

Basil, Sweet Basil

Family	LAMIACEAE
Botanical	Ocimum basilicum
Parts Used	Leaves and flowers
USDA Hardiness	4-10
Light	Full Sun
Soil	Loamy, sandy pH 5.1-8.5
Duration	Tender Annual



Propagation Cuttings, seeds

Water Moist, well drained soil

Growing This herb is sensitive to cold, so be sure to wait until after the last frost to plant. Plant in good loamy soil with at least 6 hours of sun.

Plant basil with tomatoes and asparagus to repel aphids, mites, tomato horn worms and asparagus beetles. It is also supposed to improve the general growth and flavor of tomatoes.

Other Varieties of Basil:

Spicy Globe Basil

Compact, good for small gardens. Use like sweet basil.

Lettuce Leaf Basil

White flowers, large crinkly leaves. Sweeter flavor. Good in salads. Grows like crazy.

Lemon Basil

Finer leaves with a distinct lemony odor. Good for potpourri, tea and salad.

Opal Basil

Very pretty, ornamental with shiny purplish foliage and lavender flowers. Gives color to herbal vinegars and looks lovely in flower arrangements. There are larger and more compact varieties.

Cinnamon Basil

Large, with dark green shiny leaves and pink flowers. Strong spicy flavor and fragrance in both foliage and flowers. Use in dried arrangements, potpourri, tea, vinegars, jellies and cooking.

Thai Basil

Upright and branchy. Very nice, but very different flavor and fragrance. Purple stems and flowers. Use in Asian dishes and with fresh fruit. A cultivar of Sweet basil and Holy Basil.

Mammoth Basil

Huge leaves. Ideal for wrapping meats for roasting or for sandwiches.

Purple Ruffles Basil

Lavender flowers, ruffled, dark maroon, shiny leaves. Pretty ornamental. Makes a beautiful reddish purple vinegar.

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Holy Basil

Lavender flowers with coarse gray green foliage and hairy stems. Sweet fragrance and very ornamental. Called Tulsi Tea in India. Boosts the immune system.

Medicinal Uses	Anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antibacterial, antiviral, antifungal and insecticidal.
Benefits	A remedy for headache, fever, anxiety, convulsions, nausea and hypertension.
Preparation	Introduce basil into your meal plan by flavouring dishes with chopped fresh basil instead of cream-based sauces, cheese or salt. Add a few leaves and a drizzle of balsamic vinaigrette to spice up boring greens, or stick to the classic tomato-basil combo and toss in a handful of chopped basil to pasta sauce, Mediterranean-style pizza or tomato-mozzarella salad. For an Eastern flair, stir a few coarsely chopped Thai basil leaves into spicy curries, soups or stir-fries until just wilted.

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Culinary Uses Use the leaves in soups, stews, pasta sauce, poultry and meat dishes. Use as a flavoring in vinegar. Herbal tea.

Grilled Pizza with Pesto, Tomatoes & Feta

Ingredients:

- 1 pound prepared pizza dough, preferably whole-wheat
- 1/2 cup prepared pesto
- 4 ripe plum tomatoes, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup lightly packed fresh basil leaves, torn

Directions:

1. Heat grill to medium-high.
2. Meanwhile, place dough on a lightly floured surface. Divide into 4 pieces. Roll each piece into an 8-inch round crust, about 1/4 inch thick. Place crusts on a floured baking sheet. Carry crusts and toppings out to the grill.
3. Lay crusts on grill (they won't stay perfectly round). Cover grill and cook until crusts are lightly puffed and undersides are lightly browned, about 3 minutes.
4. Using tongs, flip crusts. Immediately spread pesto over crusts. Top with tomatoes. Sprinkle with feta and pepper. Cover grill and cook until the undersides are lightly browned, about 3 minutes more. Sprinkle with basil and serve immediately.



Basil Pesto

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup walnuts, pecans, almonds or cashews
- 1/4 cup pignolis
- 3 tablespoons chopped garlic (9 cloves)
- 5 cups fresh basil leaves, packed
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 cups good olive oil
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Directions:

Place the nuts, pignolis, and garlic in the bowl of a food processor fitted with a steel blade. Process for 30 seconds. Add the basil leaves, salt, and pepper. With the processor running, slowly pour the olive oil into the bowl through the feed tube and process until the pesto is finely pureed. Add the Parmesan and puree for a minute. Serve, or store the pesto in the refrigerator or freezer with a thin film of olive oil on top. Use your ice cube trays for freezing the pesto into serving size cubes.

Historical Facts

First native to India, Asia and Africa. It is prominently featured in varied cuisines throughout the world including Italian, Thai, Vietnamese and Laotian.

The name "basil" is derived from the old Greek word basilikohn, which means "royal," reflecting that ancient culture's attitudes towards an herb that they held to be very noble and sacred. The tradition of reverence of basil has continued in other cultures. In India, basil was cherished as an icon of

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hospitality, while in Italy, it was a symbol of love.

Additional Tips

Nutrition Facts

Basil Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 2 Tbsp. of chopped basil (5 grams) % Daily Value

Calories 1

Vitamin K 29%

Vitamin A 6%

Vitamin C 2%

Calcium 1%

Iron 1%