large leaves should be removed** from the plant at harvest and laid flat on a drying rack.
- With small-leaved plants (rosemary and thyme, for example), cut stem lengths and **keep the leaves on** until they are dry.
- **Keep drying herbs in the dark.** Light diminishes the colour and flavour of herbs.
- Roots may be dried similarly to leaves; however, you should cut **thick roots lengthwise** and dry them at a higher temperature (up to 60°C).

Now that you know the principles of drying, here are a few methods that are commonly used:

Bundle small-leafed herbs & hang to dry.



Air-Drying

Dry your herbs as quickly as possible, in a fairly dark, warm (not hot) place with good air-flow. Attics, barns, garages and empty grain bins are all good places.

Keep the leaves on the stems of small-leafed herbs and bundle 3 or 4 stems together with an elastic band. Hang the bundles upside-down. With large-leafed herbs, spread out the leaves on a porous or mesh drying tray through which air can circulate.

This method may take 1 to 4 weeks, but check herbs for dryness every few days.

When the leaves are crisp, rub them off the stems (small-leafed herbs) and store.



Spread large-leafed herbs on a porous or mesh drying tray.

Oven-Drying

Spread herbs out on a cookie sheet lined with paper towels. Place cookie sheet in the oven, using only the oven light (turned on) as the source of heat. Turn herbs occasionally and check for dryness. Try to avoid over-drying: when herbs get too dry, they crumble to a fine powder and their flavour is lost.

Microwave-Drying

Microwaves can speed up the drying process and, according to some people, result in better-quality dried herbs. Position herbs between 2 pieces of paper towel. Microwave on full power for 1 minute, then check for dryness. If further drying is needed, continue in 30-second intervals until drying is complete. You're aiming for crisp herbs — not powdery — when crushed.

Freezing

There are several ways to freeze herbs.

You can:

- (1) Freeze them packed tightly into a plastic bag;
- (2) Chop them up, add water and freeze in an ice cube tray;
- (3) Make an herb-and-oil paste and freeze.

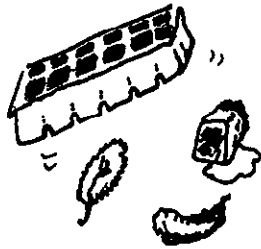
PRESERVING HERB & SPICE VINEGARS

TIP! ~

How Much Vinegar?

As the concentration of vinegar is lowered, so, too, are its abilities to preserve and keep food. Starting with a few herbs and spices and working up to increasing concentrations is a good, safe approach.

Make sure there is at least twice as much vinegar as herbs/spices.



(1) Plastic Bag Method

Pack whole leaves — tightly — into freezer bags, remove excess air, seal well and freeze. To use herbs frozen in this way, remove from freezer and use a sharp knife to cut off the desired amount. Chop this up and add to soups, stews and sauces. Keep in mind that although this method does a great job of preserving flavour, most frozen herbs will be limp and mushy when thawed. For this reason, it is best to use frozen herbs in cooked dishes and not salads.

(2) Ice Cube Method

Mince herbs and pack into the compartments of an ice cube tray. Cover with just enough water to make cubes; freeze. Once cubes have frozen, remove from tray, place in freezer bag, remove excess air, seal tightly and return them to the freezer. Don't forget to label!

(3) Oil Paste Method

Add 125 ml of vegetable oil to 500 ml of finely chopped herbs. Pack the oil-and-herb paste in airtight, freezer-proof containers and store in the freezer. The advantages of this method are that the oil keeps the herbs from freezing, thawing and drying out in the freezer; also, oil will not quite freeze into a solid, allowing you to scoop or cut out just the right amount when you need it.

Vinegar helps preserve the fresh flavour of herbs. Used in salad dressings, marinades and anything that needs a splash of 'zing', herbed and spiced vinegars lend an exotic background to cooking.

There are many ways to make herbed & spiced vinegar, with many unique and creative results. Herbs and spices may be used on their own or in combination. These ingredients can be paired with one of the different types of vinegar (white wine vinegar, apple cider, red wine vinegar, balsamic vinegar and others).

To make flavoured vinegar, add 1 part lightly packed fresh herbs (and spices) to 2 parts vinegar of your choice. Place ingredients in a clean glass jar, close the lid and allow to steep, at room temperature, for 2 to 3 weeks. Some vinegar connoisseurs swear that a sunny windowsill is the best place for steeping — this will allow you to admire your hard work! Others in the know state that the sun may bleach the colours of the contents and therefore insist that a dark corner is best. Experience will lead you to draw your own conclusions.

You will know that the vinegar has adequately steeped when, upon opening the jar, the air is filled with the aroma of herbs and spices. At this stage, filter the vinegar through layers of cheesecloth to reduce any cloudiness. Pour the strained vinegar into sterile, decorative glass bottles, add a sprig of fresh herb and/or a few whole spices, then seal and label the jar. Store vinegar in the fridge.

TIP! ~

Sagely Advice

• Rubbing your fingers gently over your herbs to bruise the leaves and stems will help to release the aromatic oils.

• Preparing and using small batches of oils and vinegars will prevent your creations from going rancid or developing 'off-flavours'.

• Fresh herbs must be washed and dried thoroughly before infusion.

PRESERVING HERB & SPICE OILS

TIP! ~

Try Canola Oil

Canola oil is always a good bet — it is produced in Ontario and can be used in salad dressings (light taste, low saturated fat). It's also heat-stable (won't break down when heated) in frying and cooking.

Herbal flowers lend their colours to white wine vinegar.

- Violets, opal basil and chive blossoms will give vinegar a purple hue;
- Borage flowers provide a pale blue background; and
- Nasturtium flowers create a lovely golden glow.

It is recommended that you use dried herbs when creating your herbed vinegar.

Herbed and spiced oils have made their debut. Now found in gift boutiques, grocery stores, gourmet shops and many a well-stocked pantry, flavoured oils have aroused the curiosity of cooks everywhere. Usually displayed on kitchen countertops, in elegant bottles with fancy lids and labels, this flavourful ingredient is forging adventurous new ground. Used in salad dressings, marinades or as a base for sautéing, herbed and spiced oils have put flavour close at hand in the kitchen.

With a little imagination, you can create your own herbed and spiced oils. Simply place your choice of herbs and spices into a glass jar and fill with your preferred type of oil. Cap the jar and place in a cool, dark place for 2 to 3 weeks. As with the instructions for making flavoured vinegars, you will know when your oil is ready when you remove the lid and scent rises from the jar. At this stage, you may filter the mixture through layers of cheesecloth and place in attractive, sterile glass bottles. Adding a sprig of herb with a few decorative spices will bestow upon the oil a lovely ornamental quality.

Food Poisoning Alert!

When you prepare herbed and spiced oils, you need to take care to prevent rancidity or botulism (a nasty, dangerous type of food poisoning). Here are a few recommended precautions:

- Keep oil in the fridge or freezer and warm to room temperature 15 minutes before using.
- Use dried herbs and spices in oils. Fresh herbs may also be used, but can be a little trickier to preserve.
- Make your seasoned oils in small batches; use them up quickly or discard any surplus after 3 weeks.

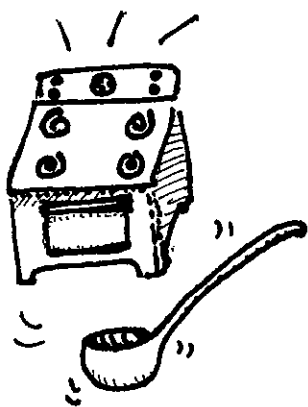
HOW DO I COOK WITH THIS?

How you cook with a herb or spice depends partly on whether it is fresh, dried or frozen (in water or in oil) and partly on the type of flavour you're aiming for. Garlic, for example, can impart a sweet, mild flavour when it is simmered in a stew; its flavour is hot and spicy (with that unmistakably garlic taste) when eaten raw.

There are no hard-and-fast rules. The fun of cooking lies in experimentation — okay, of course the eating part is fun, too! — but here are some general rules that seem to work:

The Rules of Cooking with Herbs & Spices:

1. Fresh herbs should be added during the final 15 minutes of cooking. Cooking fresh herbs for a long time will cause most of the flavourful essential oils to evaporate and escape. Of course, this makes your cooking smell great — but what you smell during cooking is what you won't taste while you're eating!
2. Dried herbs should be added a little earlier than fresh herbs, as it may take them a little longer to release their flavours.
3. Spices are usually cooked in hot oil — for example, while sautéing the onions for a curry. This helps release the essential oils within the spice that carries the flavour.
4. Frozen herbs can be added at the same time as you would add dried herbs, giving them enough time to thaw.



