

Cooking With Your Fresh Herbs
By
Chef Mark Standefer



McCoard's Garden Center
384 S. 3110 W.
Provo, UT 84601

Email: info@mccoards.com
Visit our website at www.mccoards.com
801-373-1262

2018

Cleaning & Preparing Herbs

1. Never use herbs that are wilted, yellow, or have holes in the leaves. Select a bunch that is erect in structure and has dark leaves.
2. Place the herbs into a deep bowl of cold water, or into a clean, water-filled sink. Use a lot of water when washing herbs (too little water doesn't allow the dirt to settle or the herbs to float clear). Once the dirt has sunk to the bottom of the bowl, remove the herbs by skimming them up and out of the water. (Pouring the bowl's contents through a straining device will only dump the dirt back onto the herbs). Rinse the bowl or sink free of dirt and repeat the process until the herbs are cleaned to your satisfaction.
Optional: Use 1 teaspoon bleach in water to kill any bacteria on the herbs.
3. Once the herbs have been cleaned, spread them out on a dry towel. Carefully blot the herbs with the towel before gently rolling it up around them. Let the bundle sit for a few minutes until the excess water has been absorbed.
4. Pick the leaves off the stems. For aesthetically perfect and fiber-free herbs, completely remove any trace of the stem. Some herbs like cilantro, however, have edible stems that do not need to be completely removed. Discard or save stems as needed.
5. These herbs are ready for cooking! They can be tossed into a salad or pasta, used whole in a sauce, torn or chopped.

Yogurt Herb Dipping Sauce

This is a creamy yogurt dressing. The sour cream and fresh herbs give this dish a little bit of a kick. Try this dip with vegetables or potato chips.

Base Ingredients

- 1 cup plain yogurt
- ½ cup sour cream
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. Kosher salt

Optional Ingredients Recipe #1

- 2 tsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 tsp. fresh cilantro, chopped
- 2 tsp. green onions, chopped
- 1 tsp. fresh dill, chopped

Optional Ingredients Recipe #2

- 2 tsp. Italian parsley
- 2 tsp. fresh basil
- 2 tsp. fresh thyme
- 2 garlic cloves, minced

Directions

In a mixing bowl, combine base ingredients with your choice of optional recipe. Mix well, cover and refrigerate for at least one hour before serving.

Herb Dip with Hummus

Lots of freshly chopped herbs add zing to our hummus dip. Serve with assorted vegetables, such as baby carrots, bell pepper strips, radishes, snow peas, broccoli and cauliflower florets.

Base Ingredients

- 1- 15 ounce can chick peas or garbanzo beans, rinsed
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons tahini paste
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. Kosher salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- ½ to 1 ½ cups olive oil

Optional Ingredients Recipe #1

- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- ¼ cup chopped fresh dill
- ¼ cup chopped fresh mint
- ¼ cup chopped fresh chives
- ½ cup feta cheese

Optional Ingredients Recipe #2

- 1 large roasted red bell pepper
- 1 jalapeno, seeded, diced
- 3 tablespoons chopped cilantro leaves
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 3 tablespoons chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon chopped chipotle pepper in adobo (optional)

Directions

Place beans and all of the base ingredients in a food processor gradually add the olive oil and puree until smooth. Add optional recipe; puree until incorporated. Chill until ready to serve.

Herb Ratio

When cooking with fresh and dry herbs, there is a general rule when it comes to the ratio of fresh to dry. Because dried herbs are generally more potent and concentrated than fresh herbs, you'll need less – typically three times the amount of fresh herbs as dry. For example, if a recipe call for 1 tablespoon of fresh oregano, you need only 1 teaspoon of dried, since 3 teaspoons equal 1 tablespoon.

Storing Herbs

Fresh-cut herbs can be wrapped in a paper towel, stored in re-sealable plastic bags, and then put into the refrigerator. Dried herbs should be stored out of the light and in a cool dry place. Keep an eye on how long your herbs have been open, if they've been open for too long, they'll smell and taste less potent.

