**EAT YOUR HERBS – They’re good for YOU!**

**Recipes**

**BASIL**

***Classic Basil Pesto***

1 cup fresh basil leaves, packed

½ cup fresh parsley leaves

3 to 4 garlic cloves (more or less, according to taste)

Zest from about ½ a lemon or lime

½ cup olive oil or grapeseed oil

2 tbsp. pine nuts, toasted

3 tbsp. fresh Parmesan

2 tbsp. pecorino Sardo cheese(or Romano) Or more parmesan if desired

Salt and pepper to taste

Place all in a processor and mix until finely chopped but not liquefied. Serve over linguini or fettucine.

Add more oil if needed for spreading

Serving suggestions: Double the recipe and serve it over a block of cream cheese. Make it a little thinner and use it as a salad dressing. Use it as a sandwich spread with fresh tomatoes.

**Use your herbs!**

**MINT**

***Mint Chimichurri***

2 cups packed fresh mint

1 cup packed fresh parsley (deer had eaten my parsley, so I just used more mint)

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

3 tbsp. **EACH** white wine vinegar & fresh lemon juice

Not called for but I always zest at least 1/2 lemon rind into mix

2-3 cloves garlic chopped

2 scallions chopped

1 jalapeno seeded & chopped

Salt & pepper to taste

Place all in a food processor and pulse until consistency you desire. If desired, add a little sugar (I don’t)

***Mint Pesto***

1 cup lightly packed fresh Mint leaves

½ cup lightly packed fresh parsley leaves

1 small shallot

2 tbsp. pine nuts, toasted

2 tbsp. freshly grated Romano cheese

1 tsp. lemon zest

½ c. olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

Blend all in a food processor until smooth, using more or less olive oil as needed.

**ELDERBERRY**

***Elderberry Syrup***

1 cup fresh elderberries or ½ cup dried

3 cups water

1 cup honey

In a heavy saucepan place berries and water being sure that the water covers all of the berries. Bring to a boil and then reduce the heat to simmer. Simmer slowly for 30-45 minutes. Once the berries are soft begin mashing them. Strain the entire mixture through a strainer with very small holes or one that has been layered with cheesecloth to catch all the berry goodness. Add the honey to the strained mixture, bottle and label, and store in the refrigerator for up to three months. Excellent to use when a dry raspy throat is an issue or as a gentle cough syrup for children.

*Adapted from Rosemary Gladstar’s Family Herbal 2001.*

***Elderberry Lollipops***

½ cup dried elderberry

1-1/2 cup water

1-1/2 cups sugar or honey

Optional herbs: cinnamon, rosehips, ginger

Add elderberries (and other herbs if using) to the water, bring to a boil and then reduce the heat and let simmer covered for 30 minutes. Strain the herbs pressing on the elderberries to remove as much of the liquid as you can. Add sugar or honey and bring to a low boil over medium high heat. Cook to 300 degrees.

*If you do not have a thermometer, drop a small amount of the mixture into a glass of water. If it hardens it’s ready (this is called hard ball stage in candy making). If it is still soft, cook longer.*

Pour into a lollipop mold and let it sit until completely cooled. If you do not have a mold, you can drop small amounts onto a lined baking sheet (foil or parchment paper) and press your lollipop stick into the candy. Makes around 12 depending on mold or size you pour. You can dust with powdered sugar, cinnamon, or slippery elm powder to keep from sticking together in storage.

**LAMB’S QUARTERS**

***Lamb’s Quarter Pesto***

3 cups lamb’s quarter leaves (and seeds and tender stalks if desired)

3 or 4 garlic cloves, chopped

¼ cup raw pumpkin seeds

¼ cup sun-dried tomatoes, chopped

½ cup extra virgin olive oil, plus more if needed

Sea salt, to taste

In a blender or food processor, puree the lamb’s-quarters, garlic, pumpkin seeds, and sun-dried tomatoes, stopping to scrape down the sides as needed. While the machine is running, slowly pour in the olive oil until you reach the desired consistency. Taste it, then add salt to your preference. Transfer to an airtight container and drizzle the top with a layer of oil to prevent discoloration. Store in refrigerator for up to two weeks.

Use as you would any pesto: on pasta, grains, bread, crackers, or vegetables.

Robin Rose Bennett

**THYME**

***Honey Thyme Cough Syrup***

(Thyme has been used for years to help soothe irritated throats and halt coughing.)

1 cup water

2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves or 2 teaspoons dried

½ cup raw unpasteurized honey

In a small saucepan bring water to a boil. Remove from heat, add thyme, and cover with a lid. Allow to sit for 18 to 20 minutes or longer. Strain. Whisk in honey until combined. Store in a glass jar in the refrigerator for up to two months.

***Thyme Infused Honey***

Dried Thyme Leaves

Raw local honey

Fill jar ½ full with dried thyme leaves. Add some honey and stir well. Add enough honey to fill jar the rest of the way, give it a final stir. Cover and label. Keep on counter and turn it upside down a couple of times a day. Taste after 5 days, if it has the desired taste, strain herbs out with fine mesh strainer. If mixture is thick, you may heat gently to make pourable. This mixture will keep indefinitely.

