

Culinary Herbs 101



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Objectives & High Points

- Objectives:
 - To inspire you to grow & use culinary herbs
 - To help you decide what herbs to grow this year.
- Definition of culinary herbs
- Reasons for growing & using herbs.
- Herbs Readily available & easy to grow in NY.
- The use of herbs in various cuisines.
- Considerations for gardening, harvesting & preserving herbs.
- Web sites for more details.



Why Herbs?

- Enhance flavor & boost nutritional value
- Healthy alternatives for fats, sugars and salt
- Easy to grow, harvest and store
- Beautiful in your garden or potted



Herb? Spice? What's the difference?



- **Herbs** come from the fleshy leaves & soft stems of low growing scrubs

- **Spices** come from the bark, root, buds, seeds, berry or fruit of plants & trees, generally tropical



Culinary herbs & spices are edible & flavorful

Buy 'em at Wegmans or *grow your own*

Arugula¹

Basil²

Bay Leaf³

Chervil⁴

Chives⁵

Cilantro⁶

Dill⁷

Fennel⁸

Lavender⁹

Lemon grass¹⁰

Marjoram¹¹

Mint¹²

Oregano¹³

Nasturtium¹⁴

Parsley¹⁵

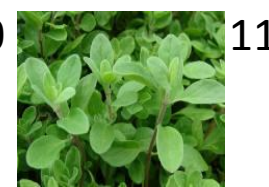
Rosemary¹⁶

Sage¹⁷

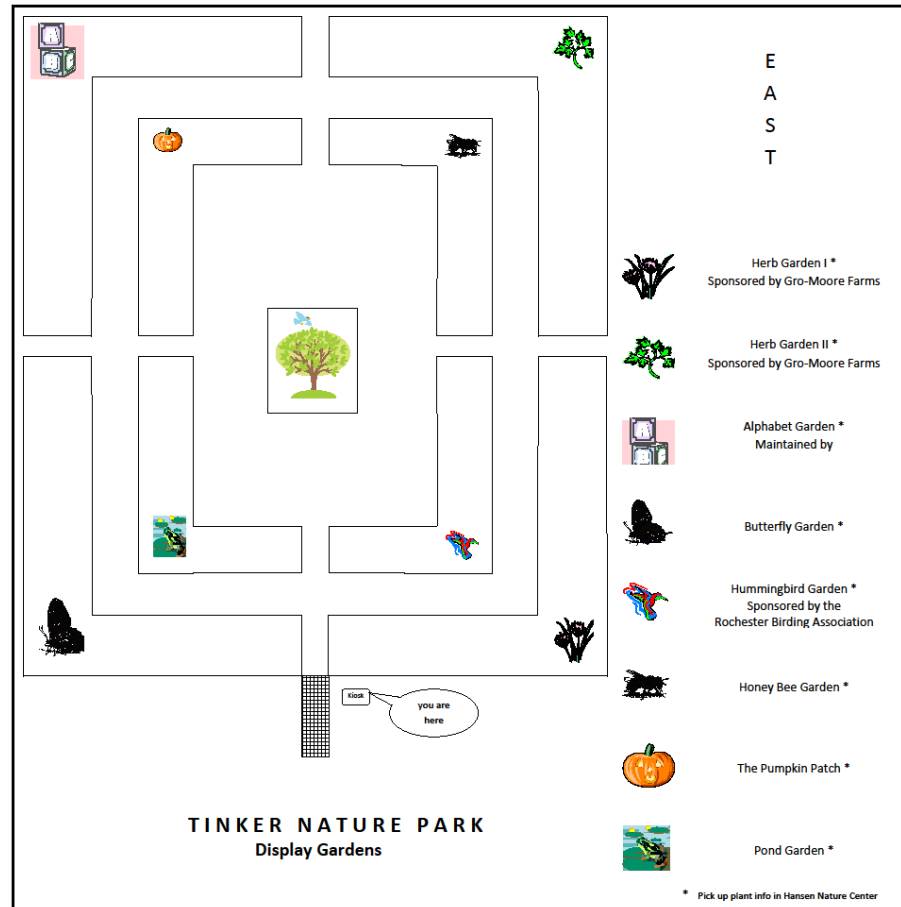
Sorrel¹⁸

Tarragon¹⁹

Thyme²⁰



Tinker Display Garden



Tinker's *Culinary* Garden

Aristotle Basil	Curly Parsley	Lovage	Thyme
Arugula	Fernleaf Dill	Oregano	Winter Savory
Bronze Fennel	Garlic	Hyssop	Yarrow
Caraway	Italian Parsley	Rosemary	
Catnip	Lamb's Ears	Sage	
Cayenne Pepper	Lavender	Sorrel	
Chives	Lemon Balm	Summer Savory	
Cilantro	Lemon Grass	Sweet Italian Basil	
Comfrey	Lemon Verbena	Tansy	



Your Culinary Herb Garden

➤ Where's your herb garden?

■ Outside:

- backyard, along the borders, the deck
- Climate, soil, light exposure
- Maintenance – usually very little
- perennials, tender perennials, annuals
- Decorative aspects
- Critters

■ Inside: pot garden

➤ What herbs suit your taste?

- Flavors & aromas
- Ethnic cooking preferences
- Your sense of adventure



Herbs & Ethnic Cooking

Herbs & spices define a cuisine's flavor profile

➤ *Italian Cuisine*

arugula, basil, bay leaf, fennel, marjoram, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sage, thyme

