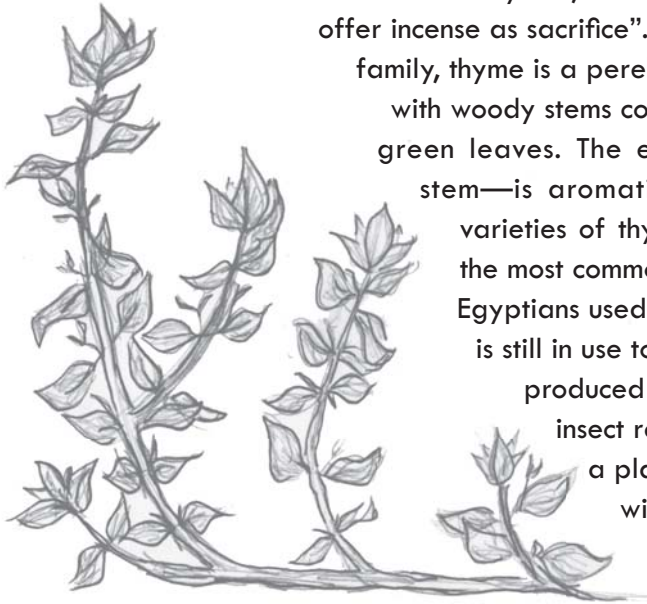


THYME



THYME (*thymus vulgaris*), gets its name from the Greek word *thymon*, meaning “to fumigate” or “to offer incense as sacrifice”. A member of the mint family, thyme is a perennial evergreen shrub, with woody stems covered with small, gray-green leaves. The entire plant—leaves, flowers, and stem—is aromatic. While there are over one hundred varieties of thyme, Garden Thyme and Lemon Thyme are the most common. Long-prized for its medicinal uses, ancient Egyptians used thyme oil in their embalming process and it is still in use today as common ingredient in commercially produced products. Thyme can also be used as an insect repellent; make a cup of thyme tea, put it in a plant mister, and spray around doorways and windows in summer to repel insects.

STORAGE

- ◆ Store fresh thyme **wrapped in a damp cloth or paper towel** in an open plastic bag in the vegetable crisper drawer of your refrigerator or **stand sprigs in a glass of water** on the refrigerator shelf.
- ◆ To dry, **hang fresh sprigs of thyme** in a warm, dry place. Once they are thoroughly dry, store whole sprigs in an airtight container.

PREPARATION

- ◆ When cooking with thyme, keep in mind that **one fresh sprig equals** the flavoring power of **one-half teaspoon of dried thyme**.
- ◆ As with most leafy dried herbs, be sure to **remove the stems and crush the leaves** between your hands before adding them to your recipe.

Nutritional Information

Thyme contains antioxidants which may help reduce the risk of cancer. While thyme is probably consumed in very small quantities, it is a source of vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, iron and folate. Vitamin A is important in vision, growth and development, skin health, immune function and reproduction. Vitamin C is important in immune response, wound healing, and allergic reactions. Vitamin C also helps with iron absorption. Calcium can help maintain good bone health and may reduce risk of osteoporosis. Iron is important for healthy blood cells. A healthy diet with enough folate may reduce a woman's risk of having a child with certain birth defects of the brain or spinal chord.

Thyme Recipes

Roasted Potatoes with Garlic and Thyme (Serves 4)

- 2 pounds potatoes (about 12 small or 6 medium pieces)
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste



Wash and cut potatoes in half or in quarters, depending on their size. Pour olive oil into a roasting pan or large cast-iron skillet and heat in 350 degree oven for 10 minutes. Add potatoes and roast 45 minutes, until crisp. During cooking, stir potatoes To make sure it all browns evenly, shake the pan several times during cooking. Remove potatoes and allow to drain on paper towels. Place in serving dish. Melt butter in a saute pan, add garlic and saute until golden brown. Remove from heat, add the chopped herbs to the garlic butter, stir together quickly. Pour garlic-herb butter over potatoes, season with the salt and pepper, and serve.

Recipe adapted from www.recipesource.com.

Baked Corn and Thyme (Serves 2)

- 1 1/2 cup fresh corn (cut from about 3 ears)
- 1/3 cup heavy cream or whole milk
- 1/2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme leaves
- 2 tablespoons fresh bread crumbs



Combine corn, cream, thyme, and salt and pepper to taste in a mixing bowl. Butter 6-inch baking pan, and spoon in corn mixture. Top with bread crumbs and place in the middle of 350 oven. Bake for 25 minutes, remove and place in broiler for 2 minutes, to toast bread crumbs.

Recipes adapted from www.fooddownunder.com.

Jerusalem Artichoke with Mushrooms & Thyme (Serves 4)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 2 pounds Jerusalem artichokes | 1 Bay leaf |
| 2 tablespoons butter | 1 1/2 pound mushrooms |
| 5 teaspoons olive oil | 4 cloves garlic, minced |
| 1 onion, chopped | 1 small lemon, thinly sliced, with peel |
| 1 cup stock or white wine | 1 1/2 teaspoons fresh thyme, chopped |



Peel and halve the jerusalem artichokes. Fry onions in a large pan with butter and 2 tablespoons olive oil. Add jerusalem artichokes, stock or white wine, bay leaf and water to cover. Bring to boil and cook on low heat until the jerusalem artichokes soften, about 1 hour. Add mushrooms, thyme, lemon slices and 3 tablespoons olive oil and cook another 20 minutes. Serve.

Recipe adapted from www.elook.org.