Garlic and Herb Marinade

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup water
- 1/3 cup vinegar or balsamic
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tsp. thyme
- 3 tsp. Italian oregano seasoning
- 3 tsp. rosemary, crushed
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper

Directions

In a medium bowl, combine the water, vinegar, oil, garlic, thyme, oregano, rosemary, salt and black pepper. Mix well and apply to your favorite meat (2-3 pounds protein).

Note: Let marinade stand for no less than 2 hours, maximum 12 hours.

Cilantro Lime Ranch Dressing

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup mayo
- 3/4 cup Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 cup cilantro, chopped
- 2 tablespoons, chives, roughly chopped
- 2-3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper

Directions

Place all ingredients into a food processor and blend until smooth and creamy. Refrigerate at least one hour before serving.

Traditional Pesto Sauce

Ingredients

- 2-3 cloves garlic
- 2 cups basil leaves, packed
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup pine nuts, roasted
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese
- Kosher salt

Directions

In a food processor, mix the garlic, basil, a pinch of salt, pine nuts and cheese into a paste. Gradually blend in olive oil; adjust seasoning to taste.

Kale Pesto

Ingredients

- 2-3 cloves garlic
- 3 cups kale, chopped, packed
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup pine nuts, roasted
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- Kosher salt

Directions

In a food processor, mix the garlic, kale, a pinch of salt, pine nuts and cheese into a paste. Gradually blend in olive oil; adjust seasoning to taste.

Aioli

Aioli is a zesty garlic mayonnaise that's used as a sauce, most often for seafood and shellfish, although it's also great on green beans or French fried potatoes.

Curry Dill Aioli Ingredients

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tsp. curry powder
- 1 tablespoon garlic (minced)
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1/4 cup lime juice (1 lime)
- 1 tablespoons fresh dill, chopped
-

Directions

In a bowl, place mayonnaise, curry powder, garlic, salt and pepper. Start to mix, add the lime juice and dill; combine. Store under refrigeration after completion. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary.

Lemon Garlic Basil Aioli Ingredients

- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 4 tablespoons garlic, minced
- 1 lemon (zest)
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (1 lemon)
- 4 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped

Directions

Place all ingredients into a mixing bowl. Mix well. Let aioli stand 2 hours prior to serving for flavors to combine. Keep under refrigeration.

Cook's Notes:

You can prepare this sauce one to two days in advance. The longer it sets the more the flavor is absorbed into the sauce.

Herbal Salts

Sprinkle herbal salts on your favorite soups, salads and stews, or use to enhance the flavors of tomatoes, potatoes, chicken and fish.

Citrus Rosemary Salt Ingredients

- 1 tsp. fresh rosemary leaves, chopped
- 1 tsp. lemon zest (can sub orange zest)
- ½ cup coarse salt

Garlic Rosemary Salt Ingredients

- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 tsp. fresh rosemary leaves, chopped
- 4 tsp. coarse salt

Directions

In a food processor, combine citrus zest, rosemary and salt. Pulse until well blended (for day use).

STORING SALTS LONG TERM:

1. Chop fresh herb leaves
2. Add salt to leaves
3. Crush the mixture with a mortar and pestle, or food processor for 1 to 2 minutes.
4. Spread the herb and salt mixture on a cookie sheet.
5. Place in oven at 200 degrees between 45-60 minutes.
6. Stir frequently and break up any clumps.
7. Remove from oven and let cool.
8. Pour into jar and seal.
9. Store away from heat and light.

Roasted Red Pepper Pesto

Ingredients

- 2 large red bell peppers, roasted and peeled
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2-3 cups Extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup basil leaves, packed
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/3 cup pine nuts, roasted
- Black pepper (to taste)
- Salt (if needed)

Directions

Roast or grill the red bell peppers until the skins are charred, then using tongs, transfer them to a covered container such as a small pan with a lid or even a plastic Ziploc bag to let them rest. Peel them when cool.

In a food processor, mix the garlic, peppers, basil, pines nuts, cheese and black pepper into a paste. Gradually blend in olive oil; adjust seasoning. Add salt only if needed, since the cheese will add saltiness.

