



How Harvest, Dry and Preserve Garden Fresh Herbs

Harvesting

Harvest before flowering. Harvest all season but especially in late summer before the herb loses its potency.

Cut in mid morning. Let the morning dew dry from the leaves but pick before the leaves wilt in the afternoon heat.

How to Dry Herbs

1. Cut healthy branches from your plants
2. Remove any dry or diseased leaves
3. Shake gently to remove any insects
4. Rinse only if necessary with cool water. Pat dry
5. Remove lower leaves to leave space at the bottom to tie up your herbs
6. Bundle 4-6 branches together
7. Place the herbs in a paper bag or without and hang upside down in a warm airy room.
8. If using a bag punch holes to allow air circulation and label the bag for identification of the herb.
9. Check in 2 weeks to see how herbs are drying.

Microwave Drying of Herbs

This is a fast way to dry herbs but the herbs can be easily cooked and is not something I would use myself.

Storing Dried Herbs

1. Store dried herbs in air tight containers ie ziplock bags or small canning jars. Glass is preferred as it will not lend or borrow flavours or fragrances.
2. Be sure to label and date the containers
3. Store the leaves whole to retain the flavour. If you crush the leaves the oils will leach out.
4. Discard any dried herbs that show signs of mould.
5. Place containers in a cool, dry place away from sunlight.
6. Use within a year. As your herbs lose their colour they lose their flavour.

Freezing Herbs

When you freeze herbs instead of drying herbs you must understand that you are freezing the water in the cells of the plant leaves and when these leaves are thawed they will be limp. Only freeze herbs that you use in a recipe and not ones that you wish to use as a garnish.

When freezing the herbs remove the leaves from the stem and place the leaves in an airtight freezer bag or container. Freeze solid. You may also lay the leaves on a cookie sheet and freeze; then place in an airtight container. Other people have been known to place the herbs in an ice cube tray and fill the cubes with water. Freeze them and when they are wanted just drop the ice cube into the recipe.