

# FAVOURITE HERBS

Culinary, Medicinal  
and Ornamental

## HUMBER NURSERIES "GREEN THUMB GUIDE"



### The Lore of Herbs

The history of herbs is as old as the history of man, and they are as popular today as they have ever been.

The practical uses of herbs give them a broad appeal. Each of us can approach herbal gardening from our own point of view and for our own purposes.

- The **culinary** herbs are the delight of cooks. Fresh from the garden, herbs can add flavour to our meals. For winter use they can be dried or frozen, and a sunny window sill can still produce fresh foliage.

- **Fragrant** herbs can be dried for sachets and potpourris for a wealth of pleasant aromas. Many make soothing and fragrant herbal teas.
- While most of our traditional **medicinal** herbs have either been refuted or replaced by modern pharmaceuticals, many claim relief from migraines with the daily use of a few leaves of Feverfew.
- The **ornamental** value of herbs would be reason enough for their continuing use.

In the landscape they can be used as ground covers or fillers between other plants. Many of them have interesting textures or coloured foliage. In containers, herbs make attractive ornamentals for the kitchen, living room or patio.

### ANISE (*Pimpinella anisum*)



- Culinary annual
- 60 cm tall
- Full sun
- Licorice flavoured leaves are used in salads.
- The seeds flavour baked goods and liqueurs.

### BEE BALM (*Monarda didyma*)



- Perennial herb
- 60-90 cm tall
- Sun or partial shade
- Famous ingredient of Oswego tea
- Foliage is aromatic between citrus and mint
- Attractive flowers

### CARAWAY (*Carum carvi*)



- Hardy biennial
- 60 cm tall
- Full sun
- The seeds are a popular flavour in Scandinavian cookery, rye bread and many liqueurs

### ANGELICA (*Angelica archangelica*)



- Culinary biennial
- 120 cm tall
- Semi-shade in moist soil
- Boiled roots and stems are used like celery
- Candied stems are traditional in confectionary

### BORAGE (*Borago officinalis*)



- Annual flowering herb
- 30-90 cm tall
- Sun or shade in dry soil
- Cucumber flavoured leaves are used in salad or to flavour iced drinks.
- Star-shaped blue flowers

### CATNIP (*Nepeta cataria*)



- Hardy perennial
- 60-90 cm tall
- Sun or partial shade
- Used as a relaxing tea or a special treat for cats
- Be prepared for unusual antics from your pets!

### BASIL (*Ocimum basilicum*)



- Attractive annual
- Culinary herbs
- Many varieties
- 30-60 cm tall
- Full sun
- Essential to Italian cuisine particularly pesto (recipe on back page)

### BURNET PIMPINELLA (*Sanguisorba minor*)



- Hardy perennial
- 30-60 cm tall
- Full sun
- Salad Burnet – use fresh new foliage in salads
- Green Sauce – a German favourite for potatoes or hard-boiled eggs

### CHAMOMILE (*Anthemis nobilis*)



- Hardy perennial
- 60-90 cm tall
- Sun or partial shade
- Chamomile tea is made from the flowers
- Once used as a lawn before lawn grasses came into use

**CHEVRIL** (*Anthriscus cerefolium*)



- Culinary annual
- 30-60 cm tall
- Best in partial shade
- Parsley-like foliage has a mild anise flavour
- Used in salads
- Enhances the flavour of other herbs

**FEVERFEW** (*Chrysanthemum partenium*) (*Matricaria*)



- Hardy perennial
- 30-90 cm tall depending on variety
- Highly ornamental with yellow or white flowers
- The leaves are used to relieve migraine headaches.