Herb Butter

Ingredients

- ½ pound unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoon minced fresh chives
- 1 tsp. lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon minced oregano
- 2 tablespoon minced parsley leaves
- ½ tsp. Kosher salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- Pinch of cayenne = ¼ tsp. (optional)

Directions

In a large bowl mix the butter and the other ingredients with a rubber spatula until evenly combined.

Lay about a foot long section of plastic wrap on a work surface. Put the herb butter on the bottom center of the plastic wrap, and form into a mound about 8 inches long. Fold the bottom edge of the plastic wrap over the butter and roll the enclosed butter forward until completely wrapped, to form a tube of butter about 1 ½ inches in diameter. Twist the ends together like a party favor. Refrigerate until firm or freeze for up to 1 month. Sliced as needed for corn on the cob, grilled steaks or chicken kiev.

Tarragon Chive Vinegar

Ingredients

- 16 sprigs fresh tarragon (5-6")
- 2 whole, peeled garlic cloves
- 12 fresh chive shoots
- 3 ½ cups white wine vinegar

Directions

Heat the vinegar in a large saucepan over medium-high heat, and heat until vinegar reaches 190 degrees F. Place the herbs in a container large enough to hold the vinegar. Pour the vinegar over the herbs, and after the vinegar has cooled, place the lid on the container. Set in a cool dark place for 1 week.

Sterilize the containers and lids that you will store the vinegar in by immersing them in a large pot of boiling water and boiling for 10 minutes. If using corks, purchase pre-sterilized corks, and then dip them in and out of boiling water 3 to 4 times.

Discard the old herbs. Strain the vinegar through a sanitized colander or funnel lined with cheesecloth. Divide the fresh herbs among the containers and pour the vinegar over them. Seal and refrigerate. The vinegar may be stored at room temperature for 5-6 weeks or in the refrigerator for up to 6 months.

Note: If herbs are left in after 5-7 days they will mold.



The “Classics”

(from previous seminars)

Garlic and Sun Dried Tomato Herb Butter

Ingredients

- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped chives
- 3 tablespoons sun dried tomatoes, diced
- ½ tsp. Kosher salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- ½ pound unsalted butter, softened

Directions

In a mixing bowl, add butter, garlic, chives, sun dried tomato, salt and pepper. Whip together until well incorporated. Take a piece of plastic wrap and lay it on the counter. Place the butter mixture on the plastic wrap and shape into a log or place the bowl in the refrigerator covered to firm it back up.

Penne Pasta with Herb Butter and Cream

Ingredients

- 8 ounces pre-cooked penne pasta*
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 3 tablespoons butter or herb butter
- 3 to 4 tablespoons mixed chopped fresh herbs such as tarragon, chives or Italian parsley
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions

In a saucepan place the heavy cream and butter. Simmer over low heat for a minute or until slightly reduced and then season with salt and pepper. Keep warm over low heat. Drain penne and add it to the cream sauce. Toss penne coating them with cream sauce. Add fresh herbs, salt, and pepper and toss again, still over low heat, until sauce has thickened and penne is well coated. Serve immediately.

*Cook's Note: Sauces can be used with any type of pasta.

Herb Waffle Batter

Base Ingredients

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- 4 tsp. baking powder
- 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 1/3 cup butter, melted
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

Optional Ingredients Recipe #1

- 2 tablespoons parsley, diced
- 2 tablespoons rosemary, diced
- 1 tablespoon tarragon, diced

Optional Ingredients Recipe #2

- 2 tablespoons chives, diced
- 2 tablespoons thyme, diced
- 2 tablespoons oregano, diced

Directions

In a large bowl, mix together flour, salt, baking powder and sugar. In a separate bowl beat the eggs, stir in the milk, butter and vanilla. Pour the milk mixture into the flour mixture. Beat until blended. Add diced herbs, mix by hand to incorporate. Ladle the batter into a pre-heated waffle iron. Cook the waffle until golden brown. Serve immediately.