

Capital Hill Community Garden - Flowers and Herbs 2016



Bachelor Buttons

An elegant addition to any cold or hot soup. (*Note: Remove pistils and stamens from flowers before eating. Eat only the petals.*) It looks beautiful on salad and can even work in desserts or as a garnish on any plate, and your guests will be surprised to learn it is completely edible and delicious.



Basil

Its fragrant essence combines well with rosemary and thyme in meat dishes, fish, vegetables, cheese, soup and eggs, and is one of the main ingredients in pesto, along with pine nuts and parmesan cheese.



Thai basil

Green, slightly serrated, narrow leaves with a sweet, anise-like scent and hints of licorice, along with a slight spiciness lacking in sweet basil. Thai basil has a purple stem and the flowers when open are pink.



Borage

Provides cucumber flavoured leaves for tea and other beverages as well as bright starry blue flowers for decorating salads. All parts of the plant, except the roots, are flavourful and have culinary or medicinal uses. Pregnant and nursing women should avoid borage. They can also have a diuretic effect, so should not be eaten in great quantity.



Chives

Chive flowers have a mild onion flavour and are surprisingly crunchy. Use stems and flowers in salads, pasta, omelettes and baked potatoes. Or you can add a few to white fish dishes or to cheese sauce to give that extra bite. For garnish and cooking break the flower into individual florets .



Cilantro

Has wide delicate lacy green leaves and a pungent flavour. The seed of the cilantro plant is known as coriander. Although cilantro and coriander come from the same plant, their flavours are very different and cannot be substituted for each other. All parts of the plant are edible, but the fresh leaves and the dried seeds are the most commonly used in cooking.



Dianthus

Cut the sweet tasting petals away from the bitter white base of each flower and use the petals in desserts or salads. They have a mild clove flavour.



Dill

The fernlike leaves of dill are aromatic and are used to flavour many foods including fish dishes, borscht and soups, as well as pickles (where the dill flower is used). Dill is best fresh. Frozen dill leaves retain their flavour relatively well for a few months.

Dill seed, having a flavour similar to caraway but also resembling that of fresh or dried dill weed, is used as a spice. Dill oil is extracted from the leaves, stems and seeds of the plant. The oil from the seeds is distilled and used in the manufacturing of soaps.



Lavender

Has a sweet, floral flavour, with lemon and citrus notes. Flowers taste good, with chocolate cake, in a sorbet or as a garnish for ice creams. Lavender lends itself to savoury dishes also, from hearty stews to wine-reduced sauces. Diminutive blooms add a mysterious scent to custards, flans or sorbets.



Lemon Balm

Is used as a flavouring in ice cream and herbal teas, both hot and iced, often in combination with other herbs such as spearmint. It is also frequently paired with fruit dishes, used in fish dishes and is the key ingredient in lemon balm pesto



Lovage

The flavour of its leaves and stem are like intense celery with a touch of anise and a hint of sweetness. The dried seeds make an excellent substitute for celery seeds. The chopped leaves are nice raw or added to salads, soups, stews, and sandwiches. It is also excellent for vegetable stock.



Mint

The leaves have a fresh, aromatic, sweet flavour with a cool aftertaste, and are used in teas, beverages, jellies, syrups, candies, and ice creams. Mint sauce and mint jelly are used on lamb dishes. It is also a great addition to Greek salads.



Nasturtium

All parts of the nasturtium have a pleasant, sweet, peppery flavour (flowers and leaves). Even the fresh seeds can be pickled like capers. The flowers can be used whole to decorate salads and a variety of other foods. Nasturtium butter is great on steaks.



Oregano

Harvest oregano leaves in the morning hours once dew has dried. Oregano leaves can be stored whole placed in freezer bags and frozen. They can also be dried in a dark, well-ventilated area and stored in airtight containers until ready to use. Oregano is used in many meat and vegetable dishes.



Parsley - flat leaf and curled

Is frequently used as a garnish as well as in many recipes such as meat or vegetable stews (including shrimp creole, beef bourguignon, goulash, or chicken paprikash).



Rosemary

The aromatic leaves are used as a flavouring in many foods such as stuffing and roast lamb, pork, chicken and turkey.



Sage

Is variable in size, leaf, flower colour, and foliage pattern. It has a savoury, slightly peppery flavour and is used in stuffing, sausages, and pork dishes. It is a delicious companion to beans, corn dishes, sauteed or stuffed mushrooms, or pesto sauce.



Snapdragon

The petals of the snapdragon plant can be used in salads or to decorate food trays.

Its taste can be bland to bitter. The plants grow on tall stalks and the flowers come in a variety of colours including pinks, yellows, white and orange



Sorrel

The leaves have a tart, lemony flavour. Use the tender, young leaves in salads, and the larger leaves for soups, stews and sauces. Sorrel also complements goat cheese, eggs and poultry and is a nice addition to a sandwich in place of lettuce.



Stevia

Is an exciting choice because of the natural, calorie-free sweetness found in its leaves. Appreciated by diabetics and dieters, stevia is a tender perennial that loves the sun. The leaves can be used fresh or dried.



Tarragon

Is particularly suitable for chicken, fish and egg dishes. Tarragon is the main flavouring component of Béarnaise sauce. Fresh, lightly bruised sprigs of tarragon are steeped in vinegar to produce tarragon vinegar.



Thyme

Is a low-growing aromatic plant of the mint family. Its earthiness is welcome with pork, lamb, duck, or goose, and it's much beloved in Cajun and Creole cooking. It's the primary component of Caribbean jerk seasoning,



Viola

Flowers have a sweet to mild greens flavour. The perfumed varieties (usually blue to purple) should be reserved for sweet teas, beverages and desserts. The pea flavoured varieties can be used for the savoury foods. They make a decorative addition to a green salad or to dessert. They can be crystallized and used on cakes, cookies or creamy desserts. The heart-shaped leaves are edible, and tasty when cooked like spinach.