

*The Herb Society of America's*  
*Essential Guide to*  
**Savory**



*2015 Herb of the Year*

## *Introduction*

As with previous publications of The Herb Society of America's Essential Guides we have developed *The Herb Society of America's Essential Guide to Savory* in order to promote the knowledge, use, and delight of herbs - the Society's mission. We hope that this guide will be a starting point for studies of savory and that you will develop an understanding and appreciation of what we, the editors, deem to be an underutilized herb in our modern times.

In starting to put this guide together we first had to ask ourselves what it would cover. Unlike dill, horseradish, or rosemary, savory is not one distinct species. It is a general term that covers mainly the genus *Satureja*, but as time and botanists have fractured the many plants that have been called savories, the title now refers to multiple genera. As some of the most important savories still belong to the genus *Satureja* our main focus will be on those plants, but we will also include some of their close cousins. The more the merrier!

Savories are very historical plants and have long been utilized in their native regions of southern Europe, western Asia, and parts of North America. It is our hope that all members of The Herb Society of America who don't already grow and use savories will grow at least one of them in the year 2015 and try cooking with it. We have garnered quite a few recipes that we hope will be inspiring. Perhaps one day the savories will be appreciated to the same degree as their relatives rosemary, mint, oregano, and thyme.

~ Henry Flowers and Sara Holland  
*Editors*

*The Herb Society  
of America is  
dedicated to the  
knowledge, use  
and delight of  
herbs through  
educational  
programs,  
research and  
sharing the  
experience of its  
members with the  
community.*



Henry Flowers &  
Sara Holland  
*Editors*

*It is the policy of The Herb Society of America not to advise or recommend herbs for medicinal or health use. This information is intended for educational purposes only and should not be considered as a recommendation or an endorsement of any particular medical or health treatment.*



# Acknowledgements

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-Many thanks as well to the garden volunteer staff at Festival Hill, who helped us to propagate and grow many of the savory plants we studied.

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Cover photo: Closeup of winter savory and rose hips in a tussie mussie made by Pioneer Unit member Mary Reeves, winner of the 2012 Joanna McQuail Reed Award for the Artistic Use of Herbs.

-Photo by Henry Flowers



Creeping Savory -photo by Alice Le Duc

# *The Herb Society of America's Essential Guide to Savory*

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## History and Origin

As mentioned previously in the introduction we will be focusing on a variety of plants that are commonly called savories. The main genus of plants we will be focusing on is *Satureja*, to which the important culinary plants commonly known as summer savory and winter savory belong. Many other plants through time have been referred to as savory, some of which have at one time belonged to the genus *Satureja*, and we will cover some of them as well.

Members of the genus *Satureja* are native to the warm temperate regions of the northern hemisphere - mainly regions of southern Europe, western Asia, and northern Africa. Their close cousins of the genus *Micromeria* are native to similar regions. Members of the genus *Clinopodium* are similar in many ways, but native to the New World.

## Taxonomy-What's in a Name?

Genus: *Satureja* (sometimes *Satureiea* in old texts)

Pronunciation: sāt-ū-rĕ-yā

Family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae) Mint Family

Common Names: savory; summer savory; winter savory; bonenkruid (Dutch and Afrikaans); sarriette (French); bohnenkraut and pfefferkraut (German); peverella and santoreggia (Italian); ajedrea, hisopillo, tomillo and sabroso (Spanish), segurelha-das-hortas (Portuguese); kyndel (Swedish); chubritsa (Bulgarian); sabori (Japanese); hsiang po ho (Chinese); and nadgh (Arabic)

# Satureja

There is controversy that revolves around the name *Satureja*. Many like to believe the mythological story of these plants being eaten by satyrs so that they would obtain great levels of sexual stamina. Because of this association Pliny the Elder is believed to have called the plant *Satureia*, meaning "of the satyrs", in the first century CE. *Satureja* is believed to be a derivation of that name. See more about this interesting association in the Myths and Folklore section.

The other, and perhaps more plausible story, is that *Satureja* is a derivatation of the Hebrew name *za'atar* (similar to the Arabic *az-za'tar* and Turkis *sater*) which is commonly used in reference to all plants in the eastern Mediterranean that have an oregano-like aroma.

Both stories are interesting and we may never know which is the true one, so decide which one you like and go with that one.