IM-PRESS-IVE HERBS

(Pressing Fresh Herbs
for Craft Projects)

There are many techniques and devices that may be used to press fresh herbs. The best methods dry herbs thoroughly and quickly, helping preserve colour and preventing moulds from growing. One easy way to press herbs involves placing the plant parts between layers of white paper towel. Herbs should be laid out in the shape and position in which you hope to use them (that is, flower laid out flat, leaves open, etc.). The paper towel layers should be placed between equally sized layers of corrugated cardboard, resulting in a stack of up to 10 or 12 paper towel-covered specimens.

Place the stack on a firm, moveable surface (try a cookie sheet) and weight the whole pile down with something heavy (try a large dictionary or the heaviest book in your house). Herbs will be ready in 1 week to 1 month. Monitor herbs in the centre of the pile to get an idea of how well all the herbs are drying.

Tips for Drying & Pressing Herbs and Flowers

1. Dry your specimens immediately after harvesting.
2. Colours will change with drying. You may wish to press a sample of a few different types of herbs and flowers before you launch into a big craft project.
3. Dry herbs and flowers in a dark, dry, well-ventilated space. Attics, garages and garden sheds often fit the bill.
4. Be warned: plant materials will shrink! Harvest enough plants to take this into account.
5. Drying magnifies small flaws. Use a discriminating eye to choose perfect specimens.



TIP! ~

Microwave-drying Flowers

Microwave-drying is a quick method of preserving flowers.

- Place floral parts between layers of paper towel. Place in the microwave with a cup of water.
- Microwave on high for 2 minutes.
- Materials will be dry when crisp. If additional time is needed, repeat in 30-second increments.
- With special or rare plant material, be sure to do a test run first.

Hung Out to Dry

Dried herbal flowers can be used to create interesting, aromatic crafts. Start with clean specimens with long stems.

1. Secure bundles of herbs and flowers together by wrapping an elastic band around the stems. Flowers and stems will shrink as they dry; elastics will contract with them to maintain their hold on the stems.
2. Hang flowers upside-down, vertically from the ceiling, the same as you would a bundle of herbs for drying.
3. In a few days, with the right conditions (dry, cool and dark), your flowers should be ready to use. Check by bending the stems near the base; a fully dried stem will snap when you bend it.

Dried roses are a standard component of floral crafts. These require special consideration. Pluck petals from large roses and dry on pieces of paper towel. Small rosebuds and miniature roses may be dried whole.

Dried and pressed herbs may be used in craft activities in Meeting 5.

MEETING 4: A TASTE OF HERBS & SPICES

| | |
|--|---------|
| Roll Call | page 23 |
| Spices for the Bold & Adventurous | page 23 |
| Herb & Spice Snack Time | page 24 |
| Herb & Spice Meal Time | page 26 |
| Flowers for Dinner? You must be bloomin' kidding! | page 27 |
| Herb & Spice Salad Time | page 27 |
| Herbs to Give Your 'Pinky' a Lift: Herb & Spice Tea Time | page 32 |

Member's Notes: (You can use this space for drawings, pictures, notes about the project, events
— whatever you want. Have fun!)

MEETING 4:

A TASTE OF HERBS & SPICES

ROLL CALL

What are some examples of how herbs and spices are used in everyday life (from morning to night)?



Okay, now you can grow them, harvest them, preserve and store them. But let's face it, what herbs and spices are really about is eating! From the cinnamon muffins you ate for breakfast to the pot roast you had for dinner, herbs and spices are very much a part of your world and the food you eat. Food is amazingly delicious when you go beyond salt and pepper to create rich flavours. Best of all, you don't need to be a master chef to achieve this!

- If you are just beginning, start small. You don't need to overpower food; you just want to enhance its flavour.
- Dried herbs are more powerful than fresh, so if you're substituting fresh for dried, use 3 times the amount.
- Learn the correct herb-and-spice combinations (from reliable cookbooks like "The Joy of Cooking") and experiment.
- Refer to the chart in Meeting 1 ("Some Common Herbs and Spices") for a basic guide on how some of the more common herbs and spices can be used.
- If a recipe calls for a herb or spice that you don't have, don't despair! There are substitutes available. "The Joy of Cooking" has a long list of acceptable replacements.

This meeting will follow the theme of putting together a picnic. Read on for some ideas of things you can make for your Herb & Spice Meal.

SPICES FOR THE BOLD & ADVENTUROUS

Hot peppers come immediately to mind when we think of spices. Central and South America have hot spices all figured out, and have made them a food staple. To get your eyes watering and your nose running (if you like those sorts of things!), try the following recipe. With experience, you'll learn how to alter this recipe to make it just hot enough for your liking.

HERB & SPICE SNACK TIME

* SAFETY NOTE:

Hot peppers can sting!
You may wish to wear
rubber gloves when
working with hot peppers
— or, at least, wash your
hands very well after
handling hot peppers.

* ADDITIONAL NOTE:

For a hotter flavour,
substitute jalapeno
peppers for mild chili
peppers. Also, pickled hot
peppers or dried crushed
chili peppers may be used
in place of fresh hot
peppers.



SALSA - 10 servings

Yield: 1250 ml

Prep. Time: 20 minutes

Good with nachos or as a topping on other entrées.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 tomatoes, finely diced (about 1.5L)
- 25 ml finely diced onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 mild chili pepper, finely diced
- 25 ml fresh cilantro, finely chopped
- 15 ml lime juice
- 2 ml salt
- 2 ml freshly ground black pepper

EQUIPMENT:

- Cutting board
- Sharp knife
- Measuring cup and spoons
- Garlic press
- Medium-sized serving bowl
- Wooden spoon
- Serving spoon

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, combine diced tomatoes, onion, garlic clove, chili peppers, cilantro, lime juice, salt and pepper. With wooden spoon, mix together, stirring gently. Taste and adjust seasonings if necessary.
3. Place in serving bowl, cover and refrigerate until ready to use. Serve with guacamole and tortilla chips.

HERB & SPICE SNACK TIME

GUACAMOLE

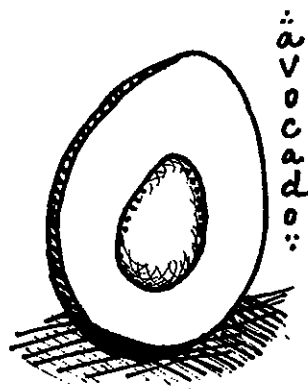
Yield: 375 ml

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

Guacamole adds another layer of adventure to the tortilla chip experience. Guacamole showcases garlic — at its finest! It also has a nice taming effect on the hot peppers in the salsa.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 ripe avocados
- 10 ml lemon juice
- 100 ml yogourt
- 2 ml salt
- 1 clove garlic, minced



EQUIPMENT:

- Paring knife
- Dessert spoon
- Fork
- Medium-sized mixing bowl
- Measuring cup and spoons
- Garlic press
- Spatula
- Small- to medium-sized sealable serving bowl

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. Cut avocados in half and remove seeds. Use a spoon to remove each avocado from its skin; place in medium-sized bowl.
3. Use a fork to mash avocado until smooth.
4. Add yogourt, lemon juice, garlic and salt. Stir well to combine. If desired, add a small amount of salsa to the guacamole. Combine well.
5. Place in sealed container until ready to use. (Note important TIP at left.)

TIP! ~ Prevent Avocado from Darkening

If not serving guacamole immediately after preparing it, bury 1 avocado seed in the mixture to prevent darkening — this really works! Cover and refrigerate. Remove seed from mixture before serving.

PESTO

When you've made pesto, everybody in your house will know it! The kitchen (and the rest of the house) will be rich with the aroma of basil and garlic. This trademark pasta sauce is a tradition of the Italian Riviera. Traditionally, it is made by hand — with a mortar and pestle — but nowadays many people use a food processor or blender.

Pesto has as many recipes as there are chefs who love it, but its normal form carries a blend of basil, olive oil, garlic, pine nuts and fresh Parmesan cheese. You can use the basic recipe below — or branch out and try adding different ingredients. Some people add butter or cream. You can substitute sunflower seeds or walnuts for the (very expensive) pine nuts. You can also make completely different kinds of pesto using oregano, thyme, olives and sun-dried tomatoes. Find recipes on the Internet or in cookbooks and cooking magazines. Better yet, do some experimenting and come up with your own creations...Chocolate pesto? Hmmm, it just might work...

