

## Herbs

### LATIN NAME

*Allium schoenoprasum*

*Anethum graveolens*

*Coriandrum sativum*

*Laurus nobilis*

*Lavandula angustifolia*

*Mentha spp.*

*Ocimum basilicum*

*Origanum vulgare*

*Petroselinum crispum*

*Rosmarinus officinalis*

*Salvia officinalis*

*Thymus vulgaris*

### COMMON NAME

chives

dill

coriander seed/cilantro leaf

bay laurel

English lavender

mint

sweet basil

oregano

parsley

rosemary

common sage

English thyme

# HERBS

## Definition of an Herb:

"The term 'herb' has more than one definition. Botanists describe an herb as a small, seed bearing plant with fleshy, rather than woody, parts (from which we get the term 'herbaceous'). In addition to herbaceous perennials, herbs include trees, shrubs, annuals, vines, and more primitive plants, such as ferns, mosses, algae, lichens, and fungi. They [herbs] are valued for their flavor, fragrance, medicinal and healthful qualities, economic and industrial uses, pesticidal properties, and coloring materials (dyes)."

© Deni Bown, 2001.

*Citation: Bown, Deni. The Herb Society of America New Encyclopedia of Herbs and Their Uses.*

*New York: Dorling Kindersley, 2001. p. 18*



**thin, tubular, grass-like, dark green leaves**

**globular, clover-like clusters of pale purple flowers**



***Allium schoenoprasum***

AL-ee-um

**Common name:** **chives**

- **Perennial**, 6-24 inches in height, hardy to Zone 3, rarely bothered by pests
- Used as a culinary herb
- Known for its mild onion flavor
- Used in China as an antidote for poison & to stop bleeding as long ago as 3000 B.C.
- Harvest flowers when they are fully open
- Harvest leaves to within one inch of ground about four times a year
- Freeze or dry leaves, or make chive butter or vinegar
- Globular, clover-like clusters of pale purple flowers subtended by papery bracts
- Thin, tubular, grass-like, dark green leaves



**stiff hollow stems clad with aromatic, lacy,  
delicate, blue-green leaves**



**flowers yellow in showy umbels**

***Anethum graveolens***

**Common name: dill**

uh-NAY-thum

- **Annual**, 3 feet in height
- Used as a culinary herb
- Flowers yellow in showy umbels
- Used by the Egyptians for treating coughs and headaches
- In ancient times, was put into wine to enhance passion
- To harvest dry leaves and seeds
- Flowering attract bees and beneficial insects
- Grows quickly and will die out in heat of summer
- Chewing the seeds sweetens the breath



Coriander (seed)  
Cilantro (leaf)





***Coriandrum sativum***

kore-ee-AN-drum

**Common name:** coriander (seed)/cilantro (leaf)

- **Annual**, 2-3 feet in height; has been cultivated for more than 3000 years
- Used as a culinary herb
- Root popular in Thai cooking
- Flavoring for foods, liqueurs & gin
- Best to sow seeds after frost
- Flowers attract bees & other beneficial insects
- Named after the bedbug because it emits the same unpleasant odor that bedbugs produce
- Use leaves, seeds, or roots in cooking





**leathery, thick, elliptic to oval,  
glossy dark green leaves**

## *Laurus nobilis*

law-russ

**Common name:** bay laurel

- **Tender Perennial**, zones 8-10
- Used as culinary Herb in marinades, stock, stews, stuffings & curries
- Aromatic, evergreen, medium tree with shiny gray bark
- Symbol of glory and reward; leaves are woven for wreaths of victory
- Bay leaves are added to Spanish, Creole and French dishes
- Fragrant oil is added to bathwater
- Beautiful ornamental tree in areas with mild winters & warm summers
- Leathery, thick, elliptic to oval, glossy dark green leaves





**narrow, gray-green leaves on square stems**





## ***Lavandula angustifolia***

lav-AN-dew-lah

**Common name:** lavender

- **Perennial**, 3 feet in height
- Used as a culinary herb in herbes de Provence blends and in a variety of sweet dishes
- Flower should be harvested just prior to opening and dried before use
- Will thrive in a warm, non-windy area that slopes to the south
- Both foliage and flowers are highly aromatic
- Aromatic smell is found in all parts of the shrub; essential oil is only produced from the flowers and flower-stalks
- Narrow, gray-green leaves (to 2 1/2" long) on square stems
- Lavender can be difficult to grow in the St. Louis area, primarily because of winter stresses and high summer humidity