*Satureja* has been a genus of about 180 - 200 species. Recently a reevaluation has resulted in a division into three distinct genera: *Satureja*, *Micromeria*, and *Clinopodium*. Today *Satureja* contains about 52 species including well-known species Winter Savory (*S. montana*), Summer Savory (*S. hortensis*), Creeping Savory (*S. spicigera*), Purple Winter Savory (*S. subspicata*) and Pink Savory (*S. thymbra*). Lemon Savory (*S.*





*biflora*) is now *Micromeria biflora*, while Georgia Savory (*S. georgiana*), Yerba Buena (*S. douglasii*) and Jamaican Mint (*S. viminea*) are *Clinopodium carolinianum*, *C. douglasii* and *C. vimineum* respectively. This division is on the diagnostic characters of leaves, calyx and geographic distribution.

The genus *Satureja* is characterized as perennials to shrubs, with square stems and aromatic foliage bearing glandular hairs that secrete essential oils. The leaves tend to be conduplicate, folded upward like a taco shell. The flowers are two lipped, found in the axils of the leaves in small compact clusters. All are Old World species.

*Satureja* species are food plants for the larva of some Lepidoptera (moths and butterflies). Caterpillars of the moth *Coleophora bifrondella* feed exclusively on winter savory. (Wikipedia, 12-11-2014)

# Micromeria

Genus: *Micromeria*

Pronunciation: mī-krō-mā-rī-ā

Family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae) Mint Family

The genus *Micromeria* is characterized as perennials and subshrubs with subequal or actinomorphic calyx. The leaves are revolute with short petioles. There are approximately 75 species. All are Old World species native to Europe, Asia, and Africa.

The name *Micromeria* comes from the Greek *mīkros*, meaning "small", and *meris*, meaning "portion". This is a reference to the small size of both the leaves and the flowers, which is obvious if you are familiar with the plants.

# Clinopodium

Genus: *Clinopodium*

Pronunciation: klī-nō-pō-dē-ūm

Family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae) Mint Family

The genus *Clinopodium* is characterized as perennials and subshrubs, with glandular dots on all vegetative parts. The leaves have entire or crenate margins and are clearly petiolate. The floral calyx is clearly bilabiate, not actinomorphic. The species all have similar chromosome numbers. Most, but not all, are New World species. There are approximately 22 species.

The name *Clinopodium* means "bed-foot" from the Greek "klinos", meaning bed, and "podion", meaning small foot.

## The Common Name: Savory

Savory is derived from the Latin word *satura*, which simply means "satiated". During the Roman Empire savory was a commonly used herb that spiced up foods before exotic spices from the east arrived and superseded this flavorful native. Foods made with savory were likely to be very palatable and thus lead to a full belly and satiation.

Savory is defined in the dictionary as: "pungently flavorful without sweetness", "having a pleasant taste or smell", and "morally exemplary". The first two definitions fit our herb of discussion and I'd like to think that the third is a definition that can be applied to those who grow and use this venerable herb. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary the first known use of the word "savory" was in the 13th Century.

## What about the genera *Acinos* and *Calamintha*?

Many members of the genera *Acinos* and *Clinopodium* have at one time been listed as members of the genus *Calamintha*. Examples are basil thyme - previously *Calamintha acinos* and now *Clinopodium acinos*; alpine calamint - previously *Calamintha alpina* and now *Clinopodium alpinum* (*Acinos alpinus*); wild basil - previously *Calamintha clinopodium* and now *Clinopodium vulgare*.

According to the current version of The Plant List there are no currently accepted species names in the genus *Calamintha*. Two examples listed not long ago as belonging to this genus are common calamint, a notable tea herb - formerly *C. officinalis* (now *Clinopodium nepeta*) or *Calamintha sylvatica* (now *Clinopodium menthifolium*); and large-flowered calamint - *Calamintha grandiflora* (now *Clinopodium grandiflorum*), which is a beautiful ornamental plant.

The genus *Acinos* is currently undergoing revision and its future is still up in the "botanical" air. It contains a small number of plants native to southern Europe and western Asia, most of which have recently had name changes. *Acinos arvensis*, now *Clinopodium acinos*, is commonly known as basil thyme and is one of many herbs used in za'atar herb blends in the Middle East. It is a small perennial with a notable thyme-like aroma and is very much a "savory" plant in its own right. *Acinos alpinus*, now *Clinopodium alpinum*, is commonly known as rock thyme. It was also formerly *Calamintha alpina*, *Satureja alpina*, and *Thymus alpinus*. It is a small perennial shrub with vivid purple flowers and is used as both a tea and medicinal herb.