**HOREHOUND** (*Marrubium vulgare*)



- Hardy perennial
- 30-90 cm tall
- Full sun
- Best in poor dry soil
- Used herbally for coughs and sore throats
- Famous flavour of Horehound Candy
- Aromatic gray foliage good in perennial border

**CHIVES** (*Allium schoenoprasum*)



- Hardy perennial
- 30-45 cm tall
- Sun or partial shade
- Attractive plant for the perennial border
- Round heads of mauve flowers
- Foliage has mild onion flavour
- Chop and add to salads, cheese or egg dishes

**FENNEL** (*Foeniculum species*)



- Perennial grown as a culinary annual
- 120-150 cm tall
- Full sun
- Both common Fennel and FINOCHIO have bulb-like lower stems eaten as a vegetable
- A variety called SMOKEY has coloured foliage

**LAVENDER** (*Lavandula species*)



- Perennial
- Many varieties, some quite hardy
- 45-90 cm
- Best in full sun in well-drained soil
- Grown for its fragrance and used in toiletries and perfume
- HIDCOTE and MUNSTEAD are well-known cultivars with purple flowers

**CORIANDER** (*Coriandrum sativum*)



- Culinary annual
- 30-45 cm tall
- Full sun
- Becoming better known as *Cilantro* from its use in Italian recipes
- Parsley-like foliage with similar use and sometime called Chinese Parsley

**GARLIC** (*Allium sativum*)



- Perennial bulb
- 60-90 cm tall
- Full sun
- Essential flavour known since ancient times
- Strong onion aroma and taste
- Harvest in fall when leaves die down

**LEMON BALM** (*Melissa officinalis*)



- Hardy perennial
- 60 cm tall
- Sun or partial shade
- Prefers rich moist soil
- Fresh or dried leaves make a refreshing lemon flavoured tea

**DILL** (*Anethum graveolens*)



- Culinary annual
- 90-120 cm tall
- Full sun
- Fine cut feathery light green leaves
- Both seeds and foliage are used as flavourings, most famously for dill pickles
- A slightly bitter taste reminiscent of Caraway

**GERANIUMS** (*Pelargonium species*)



- Ornamental tender perennials
- Scented leaved varieties are sometimes used for culinary purposes
- All make good house plants
- Flavours include rose, peppermint and lemon

**LEMON VERBENA** (*Aloysia triphylla*)



- Marginally hardy perennial
- 150-180 cm tall
- Full sun
- Amazing that it is at all hardy given its South American origins
- Woody deciduous shrub can be brewed as a tea or sprigs used like mint to garnish iced drinks

**LOVAGE** (*Levisticum officinale*)

- Perennial herb
- 150-180 cm tall
- Sun or partial shade
- Like a very large celery and of similar use
- The ingredient of MAGGI yeast extract
- Both leaves and stems are used in salads, stews and soups

**PARSLEY** (*Petroselinum crispum*)

- Biennial used as an annual
- Many varieties - curled, triple curled, Italian, etc.
- Adds excellent fresh flavour to soups and stews

**SORREL** (*Rumex species*)

- Hardy perennial
- 60-90 cm tall
- Full sun in rich soil
- Can be eaten as a vegetable or added to salads
- Sorrel Soup is a French regional classic

**MARJORAM** (*Marjorana hortensis*)

- Perennial grown as an annual
- Similar to and often included with the Oreganos
- Important ingredient in Mediterranean cookery

**ROSEMARY** (*Rosmarinus Officinalis*)

- Perennial
- 60-90 cm tall
- Best in full sun in poor dry soil for improved flavour
- Used to season oven-baked goods, roasts, etc.
- A good house plant

**SWEET BAY** (*Laurus nobilis*)

- Tender shrub for indoor culture in good light
- Essential culinary herb for stews, spaghetti, meat loaf and stuffings
- Can be used fresh or dried
- The leaves are removed before serving

**MINTS** (*Mentha species*)

- Many varieties of hardy perennials that vary from 30-60 cm tall
- Sun or shade
- Some are very ornamental and all can be used for flavouring sauces, teas, etc

**SAGE** (*Salvia species*)

- Hardy perennials
- 60-90 cm tall
- Full sun
- Garden sage is used for pork and goose and for meat stuffings
- Attractive gray foliage
- Many ornamental varieties have coloured leaves or showy flowers

**SWEET CICELY** (*Myrrhis odorata*)

- Hardy perennial
- 60-90 cm tall
- Shade or partial shade in rich moist soil
- The spicy green seeds add an anise flavour
- Like fennel, the roots can be eaten raw or cooked

**OREGANO** (*Origanum vulgare*)

- Perennial usually treated as an annual
- 60 cm tall
- Full sun in well drained soil
- The essential pizza herb and much used in Italian, Spanish and Mexican cookery
- The gold leaved type is very ornamental