**tooth-edged leaves**

***Mentha* spp.**

MEN-thuh

**Common name:** mint

- **Perennial**, 6-36 inches in height
- Used as a culinary, decorative & medicinal herb
- Fresh or dried leaves can be used in food and drinks
- Commercially important as source of flavor & menthol
- A symbol of virtue in the Victorian language of flowers
- Spp. is the abbreviation for "species"
- Distinctive feature is squarish stems and tooth-edged leaves
- Invasive perennial

Genus name comes from Minthe or Menthe, a water nymph in Greek mythology, who was transformed by Persephone into a mint plant in revenge for Minthe's ongoing affair with Hades (husband of Persephone).





**upright clump of stems with flattened leaves**

***Ocimum basilicum***

OH-sih-mum

**Common name: basil**

- **Annual**, 2 feet in height
- Large succulent leaves
- Numerous cultivars available such as "Anise", "Cinnamon", "Lemon", & "Thai" shoots
- Unique flavor dominates other flavors; compliments tomato dishes & key ingredient in pesto
- Repels white flies
- To harvest freeze or dry leaves, or infuse leaves in oils & vinegars
- Used as culinary herb, often called the "tomato herb" & "king of herbs"
- Extremely frost sensitive





**bushy, woody-branched perennial**





## ***Origanum vulgare***

or-RI-ga-num

**Common name:** **oregano**

- **Perennial**, 18 inches in heights, hardy to Zone 4
- Used as a culinary and decorative herb
- To harvest freeze or dry leaves, or macerate in oil or vinegar
- Pungent herb used in Italian, Greek and Mexican cooking
- Tiny, two-lipped, pinkish-purple or white flowers
- A good foliage plant for the border as well as for cooking
- Bushy, rhizomatous, woody-branched perennial
- Best leaf flavor usually occurs just prior to flowering



**triangular dark green leaves are finely divided into curly or flat leaflets**

***Petroselinum crispum***

pet-roe-seh-LYE-num

**Common name: parsley**

- **Biennial that is typically grown in St. Louis as an annual**, 12 inches in height
- Used as culinary herb
- Leaves remain harvestable until temperatures drop into the low 20s F
- Gentle flavor; works especially well at blending the flavors around it
- Used fresh or dried in soups, salads and a wide variety of other food dishes (e.g., potatoes, fish, stews, vegetables, omelets)
- Larval food plant for the black swallowtail butterfly
- Contains more vitamin C per volume than an orange
- Triangular dark green leaves are finely divided into curly or flat leaflets





**gray-green, linear, needle-like leaves**

## ***Rosmarinus officinalis***

rose-ma-REE-nus

**Common name: rosemary**

- **Perennial**, 2 to 6 feet in height
- Used variously as a medicine, food preservative, stimulant, memory enhancer, and of course as a flavorsome cooking ingredient
- Greek scholars often wore a garland of the herb on their heads to help their memory during examinations & is therefore a symbol of remembrance
- Prune to encourage branching and to remove dead leaves and stems
- Does not transplant well
- Repels cabbage moths, bean beetle & carrot fly
- Gray-green, linear, needle-like leaves are closely spaced on the stems & are very aromatic
- Plants grown from seed are not as robust as those taken from established plants





**wrinkled, gray-green leaves**

**whorls of two-lipped, lavender-blue flowers**





***Salvia officinalis***

SAL-vee-uh

**Common name:** sage

- **Perennial**, 2-3 feet in height
- Used as a culinary and decorative herb
- Essential herb in Italian cooking; commonly added to sauces, marinades, & soups
- Harvest leaves before flowering & dry slowly
- Repels cabbage butterflies
- Stems square & aromatic when crushed
- Wrinkled, gray-green leaves (to 4" long) are strongly aromatic



**tiny leaves are pointed, linear to elliptic**



***Thymus vulgaris***  
**Common name: thyme**

TY-muss

- **Perennial**, 12 inches in height, Zone 4
- Used as a culinary herb
- Tiny leaves are dark gray-green, pointed, linear to elliptic
- Leaf margins are rolled under
- Pale pink flowers bloom at the tips of the stems in summer
- Lore dates from ancient times; used as an embalming oil
- Strong piquant or lemony flavor
- To harvest pick leaves in summer and dry or infuse in oil or vinegar
- Repels cabbage root fly and flower attracts bees
- Dried leaves added to sachets help repel moths