## Description

Most members of the genus *Satureja* are herbaceous annuals or perennial subshrubs.

Leaves - Entire of margin, but varying in shape by species. Sometimes marked by glandular spots. Margins sometimes ciliate.

Flowers - Normally whorled and in loose cymes or spikes. Corolla (petals) is typically bilabiate with a straight tube and tri-lobed lower lip. Calyx (sepals) is typically tubular and 5-toothed. Color is white, pale purple or bluish purple. Flowering time is typically late spring or early summer.

Seeds - A schizocarp (see Glossary for a definition)



## Propagation

Most types of savory can be propagated by seed. The most common way to start plants of annual summer savory is to sow seed. Perennials such as winter savory and pink savory can be started by seed as well. Lemon savory is also quite easy to start from seed, which is a quick way to start a good crop of a wonderful and little-known herb.

Almost all savories are easily started by stem cuttings. The best season to take cuttings will depend upon your location. For those of us in the southern U.S. the best time to take cuttings of savories such as winter or pink savory is in the fall or early winter. It is likely better to do so in northern states in the spring or summer. A sprawling plant such as *yerba buena* easily roots itself as it spreads, so one just needs to dig up rooted stems in order to start new plants. If you have a large specimen of winter savory you may note that it will at time layer its stems and there are certain times of the year in which adventitious roots will be present on the lower portions of the stems, a great indication that it is a good time to root cuttings (this is also notably true of other herbs such as rosemary and thyme).

Division of a root ball to create new plants can also be done with larger specimens – especially container grown ones. The editors will occasionally do this with larger winter savory specimens, but more commonly propagate this plant by cuttings.



Propagation of winter savory (top l to r): stem of winter savory selected for propagation; smaller pieces (2-3 inches long) removed from main stem; lower leaves removed; (bottom l to r) multiple pieces stuck into a small pot containing a sterile, soilless mix and watered in; plants transplanted when roots are formed after 4 to six weeks. -photos by Henry Flowers



## Cultivation

Most savories will thrive in full sun if given a fertile, well-drained soil with routine watering and occasional fertilization. The annual summer savory may need a bit more fertilization with a balanced fertilizer or a good organic fertilizer than will its perennial cousins. A notable exception is yerba buena, *Clinopodium douglasii*, which prefers a shady location with a well-drained, but lightly moist soil.

Like other members of the family Lamiaceae, many perennial savories tend to get woody in time and should be trimmed back routinely in order to stimulate new growth. This would be a good time to harvest, dry, and store some of the removed plant material for future use (see Harvesting and Storage).

## Harvesting & Storage

Although it is preferred to use savory (both winter savory and summer savory) as a fresh herb, it may be dried and holds its flavor. For both savories, harvest just before the plant flowers for the best flavor. Dry by hanging bunches upside down or place on a screen to dry. Winter savory will take longer to dry because of its thicker leaves. When dry, strip the leaves and store them in an airtight container.

Both savories may be frozen; I've found they stay green and hold their flavor for at least 6 months. If you are not growing it yourself, you can purchase savory in its dry form. It is most often sold without the identification of the variety but you can assume it is summer savory. In general, the milder summer savory is preferred in cooking over winter savory.



Pat Kenny harvesting summer savory -photo from Pat Kenny

It is best to keep the flowers pinched off (much like you would do with basil) until the end of the season. At this time you may want to pull up the entire plant since summer savory is an annual. On the other hand, winter savory is a perennial woody subshrub and benefits from pruning in spring and fall. Do not cut back more than 1/3 of the plant at one time.

You can also preserve the savories by making herb butters, marinades, and savory vinegar (see *Recipe* section) which can be used in making vinaigrette for salads or splashed on beans and other vegetables.

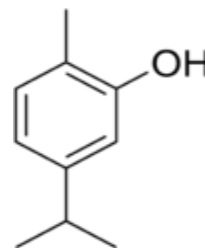
## Chemistry & Nutrition

Savories contain a large variety of essential oils, many of which are responsible for giving them aromas similar to close cousins in the mint family such as thyme, oregano, and mint.

