



Plant Based Health

healthy food you can swallow

Herbs & Spices Make All The Difference

by Kay Kitchens

Whether you grow your own herbs, buy them fresh from the grocery or use the dried variety – herbs can make any recipe special. Almost every recipe you try will have one or more herbs or spices as an ingredient to add special flavor. So what is the difference in a spice and an herb?

Herbs are leaves of low-growing shrubs such as parsley, chives, marjoram, basil, caraway, coriander (cilantro), thyme, rosemary, sage, caraway and oregano. They can be fresh or dried.

Spices come from the root (ginger, horseradish, wasabi, onion, garlic), bark (cinnamon) or buds (cloves, saffron), seeds (yellow mustard, cumin, sesame, poppy), berry (black pepper) or the fruit (allspice, paprika).

It is important to use herbs and spices that complement the flavor of the dish you are preparing. It is also important to use spices and herbs that you enjoy eating. One way of ensuring that the herb you will be using is pleasing to you is to take a clean leaf of the herb and chew it but don't swallow. You will experience the pure taste of the herb and decide if it is the flavor you wish to add to your recipe. If you are using a dried seasoning, sprinkle a little on a small bite of baked potato and then eat it to learn how it tastes. If you decide to add more of a spice or herb, do it gradually in small increments as you cook.



The chart below provides you with some recommendations on which Herbs are used for which types of foods. Experiment on your own by adding or substituting the herbs in your recipes to create a new flavor.

Herb	How prepared	Recipe/Food
Thyme	Fresh or Dried leaves, flowers	Vegetables, tomato sauce
Oregano	Fresh or Dried Leaves	Tomato sauce, vegetable stews, soups, dishes & pasta
Rosemary	Fresh or Dried Leaves	Bread stuffing, soups, stews, vegetables
Tarragon	Fresh or Dried Leaves	Salads, soups, vinegar, sauces
Sage	Fresh or Dried Leaves	Bread stuffing, pasta, sauces, vegetables
Basil	Dried or Fresh Leaves	Italian sauces, tomato sauce, salads, pesto
Cilantro	Fresh Leaves	Mexican, Middle Eastern, Asian, South American dishes
Chives	Fresh or Frozen Leaves, flowers	Soups, salad dressings, salads, vegetables

This is a great time of year to grow your own herbs. Most familiar herbs are available at home and garden stores ready to plant in your garden or in a pot. You can also grow them from seed and have a lovely variety of herbs to use in your cooking. Additionally, there are important things that spices and herbs can do to help us with our health. Using spices and herbs in your meal preparation can help you cut back on salt and sugar.

Reducing Salt – Use black pepper, garlic, curry, cumin, basil and ginger as savory flavor choices instead of salt. Use powdered garlic and onion rather than the salt form. When cooking pasta, skip the salt and add flavor with oregano, parsley, basil or an Italian blend.

Reducing Sugar – Use these spices which are naturally sweet to eliminate or reduce sugar: Allspice, Anise, Cardamom, Cinnamon, Cloves, Ginger, Nutmeg. Try out some new spices in your recipes – or try out some recipes that have spices that are new to you. Enjoy!

Tomato, Cucumber & Basil Salad ~ by Kay



- 1 cup of Quinoa
- 2 Tomatoes – chopped
- 1 Cucumber partially peeled and chopped
- ½ Red Onion – sliced
- ½ cup of fresh Basil – chopped or cut with herb scissors
- ¼ cup Pine Nuts – toasted
- Dressing Ingredients:
- 4 garlic Cloves – minced
- 2 teaspoons Lemon Juice (fresh, preferred)
- 3 tablespoons Balsamic Vinegar
- ½ teaspoon Dijon Mustard
- ½ teaspoon Salt
- ½ teaspoon Crushed Red Pepper

Wash Quinoa thoroughly by immersing in bowl of water and rubbing with your palms. Pour off cloudy water and rinse. Do until water is no longer cloudy – usually 2 – 3 times.