Yield: 250 ml

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 500 ml (packed) fresh basil leaves
- 4 small (OR 2 large) cloves of garlic
- 75 ml olive oil
- 175 ml grated Romano or Parmesan cheese (fresh is best, but dried will do)



EQUIPMENT:

- Food processor or blender
- Spatula
- Measuring cups
- Container with lid

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. Wash basil leaves and dry well.
3. In food processor or blender, combine basil leaves, garlic, olive oil and grated cheese.
4. Process or blend at high speed until all is blended, stopping occasionally to scrape down sides. Process or blend until all ingredients form a thick paste.
5. Place in container with lid and refrigerate until ready to use.

You can mix pesto with cooked pasta (instead of a tomato sauce).

FLOWER FOR DINNER? YOU MUST BE BLOOMIN' KIDDING!

TIP! ~

Saffron

Saffron is one of the most expensive spices in the world. Prized for its vibrant yellow colour, saffron lends itself to exotic dishes including Spanish Paella.

Saffron is really just the stigma found in crocus flowers — but with only 3 per flower, it takes almost a quarter of a million crocus flowers to make 450 g of saffron. That's the same weight as a brick of butter!

HERB & SPICE SALAD TIME

Leaves, seeds, roots and stems are not the only parts of a herb plant that will set your tastebuds tingling. Many herbs have edible, showy flowers. While presenting a lovely aroma, these blossoms can be wonderful to look at and wonderful to taste! Herbal flowers can lend an unusual flair to your culinary experience — presenting flavours that range from sweet to spicy.

Now making regular appearances on cakes and salads are garden blooms including:

- pansies
- calendula
- bachelor buttons (cornflower)
- lavender
- nasturtium
- borage
- chives
- violets
- marigolds
- johnny-jump-ups
- roses

Flowers are best when picked early in the morning or late in the afternoon, soon after they have opened, and served whole or with the petals removed and scattered onto your choice dish.

A Word of Caution!

It is very important that you use the same caution with flowers as you would with any other unknown plant material. Those listed above are safe, but others should be checked before being invited onto your plate. As an added safety precaution, use flowers that come from a known source and that are guaranteed to be free of chemical sprays. Commercial plants and flowers are often treated with chemicals and should therefore be avoided.

Fresh garden salads present another forum for herbs to strut their individual flavours. Leafy garden herbs can be used in place of or with lettuce to give salads a spicy, textured flair.

The following herbs will lend gourmet flair to any green salad:

- Nasturtium leaves: crunchy with peppery flavour
- Dandelion leaves: best in spring; tender, jagged leaves with slightly bitter taste
- Purslane: crisp, succulent leaves
- Arugula: sharp, peppery flavour
- Mustard greens: flavour ranges from spicy and mild to hot and bitter; mildest flavours come from pre-flowering plants with young leaves.

HERB & SPICE SALAD TIME

(Continued)

TOSSED GREEN SALAD with SLIVERED ALMONDS and ORANGE WEDGES

Yield: 3L

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

The orange and almonds give this salad a delicious flavour.
Omit the almonds if there are allergy concerns.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 head of Romaine lettuce
- 1 head of Boston OR Bibb lettuce
- 2 oranges, peeled and sliced into wedges
- 50 ml (or to taste) thinly sliced red onion
- 125 ml slivered almonds (optional)

EQUIPMENT:

- Lettuce spinner
- Large salad bowl
- Salad servers
- Chopping knife
- Cutting board

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. Wash lettuce, drain and dry well (or spin in lettuce spinner), removing all excess water.
3. Tear lettuce into bite-sized pieces and place in salad bowl. (There should be about 3L.)
4. Place sliced red onion on top, separating into rings. Sprinkle with slivered almonds (if using). Cover and refrigerate until serving time.
5. At serving time, add orange wedges. Toss lightly. Serve with Herbal or Strawberry Vinaigrette.

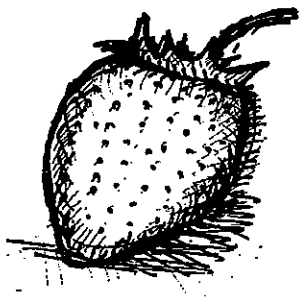
NUT ALERT!

Omit the almonds from this recipe if there are any concerns about allergies among the picnic 'diners'.

HERB & SPICE

SALAD TIME

(Continued)



Salad Dressings

If you have ever asked a waiter to list all the restaurant's salad dressings, you know that the possibilities are endless! Typically, you have the oil-and-vinegar type (Italian, for example) and the creamy type (Ranch and Thousand Island) — each with its specific blend of trademark herbs and spices. Below you'll find a few favourite salad dressings that you can try on your next batch of tossed salad herbs.

STRAWBERRY VINAIGRETTE

Yield: 500 ml

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

A mild, creamy strawberry vinaigrette suitable as a dip or served over a tossed salad with fruit.

INGREDIENTS:

- 250 g ripe, hulled strawberries (fresh or frozen, about 500 ml)
- 50 ml white wine vinegar
- 15 ml fresh oregano (or 5 ml dried)
- 250 ml canola oil

EQUIPMENT:

- Blender
- Colander
- Small kitchen knife, and chopping knife
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Cutting board (if using fresh oregano)
- Spatula
- Jar with tight-fitting lid

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. In blender, combine strawberries, vinegar, oregano and oil.
3. Blend on high speed until smooth.
4. Transfer to a suitable jar; cover and refrigerate.
5. This dressing will keep, refrigerated, for about 1 week.

NOTE: If using fresh strawberries and oregano, rinse well with fresh water, draining off any excess water before using.

HERB & SPICE
SALAD TIME
(Continued)

CREAMY DILL SALAD DRESSING

Yield: 375 ml

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

Marinating Time: 10 minutes

The mild dill flavour of this creamy dressing makes it suitable over fresh salad greens or as a dip for vegetables.

INGREDIENTS:

- 250 ml plain, low-fat yogourt
- 125 ml low-fat mayonnaise
- 15 ml dill pickle juice or vinegar
- 15 ml chopped fresh parsley (or 5 ml dried)
- 15 ml chopped fresh dill weed (or 5 ml dried)
- 5 ml sugar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Salt and pepper to taste

EQUIPMENT:

- Medium-sized mixing bowl
- Garlic press
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Sharp chopping knife (if using fresh herbs)
- Cutting board
- Whisk
- Jar with tight-fitting lid

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. In medium-sized mixing bowl, whisk together yogourt and mayonnaise.
3. Add dill pickle juice, finely chopped parsley and dill, sugar and minced garlic. Whisk together until well combined.
4. Add salt and pepper to taste. Adjust seasonings if necessary.
5. Place in jar, close lid tightly, and allow to marinate 10 minutes before serving, to allow flavours to develop.
6. This dressing will keep, refrigerated, for 1 week.



HERB & SPICE

SALAD TIME

(Continued)

HERBAL VINAIGRETTE

Yield: 225 ml

Prep. Time: 10 minutes

Marinating Time: 10 minutes

This is a very light vinaigrette which is delicious served on salad greens of any type.

INGREDIENTS:

- 175 ml olive oil OR canola oil
- 50 ml red wine vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 ml each: dried thyme, basil and oregano
- 2 ml dried mustard (optional)
- 1 ml salt
- Pinch of pepper

EQUIPMENT:

- 500 ml container with tight-fitting lid
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Garlic press

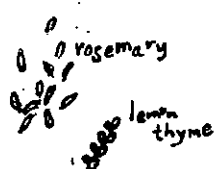
INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the recipe. Assemble all ingredients and equipment.
2. In 500 ml container, combine oil, vinegar, garlic, thyme, basil, oregano, dried mustard (if using), salt and pepper.
3. Tighten lid and shake thoroughly. Taste and adjust seasonings if necessary.
4. Allow to marinate at least 10 minutes before serving.
5. Will keep, refrigerated, for 1 week.



HERBS TO GIVE YOUR 'PINKY' A LIFT:

HERB & SPICE TEA TIME



rosehips

dried
lemon
peel



Herbal teas, or tisanes as they are formally known, are held in high esteem. Herbal teas are renowned for their soothing or refreshing qualities. Herbal tea blends are widely available in gift shops, health and grocery stores. Most restaurants now offer herbal tea as an alternative to regular tea or coffee.