**SAVORY** (*Satureja species*)

- Winter Savory is perennial, Summer Savory an annual
- Pleasant peppery flavour that is much used with bean dishes
- Both grow about 45 cm tall and need full sun

**SWEET WOODRUFF***(Asperula odorata) (Galium o.)*

- Hardy perennial
- 15-30 cm tall
- Best in shade in rich moist soil
- The flowers are used in May Wine or steeped for a tea
- Excellent when massed as a groundcover in moist shade



## TANSY (*Tanacetum vulgare*)



- Hardy perennial
- 60-90 cm tall
- Full sun
- Long used as a herbal medicinal plant, now only grown as an ornamental
- Fine ferny foliage and bright yellow flowers

## TARRAGON (*Artemisia dracunculus*)



- Perennial culinary herb
- 30-60 cm tall
- Full sun or partial shade
- French Tarragon has a distinctive anise-like flavour
- Can be used fresh or dried in egg dishes and with fish
- Russian Tarragon has a milder less pungent taste

## THYME (*Thymus species*)

- Hardy perennials
- Many varieties from 5 to 30 cm tall
- Full sun
- Common thyme is used fresh or dried in vegetable juices, stuffings etc.
- *Thymus herbabarona* is caraway scented and used to flavour roasts
- Very attractive in pathways or rock garden



## VALERIAN (*Valeriana officinalis*)

- Hardy perennial
- 100-120 cm tall
- Full sun or partial shade
- Once used medicinally, now only an ornamental
- For perennial or bog garden
- Good cut flower for fresh arrangements



## HERBS DRIED OR FROZEN

### DRYING:

After a summer-long enjoyment of fresh herbs, you will not wish to be without them in winter.

Herbs with long stems such as Marjoram, Sage, Savory, the Mints and Rosemary can be hung in bunches upside down to become crackly dry. Keep them under cover out of direct sun. After a week or two you can take them down and remove the leaves.

Store the thoroughly dried herbs in airtight containers in a dark cool place.

Leaves will keep their flavour best if you leave them whole and break them up only as you use them.

### FREEZING:

Fennel, Burnet, Dill, Tarragon, Chives and Basil are better when frozen

Dill, Chives and Basil need only be washed, chopped and frozen. Others should be blanched by dropping into boiling water for one minute then rinsed under cold water. Freezing is very handy if you only put small quantities in each wrapping, enough for one recipe.

### FREEZING IN ICE CUBES:

Fill the ice-cube tray with finely chopped fresh herbs and top with water. When frozen, the cubes can be stored in poly bags in the freezer.

To use, drop one or two in the pot while cooking.

## HERB RECIPES

### PASTA AL PRESTO, BLENDER RECIPE

2 firmly packed cups of fresh basil leaves  
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
3 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely chopped  
1 strong pinch of salt  
2 tablespoons of pinenuts (pignoli) or walnuts  
½ cup olive oil

Blend at high speed. Add more oil if too thick. When whipped like butter, add ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese. Mix well with piping hot, buttered pasta sufficient for four servings.

### HERB BUTTER

Spread herb butter on vegetables and French bread or melt them on steaks or hamburgers.

Rosemary butter is good for lamb chops, steak and fish.

Oregano butter is perfect for broiled tomatoes.

Use half a cup of fresh herbs or two tablespoons of dried herbs with half a pound of butter.

Beat together until smooth in bowl or blender.

Not meant for long storage, the flavour is best if used within a few weeks.

### HERB JELLY

Jellies enhanced with herbs are good on toast or hot breads or to accompany meat dishes

### THYME GRAPE JELLY

3 cups of grape juice  
1 teaspoon dried Thyme  
2 teaspoons of lemon juice  
1 – 2 oz. Package of pectin  
3 – ½ cups of sugar

Heat juice and herbs to scalding. Remove heat, let stand 15 minutes. Strain through cheesecloth. Return liquid to pot and add lemon juice and pectin. Bring to a boil. Add sugar and bring to a rolling boil, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, skim off foam and pour into sterilized jelly glasses.



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