Bring 2 cups of water to a boil, add Quinoa, cover and simmer for 15 – 20 minutes. Let cool

Whisk together dressing ingredients. Combine all salad ingredients with dressing and top with the toasted Pine Nuts.

Watch Katherine make these super-easy spice recipes from The Cancer Project (click to see the videos)

Italian Seasoning Mix



Mexican Seasoning Mix



Joe's Corner

“Eat Mushrooms for Cancer Prevention & Survival!”



For centuries, Eastern medicine has explored the health benefits of mushrooms. Today, researchers are finding that certain properties in mushrooms appear to have anti-cancerous effects. In 2009, a study from southeast China found that women could reduce their risk of breast cancer by consuming a small amount of mushrooms. When the women in the study included green tea, their breast cancer risk decreased even more. Intake of fresh mushrooms (greater than or equal to 10 grams per day) and dried mushrooms (greater than or equal to 4 grams per day) decreased risk by 64 percent and 47 percent, respectively. The most commonly eaten mushroom in this study was the white button mushroom; one small white button mushroom weighs 10 grams.

So why mushrooms? Apparently mushrooms have multiple beneficial effects on the body that work synergistically to signal certain receptors, which then enhance the immune system. Extracts from certain species of mushrooms are now used pharmaceutically to combat diseases. Some antifungal proteins in mushrooms have been shown to inhibit enzymes that stimulate the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and have also shown to inhibit tumor cell proliferation. Beta-Glucans are a type of polysaccharide (long chains of glucose) found in mushrooms. These polysaccharide substances appear to stimulate the immune system.

Unlike pharmaceutical drugs, mushrooms do not have to go through numerous trials in order to be found “safe.” Their ability to modulate the immune system is promising. The research is not perfect, but mushrooms (like many other plant foods) offer a healthy option for breast cancer patients, survivors, and those looking for ways to prevent cancer.

Reishi mushrooms (rarely found in nature) contain more than 400 different bioactive compounds. Similar to the phytonutrients found in brightly colored plants, mushrooms offer multiple ways to protect the body from foreign invaders. For example, they promote anti-inflammatory responses, protect from chemo and radiation therapy, stimulate anti-hormonal responses, regulate sleep cycles, and contain potent antioxidants. Because of the various beneficial roles mushrooms exhibit, many nutritionists encourage increased mushroom intake. Shitake, portabella, and chanterelle mushrooms are some of the better known types available.

References: Wong JH, Ng TB, Cheung RC, et al. *Proteins with antifungal properties and other medicinal applications from plants and mushrooms.* *Appl Microbiol Biotechnol.* 2010;87(4):1221-35. Ramberg JE, Nelson ED, Sinnott RA. *Immunomodulatory dietary polysaccharides: a systematic review of the literature.* *Nutr J.* 2010;9:54 Sanodiya BS, Thakur GS, Baghel RK, Prasad GB, Bisen PS. *Ganoderma lucidum: a potent pharmacological macrofungus.* *Curr Pharm Biotechnol.* 2009;10(8):717-42. Zhang M, Huang J, Xie X, Holman CD. *Dietary intakes of mushrooms and green tea combine to reduce the risk of breast cancer in Chinese women.* *Int J Cancer.* 2009;124:1404-1408. Lull C, Wichers HJ, Savelkoul HF. *Antiinflammatory and immunomodulating properties of fungal metabolites.* *Mediators Inflamm.* 2005(2):63-80.

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Finally, a VEGAN Potluck!



We are very excited that Westside UU Church in Fort Worth has begun a monthly vegan potluck dinner for the community! Finally, a place we can go to share recipes and stories, and try new foods!

Time: April 23rd, 5:00 pm

Where: Westside UU Church, 901 Page Ave, Ft. Worth

Visit www.rke.cc/potluck for all the details - registration is required! We hope to see you all there!

