



## What Is Basil?

Basil is an herb belonging to the mint family. Common basil is the traditional ingredient in Thai and Mediterranean cuisines. It goes well with veal, lamb, fish, poultry, white beans, pasta, rice, tomatoes, cheese and eggs. It also adds zing to mild vegetables such as zucchini, summer squash, eggplant, potatoes, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, parsnips and spinach and to soups, stews and sauces that contain these vegetables. It blends well with garlic, thyme and lemon. Sweet basil is a sub-type of common basil with milder or licorice taste. It is the best choice for Italian sauces and soups and for making pesto.

## Interesting facts

- Basil is known as the "king of herbs". The origin of this is murky, but the Greek word for king, basileus, lends itself to this connection. In fact, in addition to its common French name, basilic, basil is also known as l'herbe royale in French.
- In India, under British crown rule, Hindus were allowed to swear on holy basil instead of the bible in court.
- In old Italy, a pot of basil on your windowsill to signal a lover, but in Ancient Greece and Rome, it was believed that the herb would only grow where there was hatred and abuse.
- Basil has been used as a remedy for health issues for thousands of years. It is a good source of vitamin K, manganese, vitamin A, and calcium.



"Spice of Life" is a monthly "Take & Make Spice Club Kit" featuring a variety of unique spices, herbs, or blends.

## This kit includes:

- Information on the featured spice
- 2-3 recipes
- A small packet of featured spice - enough for at least 1 of the recipes.

The kits are free, but supplies are limited.  
**Please take only one kit per household.**



## Share your experience with us

Once you have created your culinary masterpiece at home, you're welcome to share photos of your successes (and fails), opinions, tips, and love (or not) of the spice on the library's Facebook page, and may even be featured on our Spice of Life webpage.



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# Take & Make Spice Club Kit



## February Basil



## *Fresh vs. Dried*

A good ratio is 1 to 3. For example, if a recipe calls for 1 tablespoon of fresh basil, use 1 teaspoon of dried.

## *Herb Stuffed Tomatoes*



*(Yields 10 tomatoes)*

### **INGREDIENTS**

10 small sized tomatoes

Mix together:

1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley

**1 teaspoon dried basil**

½ teaspoon dry red chili flakes (paprika)

½ tablespoon finely chopped garlic

2 tablespoons bread crumbs

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 tablespoon melted butter  
salt to taste

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Cut the tops of each tomato, scoop out the center pulp along with the seeds and roughly chop it. Keep the scooped tomato shells and the tomato mixture aside. Combine the tomato mixture and herb mixture in a deep bowl and mix well. Divide this herb stuffing into 10 equal portions and stuff each scooped tomato shell with a portion of the stuffing. Arrange the stuffed tomatoes on a greased baking tray and bake in a pre-heated oven at 400°F for 10 minutes. Serve immediately.

## *Grilled Chicken Marinade*



*(Yields 5 servings)*

### **INGREDIENTS**

¼ cup red wine vinegar

¼ cup reduced-sodium soy sauce

¼ cup olive oil

1 ½ teaspoon dried parsley flakes

**½ teaspoon dried basil**

½ teaspoon dried oregano

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

5 skinless, boneless chicken breasts, thinly sliced

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Gather all ingredients. Whisk vinegar, soy sauce, olive oil, parsley, basil, oregano, garlic powder, and black pepper together in a bowl. Pour into a resealable plastic bag. Add chicken, coat with the marinade, squeeze out excess air, and seal the bag. Marinate in the refrigerator, at least 4 hours. Preheat grill for medium-low heat and lightly oil the grate. Drain and discard marinade. Grill chicken on the preheated grill until no longer pink in the center, 4-5 minutes per side. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should read at least 165F.

### **Recipe Sources**

- <https://www.tarladalal.com/herb-stuffed-tomatoes-1496r>
- <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/241890/grilled-chicken-marinade/>
- <https://www.upstateramblings.com/crock-pot-beef-and-noodles/>

## *Crock Pot Beef and Noodles*



*(Yields 8 servings)*

### **INGREDIENTS**

1 ½ teaspoon coarse kosher salt

**1 teaspoon dried basil**

1 teaspoon dried parsley

1 teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon garlic powder

½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

2 pounds beef stew meat or beef roast, cut into chunks

4 cups low sodium beef broth

1 (10.5-ounce) can cream of mushroom soup

2 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

16 ounces dry extra wide egg noodles

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Mix together the salt, basil, parsley, onion powder, garlic powder and pepper. Add the beef to the pot of the slow cooker and sprinkle with the spice mixture, tossing to combine. Add the beef broth, cream of mushroom soup and Worcestershire sauce, giving it a few quick stirs to combine. Cover and cook on low for 6-8 hours or high for 3-4 or until beef is tender. About 30 minutes before beef is done cooking, cook noodles according to package directions. Drain the noodles and stir into beef mixture.