Iced or hot herbal infusions come in almost endless combinations. Using ingredients from your own herb garden, fresh or dried, you can prepare your own special tea blends. Herbs with mild flavours are best used in high concentrations, while herbs with strong flavours serve well as background, giving a tea 'depth'. Experience will lead you to determine the perfect steeping time, herb choices and combinations. Be sure to keep a log of your experiments, noting your successes (and...oh yes, any flops!).

Tried-and-True: Tea Blends that Work

- Scented geranium (try lemon geranium), rosehips or sumac berries
- Mixed mints (spearmint, lemon mint, orange mint, apple mint)
- Raspberry leaves, lemon thyme
- Peppermint, dried lemon peel
- Summer savory, marjoram, rosemary

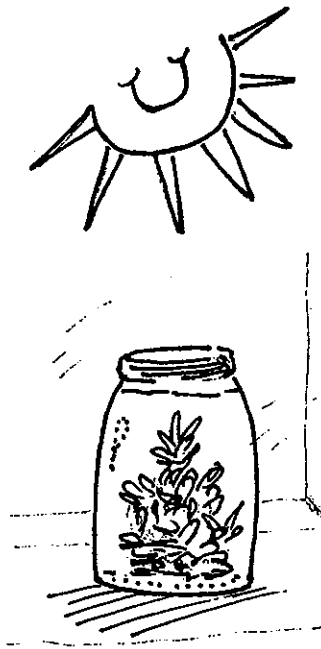
Not all herbs are suitable for brewing!

Beware of medicinal effects and drink ONLY those that are safe for brewing.

"The Herb Book" by John Lust is one source that lists more than 2,000 herbs and their medicinal effects.

Herbal Tea How-To

1. Use 25 ml dried or a handful of fresh herbs for every cup of tea.
2. Place herbs in a teapot; add boiling water.
3. Allow to steep for 5 minutes. (Over-steeping may draw out some less desirable flavours.)
4. Pour tea through a wire mesh strainer (or special tea strainer) into a teacup.
5. Serve with a sprig of fresh herbs (inside the cup, or on the side as a garnish) and honey, if desired.



Sunshine Tea

Sun tea is an age-old method of brewing what we refer to as iced tea. Harnessing the energy of the sun, tea can be brewed and steeped in a warm, sun-lit window. To make your own batch of sun tea:

1. Place a handful of fresh lemon balm, a handful of fresh mint and a handful of fresh lemon basil in a large glass jar.
2. Fill the jar with water, cap and place in the sun to brew and steep.
3. After several hours — or when the tea smells like the herbs within — filter the tea through a tea or wire mesh strainer.
4. Pour over ice into drinking glasses and serve with a sprig of fresh mint.

Great Gift Ideas for Grannies

- Place dried herbal tea blends in attractive glass jars with lids. Label with instructions for brewing; maybe even add a tea infusion ball or spoon (available in tea and gift shops).
- Place a heaping teaspoon of herbal tea blend onto a square of cheesecloth. Pull corners together and wrap string around the bundle to keep herbs in. As above, place in a funky teacup and attach label with brewing instructions.

Spiced Teas

Spiced teas, like herbal teas, have been hailed for their marvellous flavours and healing properties. In Nepal, a spiced tea called 'chai' is served by roadside vendors who call out: "Chai, chai, chai, chai!" Poured into a small, clay cup, the tea is consumed and the cup then discarded.

MEETING 5: CRAFT GALLERY

| | |
|--|---------|
| Roll Call | page 34 |
| Herbal Sun-catcher | page 34 |
| Orange Pomander | page 35 |
| Herbal Wreath | page 35 |
| Herb & Spice Potpourri | page 37 |
| Bouquet Garni | page 40 |
| Spicy Trivet | page 42 |
| Quick & Easy Flavour | page 43 |
| More Ideas for Your Herb & Spice Craft Gallery | page 44 |

Member's Notes: (You can use this space for drawings, pictures, notes about the project, events
— whatever you want. Have fun!)

MEETING 5: CRAFT GALLERY

ROLL CALL

Name 1 quality of herbs and spices that would make them suitable for craft projects.
Suggest a craft that might use herbs and spices.

HERBAL SUN-CATCHER

Catch the sun and dress up a window with this herbal craft. What better way to display a pressed flower than to have it lit up by the sun?

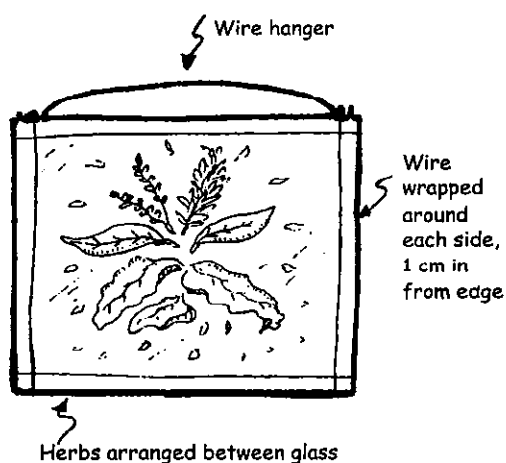
Careful!
Glass
may have
sharp edges!

MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:

- Two 10 cm by 10 cm pieces of clear glass (Watch for sharp edges!)
- 3 m of floral wire, cut into 4 lengths of 70 cm & 1 length of 20 cm
- Wire-cutters
- Masking tape
- Pressed herbs

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Place pressed herbs on 1 piece of 10 cm by 10 cm glass. Position herbs as you intend them to be displayed.
2. Place second glass square on top of the arranged herbs. Secure edges with masking tape.
3. Working one end at a time, wrap 70 cm length of floral wire 1 cm in from each end of the 'sandwiched' glass piece. Tie off wires and neatly tuck in ends.
4. Remove masking tape.
5. Use final piece of floral wire to create hanger, looping ends through top of wires on the 2 vertical sides of the sun-catcher.
6. Display sun-catcher in a window or on a wall. Note that a lot of direct sunlight will eventually cause the herbs to fade.



ORANGE POMANDER

NOTE: This makes a lovely scented winter decoration.

Pomanders are easy to make and they're a great gift. Traditionally, they were made to provide protection from disease or nasty smells.

MATERIALS:

- Oranges
- Whole cloves (lots!)
- Dried cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger
- Ribbon and other decorations

EQUIPMENT:

- Glue gun
- Thimbles and nails or clean meat skewers (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Aim to completely cover the orange (that is, to have very little orange showing). Use clean meat skewer to make small holes, so that the cloves go easily into the orange. Stud the orange with whole cloves, filling in spaces as you go along.
2. Roll orange in powdered spices and dust off.
3. Use glue gun and ribbon to decorate the orange.
4. Allow to cure (air-dry) for several weeks, then use to scent drawers, closets or to decorate your home.

HERBAL WREATH

Make a decorative wreath that puts herbs and spices on display.

MATERIALS:

- 1 small wreath base (straw, Styrofoam, wire or grapevine)
- Dried moss for wire or Styrofoam wreaths (enough to firmly pack wire wreaths or to cover Styrofoam)
- Assorted dried whole herbs
- Assorted dried flowers, fruits and decorations (cinnamon sticks, rose hips, pine cones, twigs, ribbons, buttons, shells). Other dried flowers and decorations may be purchased from a craft supply shop.
- Floral wire

EQUIPMENT:

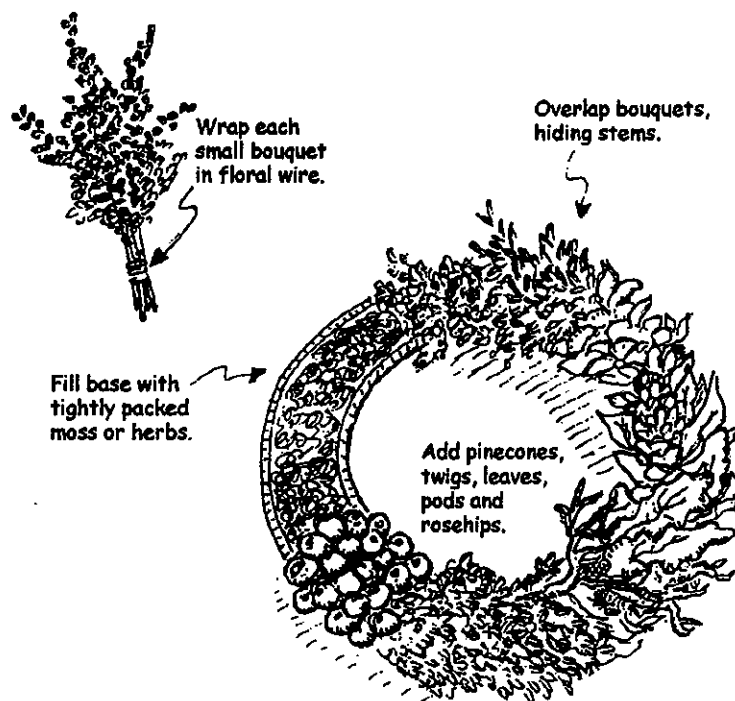
- Wire-cutters
- Scissors
- Glue gun

HERBAL WREATH

(Continued)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Fill wire base with tightly packed moss or herbs; cover Styrofoam base with a layer of dried moss.
2. Choose a colour scheme with suitable background colours (e.g., silvery sage, lemon thyme, dark green rosemary). Then, select contrasting accent pieces — usually flowers, fruits and other colourful decorative pieces.
3. Using floral wire, create short, spreading bouquets of these combined colours. Place bigger, spreading pieces toward the rear and smaller accent pieces toward the front. Working in a set direction (either clockwise or counter-clockwise), use wrapped floral wire to attach bouquets along the front and sides of the wreath. Be sure to position each new bouquet so it overlaps the stems of the previous bouquet. For the final bouquets, tuck their stems under the first bouquets that were attached to the wreath.
4. Using glue gun, attach additional accent pieces such as cinnamon sticks, chili peppers, bay leaves and dried flowers.
5. Hang your wreath out of direct sunlight.



HERB & SPICE POTPOURRI

Potpourri ~

- A collection of various out-of-place elements;
- A collection of dried herbs and spices used to scent the air.

TIP! ~

Potpourri Fixatives

The evaporation of essential herb and spice oils is the magic behind potpourri scent. Fixatives slow down the evaporation and help stretch out the potency of these oils.

You can purchase fixatives from a craft shop, but natural fixatives may be available in your garden. Freshly scrubbed, chopped and dried orris and calamus roots fix the essential oils and have a light, pleasant scent.

Many an aromatic herb or spice finds its home in potpourri. These mixtures are used to cast their garden scents indoors, dispelling the stale smell of inside air.

Potpourris usually include dried herbs, spices and — yes — flowers. Added to this are fixatives (which hold the aroma) and essential oils (for extra fragrance). Before beginning, read these important cautionary notes about handling essential oils:

Caution: Take Care with Essential Oils!

- The oils of a plant are not necessarily safe just because they are natural. Many poisonous substances come from natural sources. Be informed!
- Some essential oils are not safe for people who suffer from epilepsy or asthma, or for pregnant women. In addition, some people may have allergic reactions to particular types of essential oils.
- You should avoid getting essential oils (1) in your eyes — if this happens, go to the doctor, or (2) on your skin — use a vegetable oil to remove; do not use water.
- If you spill essential oils, clean up right away using vegetable oil — do not use water.

Be sure to read up on every essential oil you intend to use. Follow all cautionary advice. A good place to start is with the Website of the National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy at:
<http://www.naha.org>

A good reading resource is "The Complete Book of Essential Oils and Aromatherapy" by Valerie Ann Worwood. Resources such as these will also identify the qualities and appropriate use of essential oils.

Lavender is the essential oil recommended for use in this project — this is because it is a very safe essential oil.

HERB & SPICE POTPOURRI

(Continued)

A great variety of potpourri blends are available in gift shops of all types. These blends do, however, tend to rely heavily on chemical perfumes for their scents. You can create your own potpourri using natural ingredients from your garden and spice cupboard.

The successful formula is as follows:

1. Use only whole spices and the whole leaves and stems of herbs. Ground spices and herbs can look a little like...well, dirt. Good for the dirt enthusiast, but not so good for potpourri!
2. Dried whole flowers, or the dried petals alone, may be used. Flowers will give your potpourri texture, colour and — of course — aroma. Flowers should be picked just before or just as they begin to open.
3. Avoid using poisonous plant materials! Little fingers and mouths may wish to sample your 'tasty'-smelling potpourri blend.
4. Follow the standard recipe:
 - 1 part dried herbs
 - 1 part dried flowers
 - Any desired amount of spices (for depth and complexity of fragrance)
 - 15 ml fixative per litre of potpourri

Combine all ingredients, mix well and seal in an airtight container. Let steep and allow fixative to set (2 or 3 days).

5. When ready, add a few drops of essential oil — carefully, so as not to get it on your skin. (If you do get it on your skin, use vegetable oil to wipe it off.) Start with only 1 drop and work your way up to a desired strength. Too much scent can be overpowering!
6. Place a portion of your potpourri in a decorative, open bowl or jar. Store the remaining mixture in a sealed container, and use it to replenish the open dish once the fragrance begins to fade.



HERB & SPICE POTPOURRI

(Continued)

Suggested Ingredients for a Potpourri

| Herbs | Flowers | Woodland Complements | Spices |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Angelica | • Calendula | • Cedar shavings | • Allspice |
| • Basil | • Rose petals | • Dried leaves | • Angelica root |
| • Bay Leaf | • Carnations | • Dried pods & seed heads (try poppy) | • Cardamom |
| • Bee Balm | | • Interesting rocks | • Cinnamon |
| • Lavender (a favourite!) | | • Pine cones | • Cloves |
| • Lemon Verbena | | • Twigs | • Dried citrus peel |
| • Mint | | | • Nutmeg |
| • Rosemary | | | • Vanilla Bean |
| • Sage | | | |
| • Scented Geranium leaf | | | |
| • Southernwood | | | |
| • Tarragon | | | |
| • Thyme | | | |

Garden Potpourri

Fill your room with fresh garden scents.

MATERIALS:

- 60 ml dried lemon verbena
- 60 ml dried rose petals
- 30 ml dried lavender flowers
- 30 ml dried calendula petals or flowers
- 30 ml dried meadowsweet flowers
- 30 ml dried chamomile flowers
- 15 ml dried angelica root
- 5 ml orris root (fixative)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Combine ingredients and seal in an airtight container.
2. After 2 or 3 days, your potpourri should be ready to use.
3. Place in an open or porous container where the resulting scent can be enjoyed!

HERB & SPICE POTPOURRI

(Continued)

Woodland Potpourri

MATERIALS:

- 3 dried pine cones
- Handful of twigs and leaves (dried)
- 6 cinnamon sticks
- 20 whole cloves
- 2 sprigs rosemary (fresh), or 25 ml dried
- Few drops of essential oil of choice
- 5 ml orris root (fixative)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Combine ingredients and seal in an airtight container.
2. After 2 or 3 days, your potpourri should be ready to use.
3. Place in an open or porous container where the resulting scent can be enjoyed!

BOUQUET GARNI

Pronounced 'boo-KAY gar-NEE', this herbal concoction finds its roots in the kitchens of France. Traditionally consisting of parsley, bay leaf and thyme, this trio has gained world-renown for the reliable, savory taste it lends to its host dishes.

Global spectators have grabbed onto this idea and run with it — resulting in creative regional variations.

- In Italy, for instance, a bouquet garni may consist of a combination of chervil, bay leaf and basil.
- In Hungary, the bouquet may include parsley, bay leaf and sweet marjoram, with the additions of green pepper and caraway seeds.

Of course, in your own kitchen, you have free reign over the types, combinations and ratios of herbs and spices you use. However, for your herb mixture to qualify as a bouquet garni, you must observe a few simple guidelines...and do so with the reverence of great French chefs everywhere.

1. First, follow this ratio:
1 part parsley / 1 part bay leaf / 1 part thyme
2. Secondly, in altering the traditional French recipe, you must use equal portions (as above) of a select member of the parsley family, combined with bay leaf and a select member of the mint family. For other ideas, see the chart on the following page for types of herbs that you can use to expand your own creations of bouquets garni.

BOUQUET

GARNI

(Continued)

TIP! ~

Using Bouquet Garni

Use your bouquet garni to flavour soups, stews, roasts and sauces.

Simply add the herb packet to your dish in the final stages of cooking (at least 15 minutes is required).

Before serving, remove the bouquet garni and discard.