Carvacrol, thymol, para-cymene, gamma-terpinene, alpha-pinene, dipentene, borneol, 1-linalool, and 1-carvone are some of the essential oils found in most of the more pungently scented

savories such as summer savory, winter savory, creeping savory, and pink savory (Katzner 2007). They give the characteristic aromas of oregano or thyme (dependent upon essential oil concentration) that we associate with most savories. The major chemical constituent of summer savory is carvacrol (30-50%), and there may be 20-30% para-cymene and substantial amounts of thymol (Small 1997).

Carvacrol ( $C_6H_3CH_3(OH)(C_3H_7)$ ) is a monoterpene phenol with the characteristic odor of oregano. Thymol ( $C_{10}H_{14}O$ ) is a monoterpene phenol and an isomer of carvacrol. It gives us the characteristic odor we associate with thyme. Both chemicals have very notable antioxidant, antibacterial, and antifungal activities and work synergistically to enhance each other's effects. Thymol in particular has been used as an additive in mouthwashes, toothpastes, and topical antibiotics. In *Medicinal Plants of the World* carvacrol is noted as being spasmolytic and carminative (van Wyk and Wink 2004).



Members of the genera *Micromeria* and *Clinopodium* often have a minty or camphoraceous aroma. The aroma of Yerba Buena (*Micromeria douglasii*) in particular is comprised of camphor, camphene, pulegone, carvone, isomenthone, menthone, and piperitenone. (Tucker and DeBaggio 2009) Variations in oil content give different forms of Yerba Buena distinctly different aromas.

Summer savory is a rich source of calcium and vitamin A (Prakash 1990).

## Savory Profiles

# Satureja

## Summer Savory - *Satureja hortensis* L.

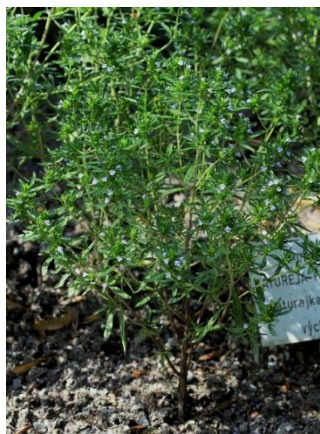


Summer Savory - photo by Pat Kenny

Summer savory has a myriad of common names around the world. A few of the most common are: *bohlenkraut* (German for “bean herb”), *sarriette des jardins* (French), and *ajedrea de jardin* (Spanish). It is native from the eastern Mediterranean east into Iran and the Caucasus. In some regions of Europe and North America it has escaped cultivation and now grows wild.

Summer savory is perhaps the most commonly used savory for culinary purposes. Its aroma and taste are spicy with a hint of pepper and are somewhat similar to the aroma and taste of oregano and thyme. The specific epithet *hortensis* means “of the garden” – a reference to the fact that it is a commonly cultivated culinary herb. It gets its common name of “bean herb” because when added to bean dishes it helps to bring out their flavor, but does not overpower it. In addition it helps to aid in the digestion of the beans, which in many people can cause gas.

Description: It is an upright, somewhat bushy annual reaching a height of about a foot to a foot and a half with a spread of less or equal width.



- Leaves are linear-oblong and are normally an inch to an inch and a half in length.
- Flowers are seen in the summer and are typically bilabiate, produced in whorls, and are white to purple in coloration.
- Propagation by seed is most common and very easy once the soil is warm or start it by sowing the seeds in containers inside before the last frost.

**Hardiness:** Since summer savory is an annual, its hardiness is not of great concern. It is often grown in the warm season of the year and is used fresh in that season and harvested and processed for future use in dried form. The editors and other gardeners who have cultivated summer savory in the southern half of the country note that it is not easy to keep summer savory alive in the intense summer heat and humidity of high summer. Thus we recommend that if you live in an area with such a summer that you sow summer savory as soon as possible (after the soil has warmed up and any threat of frost is past – the same for basil seeds) in the spring and once it is large enough you should harvest it for fresh and/or dried use before it “goes mort”. Since it is easy to germinate and since it is a wonderful culinary herb, we deem it worth the effort.

**Cultivation:** Since summer savory is an annual it is easily cultivated by sowing seeds when the soil is warm in the spring or early summer. It prefers full sun with routine watering and occasional fertilization. As it gets tall it may have a tendency to lean or fall over and should be trimmed back for use and to make the plant sturdier. One may want to try one of the smaller, compact varieties listed below to avoid this problem. For harvesting it can be cut back, preferably before blooms form, multiple times per season and dried.



