

Making herbal salts, sugars and vinegars

General information using fresh herbs or flowers

Pick the herbs in the morning after the dew has dried off and the essential oils are at their strongest.

Rinse herbs off if dusty and pat dry. Strip the leaves off the stems, do the same with lavender flowers. Rose petals need the little white part sniped off (it is bitter) then follow through prepping the plant material for your product.

Hearty herbs = rosemary, sage, oregano, sweet marjoram and lavender flowers.

Delicate herbs = basil, parsley, cilantro, dill, mint, chives and French tarragon and rose petals.

Fresh herb finishing salts

Flavored salts add crunch, mineral salinity, and concentrated flavor to meats and fish, veggies, popcorn, and salads.

Directions:

- ¼ cup coarse or flaked sea salt
- Choose 1 or a favorite combo of herbs
- ¾ cups finely chopped fresh basil lightly packed in measuring cup
- ½ cup thinly sliced fresh herb such as chives, dill, French tarragon, parsley, or cilantro.

Try 3 Tbsp of stronger herbs such as lemon verbena, rosemary or sage. More can be added if a stronger taste is desired.

You can double the recipe but I have found ¼ cup of herbed salt last me a long time.

Place a cooling rack into a rimmed baking sheet then cover cooling rack with parchment paper. Combine salt and herb in large bowl. Rub mixture between your hands to evenly disperse herb throughout salt. Repeat until well combined, about 30 seconds. Transfer mixture to parchment paper and spread into even layer.

Place pan in 50° to 70° location away from direct sunlight. Raking mixture with fork every 12 hours to ensure herb dries evenly.

Again rub mixture between your hands to break up any clumps and evenly distribute herb throughout salt. Once **completely dry** (if not dry the mixture will mold), transfer to airtight container. (Herb salt can be stored out of direct light at room temperature for up to 2 months.)

Herbs used in finishing salts

Chives & garlic chives
Kaliteri oregano
Lemon verbena
Salad burnet

Flavored herb sugars, add sparkle to cake toppings, sweet flavor to any fruit such as raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, and sliced peaches etc.

Directions:

1 cup any course sugar of your choice. This can be granulated, turbinado, coconut, etc.

¼+ cup herb leaves chopped with stronger herbs use less, start with small amount, and add more for a stronger taste.

There are 2 methods to make flavored sugar.

- 1) Similar to flavoring salt, add sugar and herbs/flowers to bowl and rub together. Place parchment paper on a cooling rack. Rake through a couple times a day to help it dry evenly.
- 2) Place herb in blender or food processor, add herb and turn on to chop up leaves/flower, add ½ the sugar and whirl until blended, caution don't over process, you don't want powder sugar. Add the remaining sugar and mix.

Herbs used in the sugars

Lemon verbena chopped and added to organic cane sugar

Mint, used 3 tbsp. dried spearmint, pulsed in blender, added ¼ cup coconut sugar, pulsed to blend, mixed ¼ cup coarse cane sugar.

Lavender, used 2 tbsp. dried flowers pulsed in blender, added ¼ cup coarse sugar, pulsed to blend, mixed an additional ½ cup coarse sugar.

Lavender uses:

Sweeten iced tea, lemonade, or flavor meringue or whipped cream, use in butter cookies, shortbread cookies

Caution: **Note: use your lavender flowers, if you don't have any of your own than be sure to purchase culinary grade lavender flowers. Always use your own rose petals, assuming you have not sprayed or used a systemic on them.**

Lavender lemonade 1 serving

- Squeeze a lemon (1oz. juice) place in a measuring cup
- Add 1 to 2 tbsp lavender flavored sugar and ¼ cup water
- Mix until sugar is dissolved, strain and pour into a tall glass.
- Add ice cubes and fill with sparkling water or still water.
- Stir, enjoy
- To garnish add a slice of lemon and a stem of lavender.

Flavored vinegars

Herbal vinegars add pizzazz to vinaigrettes, add to veggies instead of salt, and make a refreshing drink or marinades

Things you need to know before creating flavored vinegar

Make sure all the equipment used is not aluminum nor copper, all utensils need to be nonreactive to vinegar. To sterilize the bottle for the finished product, wash with hot soapy water and rinsed thoroughly. Then fill the jars with a mixture of 3 tbsp. bleach to 1 gallon hot water. Let sit for 10 minutes, pour out the water and let dry. Be sure all containers are completely dry, water clouds the vinegar.

Heat good quality vinegar (5 % acidity) until warm to the touch, (100 to 110 degrees). DO NOT BOIL. Pour over the herbs, spices or fruit and bruise with a wooden spoon. Cover with a non-metal lid and store in a dark cool place. Shake or stir occasionally every few days. In a week taste the vinegar. If it's not strong enough, let it steep for up to 3 more weeks. If a stronger flavor is desired repeat the process with fresh herbs, or fruit.

This would not be necessary if you are using spices and seeds. Steep no longer than a total of 6 weeks. If the herbs won't stay covered, fill a "ziplock©" bag with water and insert into jar to fill the gap between the lid and vinegar.

Now is the time to use decorative bottles. When the flavor is to your liking, strain into sterilized bottles using a non-metal funnel, and line the funnel with three layers of cheese cloth or a coffee filter. Carefully pour the vinegar into the funnel, take care not to disturb the sediment at the bottom of the jar. Cap with a non-metal lid and label bottle. Although it's tempting to display the flavored vinegar in a window sill to enjoy the subtle colors, the heat from the sun will soon diminish the quality. Keep the bottles in a dark cool place, use within 6 months to a year.

NOTE: If you choose to decorate with a fresh un-bruised herb. Be sure to remove it when the herb becomes uncovered.

Herbs and spices used in the vinegars

- Garlic chive flowers = white wine vinegar (filled jar 2/3rds full)
- Garlic chive flowers & rosemary = white wine vinegar (filled jar 2/3rds full flowers + 3 sprigs of rosemary)
- 1 pint Blackberries and 10 leaves lemon verbena = white wine vinegar
- 3" Cinnamon stick, 3 teas. each of cloves, allspice, coriander, 1 teas. dried ginger (roughly grated) & ¼ piece nutmeg = cane sugar vinegar
- French tarragon = white wine vinegar (filled jar 2/3rds full)

Vinegar chocolate cake

1 ½ cup flour
3 tbsp. cocoa
1 teas. vanilla
1 ½ teas. baking soda
1 tbsp. spice vinegar
1 cup sugar
1 teas. cinnamon
1/2 teas. salt.
6 tbsp. canola oil
1 cup cold water

Sift all the dry ingredients on a piece of wax paper, sift into a 9 X 9 square pan. Make 3 depressions in the dry ingredients. In the 1st depression place vinegar, 2nd 1 teas. 3rd cooking oil . pour 1 cup over ingredients and stir with fork till dry ingredients are wet don't over mix
Bake at 350° for 25 to 30 minutes

herbal vinegar drink:

4 cups fruit vinegar add ¼ to 1 cup sugar
Bring mixture to simmer, stirring often to dissolve the sugar cook for 3 min. Do not boil.
Skim off any foam, decant. Serve 1 to 2 tbsp. vinegar with sparkling water or ginger ale.