

Information About Spice

"Basil is perhaps the quintessential herb of summer. An essential herb in pasta sauce, pesto, caprese salad, and stir fry; basil is used in many culinary dishes across the globe. It is a plant soaked in history and lore.

Basil found its way to Western Europe via the spice traders in the 16th century. Since this time Mediterranean food has been infused with basil. In India, Holy Basil, or Tulsi, is considered sacred, a goddess. It has also been said basil helps keep away flying insects. It is great to plant it near your tomatoes (rumors that it helps improve their flavor).

Basils contain a variety of volatile oils that fluctuate according to variety and growing conditions.

Besides a prolific use in the culinary realm, basil has also been used in tea to aid digestion, and help with a cold or flu, migraines, insomnia, and bug bites. Since it is in the mint family, the flowers help attract beneficial insects. Several varieties are very attractive and make lovely additions to the floral border."

-Portland Nursery



Sources



Some recipes are from books available for check out at Town Hall Library

- *Don't Panic Pantry* by Noah Galuten
 - 641.5 GAL
- *At My Italian Table* by Laura Vitale
 - 641.5945 VIT
- Website: Portland Nursery
 - <https://www.portlandnursery.com/herbs/basil>
- Savory Experiments
 - <https://www.savoryexperiments.com/bread-dipping-oil/>

Information

Spice up Your Life is a monthly Take & Make Spice Club Kit featuring a variety of unique spices, herbs, or blends.

Kits Include

- Information on the featured spice.
- Two recipes (1 baking & 1 cooking).
- A small packet of featured spice-enough for **both dried recipes**.

Share your experience with us

Once you have created your culinary masterpieces at home, we'd love you to share photos with us.

Send to reference@townhall.lib.wi.us and you might be featured on the Town Hall Library Website

One-Per-Household

Take & Make Spice Club Kit are free, but supplies are limited. Please, take one kit per household.



Take & Make Spice Club Kit



Spice Up Your Life



July Basil Leaves



Carrabba Bread Dipping Oil

Ingredients

- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon coarse sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- **1/2 teaspoon dried basil**
- 1/2 teaspoon dried parsley
- fresh crushed garlic
- olive oil, the star of the show!



Directions

- Arrange the dried spices and crushed garlic on a plate (With an indent that way the oil stays in place).
- Drizzle everything with the olive oil.
- Mix together and enjoy!



Homemade Tomato Pasta Sauce

Ingredients

- 1 (28-ounce) can whole peeled tomatoes
- 1½ tablespoons extra- virgin olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced or chopped (I prefer thinly sliced)
- Pinch of crushed red pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- Handful of fresh basil leaves or **½ teaspoon dried basil**
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley (optional)

Homemade Tomato Pasta Sauce

Directions

- Bring a pot of water to a boil over high heat for the pasta. Salt the water generously.
- Meanwhile, pour the canned tomatoes and their juices into a bowl and crush them by hand-being careful not to let them pop and explode their juice-until you have a rough, chunky texture with no huge pieces. (If you are squeamish about crushing tomatoes by hand, you can chop them on a cutting board, but try crushing them by hand! It's easy.)
- In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat until it is shimmering. Add the garlic and a pinch of salt and sauté until the garlic is just barely turning brown at the edges. Add the crushed red pepper, oregano, and the basil: If using dried basil, add all of it, if using fresh, add 2 or 3 leaves (the rest will go in at the end). Toast the herbs for about 30 seconds. Add the tomatoes and all of their juices, being careful of splatter.
- Season the tomatoes with salt and pepper, stir, and add the parsley (if using).



Store it or Eat it right away :

Can it and save it for later

or

Use right away with any pasta of your choosing.



I recommend adding on top:

- grated Parmigiano
- a drizzle of olive oil
- some roughly torn fresh basil leaves

Classic Caprese

Ingredients

- 1 pound fresh mozzarella cheese (preferably buffalo), cut into slices ½ inch thick
- 3 to 4 tomatoes on the vine, quartered
- Handful of olives, preferably Castelvetrano, pitted or unpitted
- 2 tablespoons extra- virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt to Taste
- Pinch of dried Italian oregano
- Small handful of fresh **basil** leaves, large leaves torn and smaller leaves left whole

Fresh Basil Outside in the Herb Garden



Directions

- Arrange the mozzarella slices in the center of a medium shallow bowl or platter. Scatter the tomatoes and olives around the mozzarella.
- Drizzle everything with the olive oil, and season with a sprinkle of salt, oregano, and basil.
- Mix together in a bowl for better flavor.