**LEMON BALM**

***Lemon Balm Butter***

½ cup unsalted butter

1 t. lemon juice

3 tbsp. finely chopped lemon balm

Blend butter, juice and lemon balm. Refrigerate for one hour, allowing flavors to mix. Use on any bread or cracker. Also good to use when broiling or grilling fish.

***Lemon Balm Honey***

Wash and dry about 3 cups of lemon balm. Place in a large pot and cover with honey. Simmer over very low heat for 2-3 hours, cool slightly and strain.

This is a flavored honey for tea, iced tea, lemonade. It is also a cough remedy that is safe for children and the elderly.

***Lemon Balm Pesto***

3 cups packed fresh and tender lemon balm leaves

1 cup shelled roasted and salted pistachios

1 cup extra virgin olive oil

¼ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese

2 tbsp. lemon juice

3-5 garlic cloves, to taste

Sea salt to taste.

Add all of the ingredients except the salt to a food processor and blend until uniform. Taste and add salt to taste. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to one week or freeze for up to six months.

***Lemon Balm Cookies***

2 tbsp. lemon balm leaves, minced

1 tsp. lemon juice

1 cup butter, softened

2/3 cup sugar

1 egg

2 1/3 cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp. salt

In a small dish, combine minced lemon balm and lemon juice and press mixture with back of spoon to blend. In a large mixer bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and lemon mixture. Gradually beat in flour and salt. Cover and refrigerate for three hours or until firm. Roll in wax paper.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. On wax paper, slice into slices about 1/8 inch thick.

Place cookies on ungreased cookie sheet and bake for 8-10 minutes. Will brown slightly around the edges.

**PARSLEY**

***Tabouli Salad***

1 cup bulgur (cracked wheat)

2-3 cups of fresh, chopped parsley

1 small chopped onion

2 cloves garlin, chopped

3-4 tbsp. lemon juice

3-4 tbsp olive

3 chopped ripe tomatoes

1 chopped cucumber

Salt and pepper to taste

Pour boiling water over the bulgur and let it soak for 30 minutes or until soft. Drain off excess water. Combine bulgur with remaining ingredients and mix well. Great summer salad.

***Shrimp Scampi***

2 lbs. unpeeled medium size shrimp

12 oz. thin spaghetti

¼ cup chopped fresh parsley

4 cloves garlic, crushed

¾ cup butter, melted

2 tbsp. lemon juice

¼ cup dry white wine

¾ tsp salt

¼ tsp. black pepper

2 tbsp. chopped chives

¼ cup Parmesan cheese

Peel and devein the shrimp. Cook about 12 oz. thin spaghetti in boiling water. Drain and keep warm in a large bowl. Saute green onions, parsley, and garlic in butter until onions are tender. Reduce heat to low. Add the shrimp. Cook stirring frequently, 2-5 minutes until shrimp turn pink. Remove the shrimp from the pan with a slotted spoon and keep warm. Add remaining ingredients (except chives and Parmesan) to butter mixture, simmer a couple of minutes. Place shrimp on top of spaghetti. Pour warm butter mixture over all. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and toss together. Sprinkle with chopped chives.

**OREGANO**

***Feta with Black Olives***

1 lb. feta cheese, cut into 1-inch pieces

½ lb. (2 cups) pitted black olives, Kalamata or pitted green olives

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest, plus fine strips for garnish

1 tbsp. torn fresh oregano leaves

Coarse sea salt

Flat breat, crackers, or pita bread

Arrange feta and olives on a large plate and drizzle with olive oil. Scatter lemon zest and oregano on top and sprinkle with sea salt. Garnish with lemon zest strips. Serve with bread or crackers.

***Mini Breakfast Stratas***

1 ½ cup small broccoli florets

½ cup cooked breakfast sausage, crumbled

1 cup red bell pepper

1/3 cup chopped onion

5 cups French or Italian bread, cut in 3/4 inch pieces

1 cup shredded Italian cheese blend

5 eggs

1 cup half and half

2 tsp. chopped oregano

½ tsp. salt

1/4 tsp. pepper

Spray 12 muffin cups with cooking spray. Cook breakfast sausage until brown. Crumble the sausage. Heat butter in a large skillet over medium heat until hot. Add broccoli, red pepper, and onion. Cook 3-4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Transfer to a large bowl. Add bread, cheese, and sausage. Toss to mix. Beat the eggs, half and half, oregano, salt, and pepper in a medium bowl until blended. Pour over mixture. Toss gently to coat. Spoon mixture into muffin cups. Refrigerate covered, one hour or overnight. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Bake until stratas are puffed, golden and knife inserted in the middle comes out clean, about 20-25 minutes. Loosen stratas from sides of pan with knife.

***Oregano Oil***

3 tbsp. of oregano leaves

1 cup olive oil or oil of your choice

Chop the oregano leaves and place in a glass jar. Warm the cup of olive oil and pour over the oregano leaves. Cover and place in a cool, dark place for two week, shaking occasionally. After two weeks, strain out the leaves. Store the oil in the refrigerator. Add a couple of drops to a glass of water and drink.