"Since summer savory is well-suited to use in bean dishes, many gardeners grow it alongside or near their bean rows in the garden so that it can be picked at the same time". (Richardson 1991)

**Cultivars:**

- 'Aromata' - A uniform, compact plant with an essential oil content up to 4%.
- 'Midget' - 10" to 12" tall plant with higher foliage mass and essential oil content than common summer savory, as well as a bushier, more uniform habit that is good for production.
- 'Saturn' - A compact, bushy plant with higher oil content than common summer savory.
- 'Shortie' - A compact plant with shorter internodes that is suitable for either container or field production.



Our early New England ancestors likely treasured savory much more than we do today. In his 1671 book, *New England's Rarities*, botanist John Josselyn lists both summer and winter savory as plants that were brought by English settlers as a reminder of their homeland.

### Winter Savory - *Satureja montana* L.

Winter savory is so-named to distinguish it from summer savory by the fact that it is an evergreen perennial and will survive the winter in its homeland, whereas summer savory will not. The specific epithet *montana* simply means “of the mountains” and is a reference to it growing natively in mountainous regions of southeastern Europe and northern Africa. Thankfully it is a relatively easy-going herb and makes itself quite at home in most temperate gardens.



-photo by Henry Flowers

Most comparisons of the taste of summer and winter savory say that the flavor of winter savory is coarser and stronger than that of summer savory. An advantage of winter savory over summer savory is its evergreen character and thus it is available for use pretty much year-round in regions with little snow cover, whereas summer savory's useful time frame is limited.

Description: Winter savory is a shrubby evergreen perennial of about 1/2 to 1 1/2 feet in height and a similar or slightly broader width.

- Leaves are oblong-linear to oblanceolate, entire, sessile, and about 1/4 to an inch in length. Very fine hairs are present on the leaf margins. The leaves tend to become somewhat tough and leathery with age and thus newer leaves are often used for culinary purposes.

- Flowers are produced in whorls and are typically white, but may be pink-white or soft purple.

- Propagation is easily done by seed, cuttings, or division of mature plants.



Hardiness: Winter savory is considered to be hardy in USDA hardiness zones 5-9.

Cultivation: One of the easiest savories to grow, winter savory needs little attention. Like most savories it prefers full sun, good drainage, and occasional watering. Like thyme and other woody members of the mint family it is best to trim it back occasionally in order to stimulate new growth, less woodiness, and a bushier growth habit. Winter savory is also very easy to grow in a container, which makes it easier to overwinter and use in regions outside of its hardiness range or where snow cover makes it difficult to harvest. As with thyme, it may be judicious to root new plants every 2-3 years in



order to replace older ones that may start to degenerate. It does not need a rich soil and will usually live longer if grown on a lean and alkaline soil. Since winter savory's leaves tend to become tough with age, it is recommended that the younger, more tender leaves at the tips be used for culinary pursuits.

### **Lemon Winter Savory - *Satureja montana* var. *citriodora*\***

\*- not a currently accepted (published) botanical name -sometimes also improperly listed as *S. montana* 'Citriodora'

This is admittedly a plant with which the editors have very little experience. We have not been able to find it commercially available from any source in the United States, and thus have ordered seeds from a firm in Germany - Jelitto Perennial Seed (see Plant Sources). It is also currently listed as an available seed from Richter's Herbs in their 2015 catalog. While we were working on this publication we received and sowed the seed and it has germinated, but it is not yet large enough to determine its character in person. We've got our fingers crossed as we really want to get to know this plant.

Lemon winter savory is described by Deni Bown in her *New Encyclopedia of Herbs & Their Uses* as being a small, spreading plant with a lemon like flavor and approximately 6" in height. We haven't found any other descriptions of this plant except for internet sources. We were highly intrigued as we have grown *Micromeria biflora* - known commonly as lemon savory. This plant is a wonderfully fragrant and tasty herb, but like summer savory for us (in Central TX) it is not long-lived. A lemony evergreen and perennial savory would make a nice addition to many herb gardens. If we have success with it, then we plan to send out further information through HSA newsletters or Promising Plants.

### **Creeping Savory - *Satureja spicigera* (K.Koch) Boiss.**

Description: Creeping savory is a fantastic evergreen groundcover plant for a sunny, well-drained location. It is typically only 3 to 6 inches in height and spreading in habit. It is native to western Asia - mainly Iran and the Caucasus.

