

HOME SENSE



LOIS THIELEKE

Be bold, invite 'herb' into your home and life

Herbs are a wonderful fat-free, salt-free way to add flavor and zest to your meals. Be creative and bold with new seasonings in your favorite dishes.

Many herbs can be purchased fresh year-round. If you have a choice, use fresh herbs. One tablespoon of fresh herbs is equal to one-third to one-half teaspoon crushed or dried herbs.

Dried herbs have more concentrated flavor than fresh. If you are unfamiliar with the flavor of a certain herb use a small amount, you can always add more later.

Herbs are generally added toward the end of the cooking time. For soups or stews, add herbs the last 45 minutes of cooking. Extended cooking destroys the taste of many herbs. For cold foods, add herbs several hours before serving to allow flavors to blend.

Strong flavors

There are strong or dominate flavored herbs. These flavors really stand out so handle them with care. Bay, cardamom, curry, ginger, hot pepper, mustard, pepper, rosemary and sage are all strong flavors.

Here are some ways to try some of these herbs:

- Bay - beets, carrots, potatoes, tomatoes, fish, meats
- Cardamom - poached apples, curries, rice pilaf, stews, sweet potatoes
- Curry - chutney, chicken, fish, soups, mayonnaise
- Ginger - beets, carrots, squash, meats
- Mustard - chicken, pot roast, snap beans, Brussels sprouts
- Rosemary - turnips, potatoes, beef and pork roasts, oranges
- Sage - peas, Brussels sprouts, chowders, meats

Medium flavors

Medium flavored herbs are basil, celery seed and leaves, cummin, dill, fennel, French tarragon, garlic, marjoram, mint, oregano, winter and summer savory and thyme.

- Basil - potatoes, spinach, eggs, pasta, fish
- Celery seed - tomatoes, cabbage, meat stock
- Cummin - sauerkraut, beans and rice, tomato sauce
- Dill - broccoli, potatoes, fish, cheese dishes
- Fennel - bread, salad, squash, rice
- Tarragon - lima beans, cauliflower, fish, meats
- Marjoram - carrots, spinach, potatoes, fish
- Oregano - beans, potatoes, tomatoes, salad dressings
- Savory - peas, stews, meats, lentil soup
- Thyme - lima beans, beets, carrots, chicken

Delicate flavors

Delicate flavored herbs are used in larger quantity or combined with other herbs. These include burnet, chervil, chives and parsley.

- Burnet - salads (has a delicate cucumber flavor)
- Chervil - omelets, chicken, veal
- Chives - salads, potatoes, salmon
- Parsley - Use on almost anything

When using herbs with meats, work the herbs into the meat by rubbing them on with your hands. The flavor will penetrate better. If you accidentally "over herb" a dish, add a peeled raw potato to the dish. It will help absorb excess flavor.

Fresh herbs are perishable so use them shortly after purchase. Fresh herbs can be stored in a container of water (like flowers) except cover the whole container with a plastic bag secured with a rubber band.

Please see HERB, B2

An eye for potatoes

STORY BY RENEE SKOGLUND • PHOTOS BY BRYAN MITCHELL

From start to finish, these chips are 'Better Made'

I thought I'd died and gone to potato chip heaven.

First, there was that wonderful aroma wafting down Gratiot Avenue in Detroit that told me I was nearing the Better Made potato chip factory.

Then, there was the sight of that glorious sea of bouncing blonde chips rushing along the conveyor belt on their way to being packaged.

POTATO CHIP HEAVEN

Finally, there was the taste of a perfectly shaped, warm, crisp chip ... ahh, heaven.

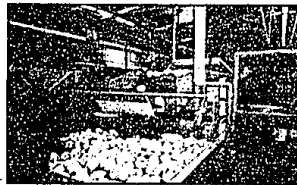
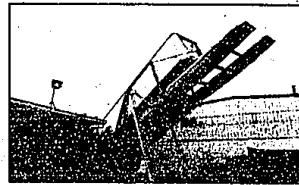
"When you're driving down the freeway (I-94) about 6:05 a.m., you can smell the chips. It's actually a very good smell," said Chris Moceri, vice president of Cross & Peters Co., which makes Better Made potato chips.

Moceri is the grandson of Cruse Moceri, who founded the company in 1930 (the company moved to its present location in 1940) with partner Peter Cipriano.

Cipriano was a chip-loving milkman and Moceri already had experience working in a potato chip company. Both men wanted to make a better potato chip, hence the brand name, Better

Please see BETTER, B2

Unloading spuds: Truckloads of up to 85,000 pounds of potatoes roll into storage bins at the Better Made potato chip factory in Detroit. Most potatoes are processed into chips the same day.



One potato, two potatoes: After being washed, millions of potatoes lose their skins in automatic peelers. Peeler blades are constantly cleaned and sharpened. Next stop is the slicer.



Chip heaven: Sorters pick out "bad" chips before they reach the bagging process. The chips, still warm from being fried, have already been salted.

Potato Chip History

- 1853 - Potato chips are created. Railroad magnate Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt, dining at a resort in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., didn't like the fried potatoes he ordered for dinner. He sent them back to the kitchen, complaining they were too thick.
- Taking offense, chef George Crum sliced more potatoes paper thin, fried them to a crisp in boiling oil, and salted them. Vanderbilt loved the "crunch potato slices," and "Saratoga Chips" became a restaurant fad with the resort's sociable patrons.
- 1890 - William Tappenden of Cleveland starts delivering his homemade chips to neighborhood stores in a horse-drawn wagon. Orders increase, and his barn becomes the first potato chip factory.
- 1926 - Chip-maker Laura Scudder of Montgomery Park, Calif., invents the first potato chip bag by ironing sheets of wax paper into bags. She fills the bags with chips and irons them shut. Before this, retailers kept chips in cracker barrels or glass displays.
- 1937 - The National Potato Chip Institute (now the Snack Food Association) is founded to educate retailers and consumers on the proper use of potato chips. They can't be used like soap chips to wash clothes. They are not good poured into a bowl with sugar and cream.
- 1943 - During World War II, production of potato chips continues but ingredients are firmly rationed.
- 1946 - Fifteen-year-old Doretha Fagnano of Yonkers, N.Y., is crowned the first Potato Chip Queen for her "Potato Chips a la Gorton" casserole made with potato chips, carrots, onions and cheese.
- 1949 - The Vincent Lopez Orchestra and the Martin Slaters record a song for the National Potato Chip Institute titled "Potato Chips," which aired along with tunes like "Rum and Coca Cola" and "The Popcorn Polka."
- 1970 - Potato chip sales reach \$1 million.
- 1973 - Chip industry takes a beating as prices for gas, used to fire their cookers, soar. Potato prices also go through the roof after a bad growing season.
- 1983 - Thicker, ridged chips made especially for dipping are introduced.
- 1998 - Low- and no-fat potato chips sales increase.

Information from the Snack Food Association, snaf.com on the Web

Save some chips for these delicious recipes

Recipes compliments of Better Made potato chips. From "Prize Winning recipes starring potato chips," published by Potato Chip International, Cleveland.

CHIPPY CHEESE STRAWS

- 1 package pie crust mix
- 2/3 cup grated sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1 cup finely crushed potato chips
- 1 egg white
- Salt and cayenne pepper

Prepare pie crust according to package directions and roll very thin in a square shape. Combine cheese with potato chips and

Please see CHIPPY, B2



Ready for stores: Workers box bags of chips according to size. From beginning to end, a potato's transformation into a potato chip is often no more than 25 minutes.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Focus on Wine
- Living Better Sensibly