All that will be left behind is its delicious flavour!

| Parsley Family | Aromatic Tree | Mint Family |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Anise | Bay Leaf | Basil |
| Celery | | Rosemary |
| Chervil | | Sage |
| Dill | | Savory |
| Fennel | | Sweet Marjoram |
| Parsley | | Thyme |

3. Thirdly, you may use either fresh or dried herbs for your bouquet garni. Tie fresh herbs together with string, as you would a floral bouquet. Use immediately. For dried herbs, combine and place 5 ml of parsley, 1 bay leaf and 5 ml of thyme onto a square of cheesecloth. Hold corners of fabric together, draw up and tie the herb bundle with a tight string knot. This bundle may be stored in an airtight container until needed. Both types of bouquets should be removed from the cooking pot prior to serving.

Here is the traditional recipe for the traditional bouquet garni:

Bouquet Garni

MATERIALS (for each bouquet):

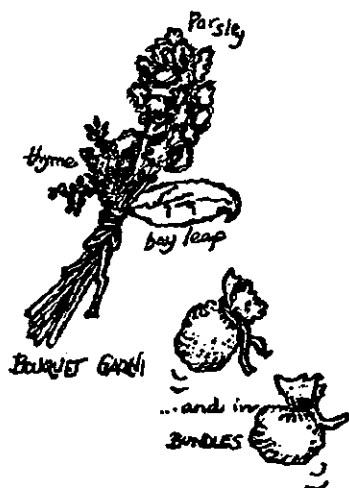
- 5 ml of dried parsley
- 1 bay leaf
- 5 ml dried thyme
- Cheesecloth (1 or 2 packages, depending on number of members)
- White string or thread
- Labels (1 per member)

EQUIPMENT:

- Scissors
- Ruler
- 250 ml clean glass jar with lid

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Cut cheesecloth into squares, 10 cm by 10 cm.
2. Place herbs onto centre of cheesecloth squares. Hold corners of fabric together; seal the herb bundle with a tight string knot.
3. Place bouquet garni into clean glass jar; label with ingredients and date. To give as a gift, place a piece of brown paper or pretty fabric over the lid and tie with brown twine, ribbon or cord.

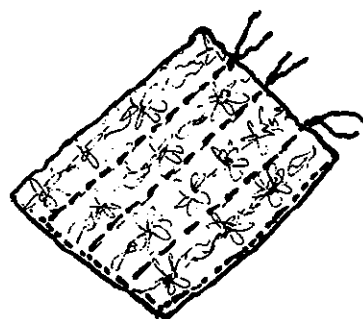
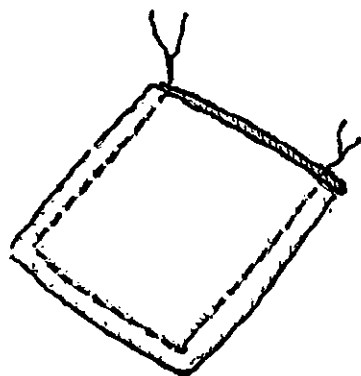


SPICY TRIVET

What's a Trivet?

Trivets are often used to protect delicate surfaces from hot pots.

This spicy trivet serves in more ways than one: the heat of the hot pot on the spicy trivet causes the scents of cinnamon, cloves and other choice spices to be released into the air — making it a very useful kitchen tool as well as a lovely gift.



This project allows you to combine your knowledge of herbs and spices with a little sewing fun.

MATERIALS:

- Two 22 cm by 22 cm cotton fabric rectangles
- Matching thread
- 500 ml split peas, lentils, barley, oats, wheat, rice or other such filling as for bean bags
- Half a cinnamon stick
- 15 ml cloves (slightly crushed)
- 6 peppercorns
- 20 ml rosemary
- 10 ml dried mint leaves

EQUIPMENT:

- Sewing machine, iron, ironing board
- Pins
- Needle
- Scissors

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Assemble materials and equipment.
2. Place mixture of whole spices in a sturdy plastic bag. Use rolling pin to crush spices until they are just cracked.
3. Combine bean bag filling, herbs and spices. Mix well.
4. Cut cotton fabric rectangles; iron. Place right sides of fabric together and pin edges.
5. With a 1 cm seam allowance, straight-stitch 3 side seams. Leave one of the sides open (not sewn).
6. Turn fabric right side out; iron.
7. Starting from the sewn side opposite to the open, unsewn side, use a straight-stitch to sew 3 straight rows, 5 cm apart. Stop 1 cm from unstitched end — this will create 4 open-ended tube-like sections.
8. Fill each tube with spice mixture.
9. Fold open end of trivet over twice, in 2 very small folds. Secure with pins. Top-stitch fold in place with short, straight stitches.

QUICK & EASY FLAVOUR

As you become a more seasoned hand with herbs and spices, you'll find that certain herbs and spices always seem to go together. You may choose to create your own herb-and-spice blends, and preserve and store them in these combinations.

Many cultures have developed their own tradition of herb-and-spice combinations. Below is a sample of renowned regional spice blends that have been adopted by kitchens the world over. You can create these combinations and have them conveniently available for your next world cooking fiesta.



BARBEQUE SEASONING

Marjoram
Basil
Celery Seed
Thyme
Onion Powder

CHINESE 5-SPICE MIX

Anise
Cinnamon
Cloves
Fennel
Peppercorns

JAMAICAN JERK SEASONING

Allspice
Brown Sugar
Cinnamon
Garlic
Ginger
Ground Chilies
Mustard

INDIAN CURRY

Chilies
Cinnamon
Cloves
Coriander
Cumin
Ginger
Nutmeg
Pepper
Turmeric

CAJUN SEASONING

Basil
Black Pepper
Cayenne Pepper
Cumin
Garlic
Onion Powder
Oregano
Paprika

Quick & Easy Herb & Spice Mixtures

MATERIALS:

- Small clean spice jars with lids
- Labels and coloured markers; glass paints and pens (optional)
- Decorations for jars (ribbon or string) and jar covers (fabric, brown paper, etc.)
- Dried, powdered spices listed above

EQUIPMENT:

- Scissors
- Glue gun (if needed)

QUICK & EASY FLAVOUR

(Continued)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Prepare spice mixtures, using approximately equal amounts of each spice.
2. Decorate your spice jars using the materials on hand.
3. Consider giving your creations (as a gift) to someone who likes to cook.

MORE IDEAS FOR YOUR HERB & SPICE CRAFT GALLERY...

Kitchen Muses ~

Great cuisine is a combination of poetry, art & science. Therefore, all great chefs need a Muse ~ something beautiful and edible in your kitchen which will inspire you to create. Here are a couple of attractive Muse-like objects that you can make to hang in your kitchen.

MUSE: ONE OF THE NINE GODDESSES OF ANCIENT GREECE WHO PRESIDED OVER POETRY, ART AND SCIENCE.



APHRODITE

Chili Garland

To make a chili garland, use a needle and thread to string fresh chili peppers tightly together. Hang to dry.

The dried chili garland may then be:

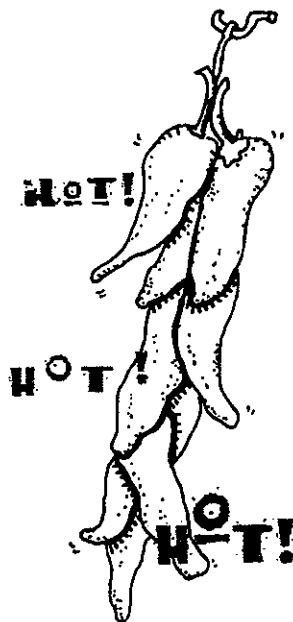
- left out on display, OR...
- ...the chilies may be:
 - removed from the thread,
 - placed in an airtight container, and
 - stored in a cool, dark spot.

Chili peppers may be used — whole or ground — to give food a hot, spicy flavour. This flavour is best released during the sautéing stage of food preparation, warming the pepper in oil to really bring out the flavour.

* SAFETY NOTE:

Chili peppers can sting!

You may wish to wear rubber gloves to protect your hands and to prevent you from accidentally rubbing the hot oil into your eyes.



Garlic Braid

Before you begin your first braid of garlic:

- Sit down
- Close your eyes
- Take a long, deep breath

Patience is a virtue in most activities, but in this particular activity, it is an absolute requirement! Patience and its close companion, practice, are the key fundamentals that will lead you to master The Art of the Garlic Braid.

1. Aim for garlic bulbs with long, firm tops.
2. Start with 3 bulbs, using string to tie the tops tightly together, immediately above the bulbs.
3. Begin braiding. After 4 or 5 turns, attach a new bulb (similar to French braiding) and continue, adding a new bulb after every few turns.
4. Once your braid reaches the desired length, firmly tie off the ends with string.