Spring Mushroom Primer

by Alicia Walter

(www.breadcrumbed.wordpress.com)



Mushrooms add a satisfying depth in taste and texture to many dishes. You can find dried cultivated mushrooms in the grocery store all year. Mushrooms are rich in glutamic acid, the natural version of MSG, and provide a great richness to many savory dishes. But finding fresh mushrooms, either wild or cultivated, is another reason to get excited about spring.

Below are six different types of mushrooms that you are likely to find on the shelves at your grocery store or nestled in baskets at the farmers market. Each listing includes its botanical name, best method of preparation, taste pairing and how to rehydrate in case you have more luck finding dehydrated mushrooms. A very loose rule is that 1 ounce of dried mushrooms is the same as 8-10 ounces of fresh mushrooms.

Shiitake

Lentinula edodes

Only use the caps, stems are tough and discarded

Very versatile mushroom; best cooked
Asparagus, basil, rosemary, sage, spinach,
balsamic vinegar

Rehydrate from 2-3 hours to overnight in water

Chanterelle

Cantharellus cibarius

Have not successfully been cultivated. Only purchase from a trusted source.

Best marinated or cooked

Garlic, pepper, shallots, thyme

Rehydrate for 20 minutes in water

King Oyster

Pleurotus eryngii

Can be eaten raw, great grilled

Leeks, lemon, marjoram, garlic, parsley

Reconstitute for 20-30 minutes in water

Wood Ear

Auricularia polytricha

First mushroom in history to be cultivated
Best cooked by poaching or braising and used in stews or salads.

Flavor is not distinct, can be added to any dish for texture. Rehydrate for 20 minutes or overnight in water.

Oyster

Pleurotus ostreatus

Have a short shelf life

Can be eaten raw or cooked

Leeks, lemon, marjoram, garlic, parsley

Reconstitute for 20-30 minutes in water

Cremini

Agaricus bisporus

Also known as baby bellas as they are young portobella mushrooms

Can be eaten raw, steamed, pickled,

Have less flavor than portobella caps

Arugula, chives, parsley. Reconstitute for 20-30 minutes in water.

Alicia Walter is a chef-instructor based in NYC. You can find her recipes and revelations at [breadcrumbed.wordpress.com](http://www.breadcrumbed.wordpress.com).

Pickled Mushroom Salad

by Alicia of breadcrumbed.wordpress.com



Simmering the mushrooms in the pickling liquid enhances their flavor and allows them to retain a firm meaty texture. Recipe adapted from The Complete Mushroom Book by Antonio Carluccio

- 1 pound mushrooms, brushed clean and trimmed
- 1 cup white wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 tablespoon agave nectar
- 1 bay leaf
- ¼ cup shallots, diced
- ½ tablespoon red chili flakes
- Pepper to taste
- ¼ c minced parsley



Chop mushrooms so that they are all about the same size. Bring water, vinegar, salt, agave nectar and bay leaf to a boil. Add mushrooms and cook on medium high heat for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat up ½ cup of water in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add shallots, chili flakes and pepper. Water sauté until translucent. Add more water if skillet gets too dry.

Test mushrooms to make sure they are cooked in the middle. Drain well, reserve cooking liquid and add mushrooms to skillet. Heat through and taste for seasoning. Stir in parsley. Serve over wild rice or fresh greens for an entrée or as a memorable side dish. Reserved liquid can be used as a dressing for bean, grain or green salads.

Class Schedule



Food For Life CANCER

Tuesdays, Apr 19 - May 10, 6-9pm First Baptist Church, 122 NE 22nd Street, **Grand Prairie**
 Call to register 972-262-5146 *Class is free due to a generous sponsorship - adults only*

** This class desperately needs a volunteer - email Kay@plantbasedhealth.com if you'd like to help*

Mondays, May 16, 23, June 6 & 13, 5:30-8:30pm. TX Oncology, 2790 Lake Vista Road, **Lewisville** Sign up by calling Kelly Parker at 972-459-1341. *Class is free due to a generous sponsorship - adults only*



Food For Life - DIABETES

Saturday, April 23rd, 10am - 12pm

A Day Away Retreat, 165 Private Rd 4584, **Boyd**

Sign up with Katherine 817-526-4811 or www.pcrm.org/diabetes

Tuesday, May 10th, 6-8pm, First Baptist Church, 402 West 8th Street, **Justin**
 Register by calling 940-648-2773.

