



Kitchen Herb Gardening & More

- I. Welcome to the first of many **Beneficial Bites** 
 - A. There's so much more to food than vitamins, minerals, protein, fat, etc.
 - B. Many foods/ingredients contain other beneficial compounds
 - C. Immune boosting, disease prevention and overall improved health
 - D. Each month we will be featuring a food or ingredient that provides added benefits...benefits above and beyond what you would expect from the vitamins and minerals the food contains
- II. Rosemary is the featured **Beneficial Bites**  for January
 - A. Anti-inflammatory qualities
 - B. Antioxidant
 - C. Helps with digestion for some folks
 - D. Can promote appetite for others
 - E. Plus, it has vitamins and minerals!
- III. Rosemary used in cooking
 - A. Distinctive appearance (pine needles)
 - B. Distinctive flavor & aroma
 - C. Very versatile (vegetables, meats, poultry, fish, cheese, egg, breads, soups, sauces, marinades, salad dressings, etc.)
 - D. Check out the menu for January to see the many ways it is being used.

IV. Starting your kitchen herb garden

- A. Empty milk cartons, cleaned w/top trimmed off
- B. Potting soil
- C. Rosemary seeds
- D. "How to care for" instructions
- E. Suggest decorating cartons and giving as gifts

V. Creating your own Rosemary-Infused Oils

A. FOOD SAFETY ISSUES!!!!

- 1) Do NOT use garlic**
- 2) Always keep refrigerated, even when using dried herbs**
- 3) Use within 3 weeks**
- 4) Freeze to store safely longer than 3 weeks**
- 5) Use clean, preferably sterile jars/lids**

B. Heat-Infused Method is best because it allows you to use it soon after making.

C. Cold Method takes longer for flavors to permeate the oil and it still requires that you use it in 3 weeks.

VI. Creating your own Rosemary-Infused Vinegar

A. FOOD SAFETY ISSUES!!!

- 1) Use clean, sterile jars with lids that seal**
- 2) Prepare herbs by briefly dipping in sanitizing bleach solution (1 teaspoon bleach for 6 cups water) then rinse thoroughly under cold water and pat dry**
- 3) Avoid wine and rice vinegars because they contain protein that can promote bacterial growth**
- 4) Store in refrigerator**

- B. Place prepared herbs in sterilized jars (3-4 sprigs fresh or 3 T. dried per pint)
- C. Heat vinegar to just below boiling (190°F) then pour over herbs, cap tightly and refrigerate
- D. Allow to stand several days for flavor to fully develop
Strain vinegar through damp cheesecloth or coffee filter one or more times until no longer cloudy
- E. Pour strained vinegar into clean jar adding a sprig or two of fresh herbs that have been sanitized as described, seal tightly and refrigerate
- F. Flavoring process can be shortened by “bruising” or coarsely chopping herbs before placing in vinegar
- G. Flavored vinegars should retain good quality for 2-3 months when stored in the refrigerator

SPECIAL NOTES:

Some people enjoy displaying pretty bottles of herb oils & vinegars on a kitchen shelf or window sill. These should be considered a decoration and not used in food preparation!