Your braid may now be proudly displayed in a cool, dry area, away from cooking steam (that is, not directly over the stove). Garlic bulbs or individual cloves may then be removed to use as needed.



Once you excel at this type of braiding, you may wish to pass along your craft as a gift to a garlic-loving cook. Use string or a glue gun to decorate your gift with bay leaves, chili peppers, dried rosemary and ribbon.

Herbal Moth Balls

This mixture will help keep moths away; it's a pleasantly fragrant alternative to naphthalene (the active and foul-smelling ingredient in mothballs).

Combine the following ingredients and place in an open bowl (if intended for the closet) or in a sachet (for a bureau drawer).

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 bay leaves
- 5 ml peppercorns
- 5 ml whole cloves
- 1 small sprig fresh rosemary (or 10 ml dried)

Other moth-repelling herbs include:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------|
| • Bay Leaf | • Mint |
| • English Pennyroyal | • Rosemary |
| • Lavender | • Tansy |
| • Lemon Geranium | • Thyme |

A few cedar shavings also work nicely.

MEETING 6: REST & RELAXATION

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
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| Herbal Remedies | page 47 |
| Herbal Beauty | page 57 |
| Herbal Hair Care | page 49 |
| Lather Up! | page 51 |
| Herbal Relaxation | page 52 |
| Aromatherapy | page 52 |
| Bath Infusion | page 54 |
| Bath Oil | page 54 |
| Aromatherapy Massage | page 55 |
| Bug-Be-Gone | page 55 |

Member's Notes: (You can use this space for drawings, pictures, notes about the project, events
– whatever you want. Have fun!)

MEETING 6: REST & RELAXATION

ROLL CALL

What is your favourite scent?

Name 1 herb or spice that may have been used to make this scent.

HERBAL REMEDIES



Traditionally used as medicine, herbs and spices have a long history in the art of healing. Various herb-and-spice concoctions are promoted as digestion aids, cold-stoppers and headache-relievers. These cures and pacifiers are just a few examples on a long list of herbal remedies:

- Tea made from peppermint leaves can often soothe an upset stomach.
- Raw garlic rubbed on the skin can help take the sting out of an insect bite.
- Chamomile tea can help calm your nerves before bed.
- Lemon tea with sage can soothe a cold.

HERBAL BEAUTY

Herbs and spices can also help you look good, smell good and feel good. You can make soaps, lip balms, shampoos and rinses — all enhanced by the infusion of herbs and spices.

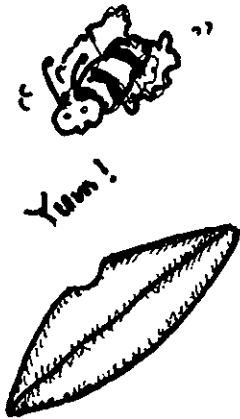
Herbs and spices lend their curative properties to these cosmetic potions, soothing chapped lips, softening skin and leaving your hair with glistening highlights.

Try the activity on the following page and create 'herbal lips'. This herbal lip balm offers soothing protection — and can be whipped up in a flash.

Herbal Lip Balm

MATERIALS (makes enough for ten 30 ml jars of lip balm):

- 15 ml shredded beeswax
- 15 ml aloe vera oil
- 250 g jar of petroleum jelly
- 10 drops of liquid vitamin E
- 15 ml witch hazel
- 15 ml dried herbs and spices (try cinnamon and cloves; or comfrey, lavender and calendula)



EQUIPMENT:

- Cheesecloth
- Small, clean glass jars or plastic containers with lids
- Microwave oven
- Microwave-safe container
- Wooden or plastic stirring spoon (metal spoon may affect the flavour of the oil)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Place petroleum jelly in a large, microwave-safe container with lid. Heat until very soft.
2. Add beeswax, herbs and/or spices to the container. Continue heating in 30-second intervals at medium heat until melted. Use a wooden or plastic spoon to stir between each heating. Strain herbs and spices by pouring the liquid through two layers of cheesecloth.
3. Stir in aloe vera, vitamin E and witch hazel. Pour into containers.
4. Allow to fully cool, then cap. Your lip balm is now ready to enjoy!

HERBAL HAIR CARE

Even washing your hair can now be a spicy affair. If you dye your hair, you should first test a shampoo (on the ends) to ensure that your colour will not be tampered with. With hair dyes, mild shampoos for light hair colours are best.

Start with a Shampoo...

MATERIALS:

- 1 bottle unscented shampoo or liquid castile soap
- Small bottle of liquid glycerine (if using castile soap)
- Dried herbs from table below OR variety of herbal tea bags. To obtain materials, look in pharmacies or health food stores — the tea bags should be made with only 1 herb, depending on hair type, with no perfumes or additives.
- Boiling water

EQUIPMENT:

- Measuring cups
- Funnel and cheesecloth (for loose herbs only)
- Clean shampoo bottle with lid

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Start with a base of unscented shampoo, or use castile soap, a pure and mild liquid made from olive and coconut oils.
2. Next, create your own herbal infusion (see instructions at left). Or use a herbal tea infusion (make herbal tea with tea bags, without additives or perfumes). Consult the chart on the following page, "Herbs by Hair Type", to choose your herbs.)
3. To the 1 part shampoo base, add 2 parts herbal infusion, (for example: 50 ml of shampoo base with 100 ml herbal tea infusion); if using castile soap, add a few drops of liquid glycerine to help contents stay mixed.
4. Use this herbal shampoo in the same way as any other shampoo. Lather, rinse, repeat (if necessary).

TIP! ~

How to Make a Herbal Infusion

Simply pour boiling water over fresh herbs.

After the herbs have fully infused (the aroma will make this obvious), strain the liquid — this is your herbal infusion — and discard the herbs.

HERBAL HAIR CARE

(Continued)

HERBS BY HAIR TYPE

| Normal to Oily | Normal to Dry | Itchy Scalp | Lighter Hair | Darker Hair |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|--|
| Basil | Nettle Leaves | Calendula | Chamomile | Rosemary |
| Nasturtium Flowers | Onion Bulb | Chamomile | Calendula | Sage |
| Yarrow | Peppermint | Comfrey | Marigold | Parsley |
| Lemon Balm | Chamomile | | | Catnip |
| Thyme | Red Clover | | | Calendula |
| Lemongrass | Comfrey | | | Onion Bulb (brings out auburn tones) |
| Rosemary | | | | |

...Followed by a Rinse

Home-made herbal vinegar rinses present an excellent alternative to store-bought conditioners. When used after a shampoo, vinegar rinse leaves hair feeling soft, with the added benefits of removing built-up soap residue, reducing excess oil, untangling knots and soothing an itchy scalp.

You can make your own vinegar rinse using garden herbs and spices. Start by identifying your hair type and selecting complimentary herbs. The above table, "Herbs by Hair Type", will help you do this.

TIP! ~

Avoid pouring your rinse down the drain!

If the 15 ml of vinegar always seems to run out of your palm and down the shower drain, dilute the herbal rinse with a little water. This way, you'll be able to use a little more, without swamping your head in vinegar.

For added effect, try adding water infused with herbs. A chamomile tea bag added to a cup of water might just do the trick — and you'll get highlights, too!

1. Place a generous selection of these herbs (fresh or dried) into a glass jar.
2. Pour gently heated apple cider vinegar or white wine vinegar over the herbs, close the jar and allow it to steep for 2 weeks.
3. Shake jar daily.
4. You will know that your vinegar rinse is ready when, opening the lid, you instantly smell the aroma of herbs.
5. Strain the liquid into an empty shampoo bottle and discard the herbs to the compost bin. Your vinegar rinse should keep for 1 year.

To use your herbal vinegar rinse, first shampoo hair (as described earlier), then follow with a good rinse of clean water. After a thorough rinsing, pour 15 ml of herbal vinegar into your palm and work through the hair, from scalp to ends. Finish by giving your hair a final rinse with fresh water, to remove the vinegar scent. Proceed with normal styling.

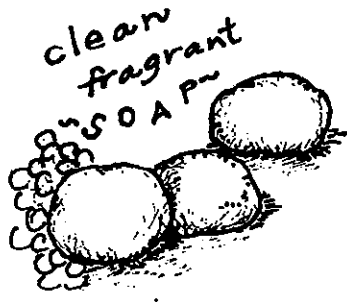
LATHER UP!