Tuesday, May 17th, 6-8pm, First Baptist Church, 122 N.E. 22nd St, **Grand Prairie**
 Register by calling 972-252-4146



Debbie's BeansTalk

Bean of the Month: Cannellini Beans



Cannellini beans are a personal favorite. They are large white beans, about 1/2" long, with a firm texture and a nut-like flavor. They are often referred to as "white kidney beans". They have a mild flavor and hold their shape well. Cannellini beans are a great addition to almost any type of soup or salad. My favorite way to use these beans is in a hearty minestrone soup. In addition to being delicious these beans provide us with numerous health benefits. Cannellini beans are high in protein, high in fiber and a good source of calcium.

Cannellini beans, like other kidney beans, require special preparation to remove compounds that can cause gastric distress. Soak your dried cannellini beans overnight. Pour off the old water and replace with enough water to completely cover the beans. Bring water to boil and boil them for 10 minutes before reducing the heat and simmering them for 1-2 hours or until tender. Adding salt to the cooking water can toughen some beans. Because cannellini beans already have a firm texture it is best to skip the salt. You can always add salt after the beans have finished cooking.

Because of their low cost, long shelf life, and versatility Cannellini beans are a great addition to any pantry. These beans double in size when soaked, so a few beans go a long way in a dish. Keeping a few cans of cannellini beans on hand is great for those times when you are in a pinch and don't have the time to prepare the dried variety.

Low-Fat Cannellini Bean Dip

1 (15-ounce) can white cannellini beans, rinsed and drained (or 1 ½ cups cooked beans)

1 large clove garlic, chopped (use more if you love garlic)

1/4 cup low fat plain soy yogurt

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 tablespoon fresh lemon zest

1/2 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary (thyme works well also)

1/4 teaspoon salt

a pinch of black pepper

This cannellini bean dip is a great alternative to hummus. It is big on taste and low in fat. A win win situation. Can be served as a simple Easter appetizer.

Put garlic, beans, soy yogurt, olive oil, lemon zest, rosemary, and salt in a food processor. Process until all ingredients are combined. Add pepper and process for a minute or until you have a smooth creamy spread. Serve with raw veggies or pita triangles and enjoy.

For a nice presentation you can line the serving bowl with cabbage leaves and add lemon rind and a sprig of rosemary as a finishing touch.

Golf to Prevent Cancer

Play golf, eat delicious food, win prizes & help The Cancer Project...



April 30th, 8:00am - 3:00pm

Join us at Riverside Golf Club in Grand Prairie, Texas for a 4-person scramble golf tournament. Entry fee is \$100 and includes greens fee, cart fee, range balls and a delicious lunch buffet. All proceeds benefit The Cancer Project. Prizes include: Closest to the pin on all Par 3's, Longest Drive, First, Second & Third Place Teams. Find more information on www.mastersinapril.com. Help us beat last year's donation of \$2800!



A "One Stop Shopping" fundraising and cancer prevention awareness event benefiting *The Cancer Project*

&

The American Cancer Society

featuring Women Entrepreneurs

When: Saturday, May 14th 10:00 am to 2:00pm

Where: Bedford Holiday Inn - Lone Star Ballroom

This event is open to women owned businesses to come together and raise money for *The American Cancer Society* and *The Cancer Project* www.thecancerproject.org. Designed as a "One Stop Shopping" event to shop, network and promote cancer prevention awareness. There will be refreshments and raffle prizes. *Organized by Regina Weiland of www.passionatevegan.com.*