➤ *French Cuisine*

- basil, bay leaves, chervil, chives, marjoram, parsley, rosemary, tarragon, thyme,
- Fines Herbes (classic mix: chervil, chives, tarragon, parsley),
- Herbs de Provence (usually basil, rosemary, lavender, marjoram, sage, thyme, fennel seeds)



Herbs & Ethnic Cooking

- Mexican & Southwestern US: *cilantro, oregano, epazote (wormweed, stinkweed), scallions*
- Asian (e.g. Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Thai): *bay leaf, cilantro, curry leaf (meetha neem), lemon grass, lime leaves, fennel, mint, scallions*
- Greek, Eastern Mediterranean: *dill, oregano, scallions, thyme*
- Northern European (e.g. Germany, Scandinavia, UK): *dill, thyme, watercress*
- Spanish: *parsley, saffron*
- North African: *cilantro, mint*



Preparing & Using Fresh Herbs

- Harvest herbs within a few hours of use
- Wash just before using.
- Treat tender herbs gently
 - Herbs, like basil, parsley & cilantro, bruise & release their oils easily.
 - Add them the last few minutes of cooking.
- Chop leaves of heavy herbs
like rosemary, sage, thyme, to release their oils.
- Cook leathery herbs
like bay & lime leaves, in large pieces or bundles for easy removal



Storing Herbs

➤ Most Herbs can be stored:

- At room temperature,
 - stems in water, for up to a week
 - Slight effect on flavor & texture
- Refrigerated
 - loosely wrapped for 1 – 3 weeks
 - Slight effect on flavor & texture
- Frozen
 - air tight, for 6- 12 months
 - Flavors, less intense, & textures affected.
- Dried
 - stored air tight in a cool, dry dark place for years
 - Dried herbs taste more intense & even different from fresh



For more information

- Joe Barkson's Worldwide Recipes, *All About Herbs*

<http://www.wvrecipes.com/herbs.htm>



- Cooking Light, *International Guide to Spices*

<http://www.cookinglight.com/food/world-cuisine/spice-world-00400000001182/>



- Culinary Herb Guide, *Using Herbs in Cooking*

<http://culinaryherbguide.com/usingherbsincooking.html>



- Bringing herbs indoors for the winter

<http://sallystrove.hubpages.com/hub/Bringing-Herbs-Indoors-for-Winter-how-To-Manage-Herb-Plants-for-Winter-Enjoyment>