Another way to introduce herbs and spices to your bathing ritual is to put them in your soap. Here's a simple recipe:

Herbal Soap

MATERIALS:

- 1 bar unscented glycerine soap
- Water
- 15 ml finely ground dried herbs and/or spices



EQUIPMENT:

- Double-boiler saucepan
- Plastic or wooden stirring spoon
- Grater

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Grate soap bar. Place in top of double-boiler (with water in bottom of pot and heat on gentle simmer).
2. Add small amount of water to soap, to help soap melt and to work soap into a melted, gel-like substance.
3. Simmer soap; stir gently. Avoid over-stirring to prevent creation and collection of air bubbles.
4. Remove from heat. Stir in finely ground herbs and spices. Once cool enough to handle, form soap into firm, round balls, OR pour into glass or metal moulds (with a closed bottom to prevent leakage). If desired, add a few whole dried herbs and spices — but none with very sharp edges.
5. Soap should be placed in a cool spot to cure for 2 to 3 weeks. (The excess liquid evaporates and soap hardens.)
6. Once the soap has reached the desired hardness (like your regular soap), it is ready to use. You'll notice that the scent of the herb will improve and increase with age.

TIP! ~

How to:

Remove Soap from a Glass or Metal Mold

Place the mold in an oven set at 100°C.

Remove from heat once the edge of the soap appears slightly clear and gel-like.

Immediately pop out or slide the soap from the mold.

Use your fingers or a knife to smooth any rough edges.

Many simple variations are available to the keen soap-maker:

- Opaque soap scraps may be used in place of glycerine bars.
- Chunks of coloured soap may be dropped into the soap pot after the cooling stage — resulting in a colourful mosaic.
- Essential oils may be added to accentuate the desired aromas.
- Powdered milk, clay or oatmeal may also be added to the mix, each with its own soothing qualities.

HERBAL RELAXATION

Be sure to reread "**Caution: Take Care with Essential Oils!**", found on page 37 of this manual before proceeding. Remember: The oils of a plant are not necessarily safe just because they are natural. Many poisonous substances come from natural sources. Be informed!

Essential Oils

Essential oils are the pure oils of a plant. These are a very concentrated form of the oils we smell when we crush basil leaves, make herbal teas and sauté garlic. Essential oils are usually obtained by distillation — a process that collects only the pure oils of the plant. These oils, once separated from the plant, tend to give off a more intense version of the plant's original scent.

Essential oils are hailed for their many healing and cosmetic uses. However, although often derived from many of the herbs and spices we eat, **essential oils MUST NOT be eaten, drunk or taken into your body in any way!**

Essential oils are actually the raw chemicals of a plant, in high concentrations, and should only be used in a prescribed way.

Essential oils should also be used **ONLY** in diluted form. To dilute them, they can be mixed with carrier oils, spreading out their intense scents.

Some good carrier oils are:

- grapeseed
- sunflower
- jojoba
- sweet almond
- apricot kernel
- avocado
- wheat germ
- olive oil.

Most of these carrier oils can be found in grocery or health food stores.

TIP! ~

Where to Obtain Essential Oils

Essential oils are available from health food stores, pharmacies, gift shops and some department stores.

AROMATHERAPY

Many people who have heard about aromatherapy understand it to be a simple form of home remedy. Those who practise it, however, know it to be a complicated science and a highly evolved art. This art and science dates back to more than 6,000 years ago, beginning in ancient Egypt. Transcripts holding recipes recovered from Egypt seem to indicate that aromatherapy was used then in ways that are remarkably similar to its uses today.

AROMATHERAPY

(Continued)

Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils for therapeutic effects. It is geared toward physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health and balance. Its effects are experienced when a person breathes in the aromas, or rubs the diluted oils onto their skin.



The aromas of essential oils can trigger an emotional response. Cinnamon, for example, can conjure up a comforting image of Mom's apple pie.

Being applied to the surface of the skin, diluted essential oils can leave skin feeling soft and conditioned.

Sparing the Oil

Pricing varies among different types of essential oils — this is because availability of individual herbs and spices varies widely (some are more rare than others); it can also be attributed to the extraction needs of each herb or spice.

Having investing in your own stock of essential oils, you will realize the value of using every drop and wasting none. When experimenting with combinations of oils, however, you may find yourself using most of your oils in the testing phase. It is recommended that you use diluted essential oils.

To cut costs and save precious oil, you can use toothpicks to dip in oil. Simply dip clean toothpicks into the oils (1 toothpick per type of oil) and hold the toothpicks together for a whiff test...If, for example, you're attempting a blend of 2 parts lemon balm to 1 part borage, you'd dip 2 toothpicks into lemon balm oil and 1 toothpick into borage oil — then just hold the toothpicks together and sniff!



Troubles Down the Drain

One way to enjoy the full effects of aromatherapy is to soak in a herb-and-spice bath. In the tub, you can inhale the scents of herbs and spices while experiencing the effects of their oils on your skin.

Creating infusions and adding bath oils are sure ways to spice up your bath. With the right combinations of oils, you'll leave the tub feeling soothed and revitalized, and have silky skin, too.

BATH INFUSION



Preparing a bath infusion is similar to making a pot of tea — only imagine that the tub is the teapot and that your tea bag is filled with herbs and spices.

1. Use herbs and spices that have the aromas and qualities you desire; these may be fresh or dried.
2. Place herbs and spices onto a square piece of cheesecloth. Gather the ends and tie with tightly knotted string.
3. Now insert this herbal 'tea bag' into your bath, gently rubbing its contents to release the oils.
4. Enter the tub and relax...

Lavender Luxury

Make a herbal bath infusion using sprigs of fresh lavender, borage, mint and calendula. Tie these together at the base of the stems using a tight, firm knot. Toss in the tub and enjoy — lovely to look at, lovely to smell and very relaxing.

BATH OIL

Bath oil is similar to massage oil, but differs in its presentation. To prepare a bottle of bath oil, place small, decorative, 'woody' items in the bottom of a tall glass bottle. Items may include dried cones, dried grasses and dried pods, among other things. Fill the bottle with a carrier oil such as almond, canola or grapeseed. Add a few drops of essential oils and — voilà! — you have a bottle of bathtime glory, suitable to use in your own baths; equally suitable as a gift.

Combinations to Suit Your Skin Type

- Astringent Bath: lemongrass, sage, yarrow, nettle, comfrey root
- Oily Skin Bath: lemongrass, mint, yarrow, witch hazel
- Moisturizing Bath: chamomile, rose petals
- Skin-toning Bath: lavender, yarrow, mint, thyme

AROMATHERAPY MASSAGE

Massage presents another way you can soothe your body with the aromas of herbs and spices. Using a massage oil made with 30 ml carrier oil and 2 or 3 drops of essential oil (lavender is recommended), you can gently ease away any aches and pains. A trained massage therapist might give your muscles more of a workout, but without this training, you should keep your massage gentle — steering clear of the bones in the neck and spine.

Try this beginner massage on your own hands. Remember to work gently, with a softly pressured, caressing motion.

1. Place a dollop (about 10 ml) of massage oil in your hand and, rubbing both of your palms together, liberally spread the oil over the inside surface of your hands.
2. Begin on one hand by gently (yet firmly) pulling each of the fingers. Start at the base, where fingers meet hand, and with long, continuous strokes, work your way toward each fingertip with a gentle pulling motion.
3. Repeat 2 or 3 times per finger.

BUG-BE-GONE



Many herbs and spices are good allies in the battle to ward off pesky bugs. The scents of lavender, peppermint, lemon grass and citronella tell mosquitoes and black flies to "bug off". By steeping these herbs in a base of vinegar and witch hazel, you will have created a safe alternative to Deet-based skin sprays.

To make this effective bug repellent:

TIP! ~

Herbal Relief

From Insect Stings

Herbs such as garlic, basil, chamomile and lavender offer soothing relief from insect bites and stings.

1. Pour 250 ml of warm vinegar into a glass jar holding a well-packed mixture of the herbs mentioned above.
2. Place lid on jar and allow to steep, shaking the bottle every few hours.
3. After 24 hours, filter the herbs from the vinegar, reserving the vinegar solution and discarding the herbs (to your composter).
4. To use, combine 1 part vinegar solution to 10 parts liquid witch hazel. Pour the mixture into a spray bottle and use to mist the skin before entering bug-ridden areas. Your spray need not be refrigerated; it should be good for 1 year.