

Culinary Herbs



Basil



Bay leaf



Borage



Chervil



Coriander



Dill



Lemon balm



Mint



Oregano



Parsley



Rocket



Rosemary



Sage



Thyme



Tarragon

Common name (botanical name)	Plentiful season	Usual culinary use and part used
Basil Many cultivars available, e.g. sweet basil, dark opal, Fino verde, lemon, lime, Thai.	summer	Leaves with tomato, eggplant, capsicum and potato dishes, with pizza, in pesto, and egg and cheese mixtures. Ingredient in herbs de Provence.
Bay leaf	all year	Leaves fresh or dried in marinades, braises, soups, stews, pickled vegetables, sauces, milk puddings, dried beans, peas and lentils. Ingredient of bouquet garni and garam masala.
Borage	spring – autumn	Young leaves used sparingly in salads, dressings, sauces. Use edible flowers for garnish on salads, soups, desserts, drinks.
Chervil	spring – autumn	Leaves in salads, egg dishes, sauces, herb butters, chicken and fish. Best used fresh or added at end of cooking. Ingredient of fines herbes.
Chives	all year	Leaves in salads, egg dishes, soft cheeses. Ingredient of fines herbes. Add at end of cooking.
Coriander Leaf also called cilantro, Chinese parsley	all year	Leaves in Asian, Indian, Mexican and Thai dishes.
Cress 'Mustard and cress' and Land cress Watercress.	spring – summer spring – summer all year	Young leaves used in salads, sandwiches, garnishes. Young leaves used in salads, sandwiches, garnishes. Fresh leaves used in soups, salads, sandwiches, garnishes, stir fries.
Curry leaves	all year	Leaves, fresh or dried. The flavour and fragrance of fresh leaves is stronger than dried leaves. Store fresh leaves wrapped in plastic in the refrigerator for up to two weeks. Store dried leaves in a dark, air-tight container. Use in Indian-style curries.
Dandelion	spring – summer	Leaves used in salads, stir fries.
Dill	spring – autumn	Leaves with seafood especially salmon, in salads, with cucumber, potatoes, sauces, pickling and borscht.
Kaffir Lime Leaf	summer – autumn	A hallmark of South East Asian cuisine. Use in curries, marinades and cook with rice. Ingredient in Asian bouquet garni with lemongrass and ginger. Juice of the ripe fruit (lime) is used the same way.
Lemon balm	spring – autumn	Best not cooked. Add at end of cooking. Fresh leaves in vinegar, wine cups, fish dishes, soft cheese dishes, chicken dishes, salsa, and sautéed vegetables.
Lemon grass	spring – autumn	Slightly swollen, white leaf-stalk. Crush to add to marinades, chop for Thai curry pastes, finely slice for soups and stir fries, and infuse as a tea.
Lemon verbena	summer – autumn	Leaves, fresh or dried in fish or poultry dishes, in stuffings, sorbets, ice cream, herb teas.
Lovage	spring – autumn	Strongly flavoured leaves used sparingly in soups, stews, braises, stocks, with chicken, cheese, tomatoes.
Marjoram	spring – autumn	Leaves in soups, with cheese, eggs, meats and vegetables. Used in Italian dishes.
Mint Many cultivars, e.g. spearmint, apple mint, peppermint, chocolate mint.	all year	Fresh leaves in mint sauce with roast or grilled lamb, with fish and a staple in Asian cuisines, dried in Middle Eastern soups and stews, with peas, potatoes, cucumber, salads, yoghurt, tabbouleh, chocolate desserts, fruit cups, mint julep and mojitos. Leaves turn black if chopped and added to hot food. Best in cold preparations. Ingredient in herbs de Provence.
Mitsuba Japanese parsley	all year	Seedlings or thinnings in salads; leaves and stems in clear soups, savoury Japanese-style dishes. Add just before serving to retain flavour.
Oregano	summer – autumn	Leaves in stuffings, sausage dishes, with grilled meats, fried vegetables, tomato sauces, pizzas, spaghetti, marinades, pickled olives and capers. Used in Italian dishes. Ingredient in herbs de Provence.
Parsley Curly parsley, Italian or flat-leaf parsley	spring – autumn	Leaves and stalks in soups, stews, braises, tabbouleh, persillade, gremolata and salsa, garnishing. Ingredient in bouquet garni and fines herbes.
Perilla Red perilla, green perilla. Also called shiso (Japanese), tai to (Vietnamese).	summer	It has a spicy flavour. Use tiny seedlings finely chopped, or leaves or flowering shoots to garnish raw and cooked fish dishes, salads, cucumber, tempura, sushi, pickles.
Rocket Also called arugula	all year	Leaves and flowers in salads, sandwiches, as a garnish.
Rosemary	all year	Finely chopped leaves with roast sheep meats, marinades, eggplant, beans, potatoes, barbecue foods, bread. Use stems as skewers. Ingredient in herbs de Provence.
Sage Common sage, purple sage, variegated sage.	spring – autumn	Leaves in sausages, stuffing, with onions, leeks, cheese and port. Ingredient in herbs de Provence. Panfry and serve with bacon.
Salad burnet	spring – summer	Fresh, young leaves in salads, soups, soft cheese, fruit drinks, as a garnish.
Savory Summer savory Winter savory	spring – autumn all year	Leaves. Called the 'bean herb'. Summer savory has a softer texture and more subtle flavour than winter savory. Use in bean dishes, summer savory in salads, both with onions, courgettes, fish and meat.
Sorrel Garden or common sorrel, has long arrow-shaped leaves. Buckler-leaved sorrel (French sorrel) is milder and has smaller shield-shaped leaves	spring – summer	Leaves. Discard stalks. Use sparingly as it is high in oxalic acid. Young tender leaves in salads, and larger leaves in soups, braises, stews and sauces, goat cheese, eggs and poultry.
Sweet cicely	spring – autumn	Finely chopped young leaves in salads, dressings, and soups. Adds sweetness when cooked with tart fruits.
Tarragon – French	spring - autumn	Leaves with eggs, chicken, fish, mushrooms, vegetables, tomatoes, oranges, sauces, vinegars. Ingredient in fines herbes.
Tarragon – Russian	spring – autumn	More robust with a coarser texture and more inferior flavour than French tarragon.
Thyme Many cultivars e.g. common thyme, lemon thyme	all year	Leaves and stems in braises, stews, soups, marinades, pâté, grilled vegetables, stuffings, beans. Ingredient of bouquet garni and herbs de Provence.
Vietnamese mint Also called rau ram, laksa leaf, Cambodian mint, hot mint, Vietnamese cilantro, pak pai	spring – autumn	Use leaves in small amounts in Asian chicken and fish dishes, soups and stews, salads and spring rolls.
Bouquet garni		Bay leaf, thyme and parsley tied together. Use in stews, soups, braises.
Fines herbes		Equal parts of finely chopped fresh chervil, chives, parsley and tarragon. Use in salads, egg dishes.
Herbs de Provence		A mixture of dried herbs – rosemary, sage, thyme, marjoram, basil, oregano, mint. Use on onion tart, pizza and meat dishes.

Herb cookery: Add 'hard' herbs such as bay, rosemary or thyme at the beginning of cooking and 'soft' herbs such as chives, parsley and coriander, at the end of cooking. Variations in supply may occur depending on region, season and weather.

For more information and recipes visit

