

Herb Garden Diary



The Purple Gate Farm Newsletter

November 2009

Our Herb Garden Diary Newsletter explores herbal knowledge, practical garden information with historical insight and current research to reveal the delight and enrichment of life by the growing and using of herbs. We explore the seasons in our south central Texas gardens and share our gardening experiences in this environment.

Holiday Herbs

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I remember as a child entering my home in Alaska from playing in the snow to be enveloped in delicious, hunger stimulating scents coming from the kitchen. My mother was busy preparing a traditional American Thanksgiving feast.

Many years later, I entered my daughters kitchen and was enveloped in the same rich scents as she prepared a very similar feast for our family in Texas. We cannot often share holiday meals with family members spread across the country or the world, but I suspect many of us will prepare meals similar to the traditional meals of the past this year and for years to come. Tradition is soothing in this fast paced world.

If you ever doubted the benefits of aromatherapy, late November and December is the time to dispel those misgivings. Just remember the last time you walked into a house where a traditional Thanksgiving or Christmas meal was being prepared.



Remember the rich scent of the spice and herb blends used to season all those wonderful dishes? Poultry seasoning from the supermarket can contain several herbs: dried basil, rosemary, sage, marjoram, thyme, oregano and nutmeg.

Everyone will have favorite blends that trigger the nostalgic memories of family gatherings during holidays in the past. Most of these herb blends are used in dressing and desert but there are other ways to enrich holiday meals with herbs.

Herbal table decorations, herbal wreaths to greet guests at the door, sprigs of herbs added to floral bouquets all freshen the air in closed winter houses and fill them



with the delightful scents of fresh herbs.

Living in south-central Texas means your herb garden is still producing thyme, sage, rosemary, some mints and oregano into November and December. A mix of all or any of these herbs rubbed onto a ham or turkey before roasting adds rich savory flavor to the meat. Mash potatoes can be presented at the table with chopped fresh parsley and chives decoratively sprinkled around the edge of the bowl. Sprigs of herbs can visually enhance vegetable dishes and desserts.



All of these herbs not only uplift our spirits, calm anxiety, entice us to the dinner table with savory scents and reward us with satisfying flavors, they also aid digestion. Thyme is an herbal remedy for digestive and stomach problems. Oregano and rosemary also aid in digestion and contain natural antibacterial properties (wonderful for the cold and flu season). Rosemary, mint and chamomile have calming effects for tension or stress. Parsley contains vitamin A and is a natural breath freshener. As you enjoy your traditional Holidays or invent new meals for gatherings of family and friends, give a silent thank you to these simple enhancements herbs provide our lives.

As a popular saying goes

“Herbs Make Scents”.