- Leaves are linear-oblongate and 1/2 to 3/4 inches long. They have an aroma similar to that of winter savory and its leaves can be used in the place of summer or winter savory in culinary pursuits.
- Flowers are normally a pure white and only about 1/4 inch in length. They are normally borne later than most other savories - in late summer or early fall.
- Propagation is easily done by rooting cuttings or simply by digging up and transplanting stems from a clump where they have self-layered.



-photo by Henry Flowers

Hardiness: Cold hardy to around 0°F - USDA hardiness zone 7.

Cultivation: Creeping savory needs a location with full sun and very good drainage. It grows well on a fairly lean soil and is very suitable for a rock garden, the edge of a retaining wall, or a container.

For culinary purposes creeping savory is a great substitute for either summer or winter savory. It is more pungent than summer savory and usually has leaves that are more tender than those of winter savory.

**Purple Winter Savory - *Satureja subspicata* Bartl. ex Vis.**  
(*Satureja montana* subsp. *illyrica*)

Purple winter savory is very similar to winter savory and has a compact growth habit and good flavor in its leaves, but notably has bright purple flowers when it blooms in the spring. It is also known as 'Purple Mountain' savory and is very much worth growing for both its culinary and ornamental use. In culture it has similar needs as winter savory.



**Pink Savory - *Satureja thymbra* L.**

(*Clinopodium thymbra*, *Micromeria thymbra*, *Satureja biroi*, *S. collina*, *S. hispida*, *S. trigoriganum*, *Thymbra hirsuta*, *T. hirsutissima*, *Thymus trigoriganum*, and *T. hirsutissimumus*)

Other common names are: *za'atar rumi* (Arabic and basically means "Roman hyssop"), savory of Crete, thyme-leaved savory, barrel sweetener, goat's thyme, wild time of Candy, and whorled savory. The specific epithet *thymbra* is an ancient Latin name notably used by Pliny as a descriptive for a savory, thyme-like plant.

Description: Pink savory is native to woody and shrubby areas of the eastern Mediterranean – mainly the Balkans, Greece, and Crete. It is a small shrubby plant of approximately 6 to 12 inches in height and up to 1 ½ to 2 feet in height when blooming.

- Leaves can either be a thyme or oregano scented form and have traditionally been used as substitutes for those plants. It is one of the myriad plants commonly used in the making of the herbal mixture known as *za'atar*. The leaves are entire, have a smooth margin, and are opposite on the stem. They are also covered with fine hairs that give the plant an overall fuzzy appearance.



-photo by Henry Flowers

- Flowers are the typical bilabiate form of the genus and are normally a soft to rich pink, but can also be purple. They are typically borne in many whorled clusters that are closely spaced along the flowering stem. The leafy bracts in the whorls of flowers are especially hirsute and give the plant a very fuzzy, somewhat gray appearance when it is in bloom in early summer.

- Propagation can be done by sowing seed or by taking semi-hardwood cuttings from a mature specimen during the growing season.

Hardiness: USDA hardiness zones 8-9 - thus it should be viewed as a tender perennial in most regions of North America.

Cultivation: Pink savory prefers full sun and a lean, well-drained soil. Once established it is tolerant of high heat and drought conditions. Overwatering and being too cold are two conditions it will not tolerate.

The essential oil of pink savory, being high in carvacol and thymol, is antifungal and antibacterial (Tucker and DeBaggio 2009).

It is also antinociceptive and antiinflammatory (Tucker and DeBaggio 2009).

The common name of barrel sweetener is derived from its historical use in a strong infusion on the island of Crete to cleanse wine barrels before using them to store a new vintage. The name wild time of Candy was a name used by the likes of the 17th century herbalists Gerard and Parkinson where "time" is what we now call thyme and "Candy" was the then name of Crete (Saville 1997).

Some Biblical scholars are of the opinion that pink savory may be the true "hyssop" of the Bible - a plant whose true identity has caused much research and discussion (Tristram 1867).

Pink savory can be used in cooking much as one would use summer or winter savory. Like winter savory its flavor is quite pungent, so be careful how you use it.

#### **A few other notable members of the genus *Satureja*:**

*Satureja adamovicii* Silic- Yugoslavian Winter Savory or Adamovica Thyme

*Satureja kitaibelii* Wierzb. ex Heuff - Serbian Savory

*Satureja montana* subsp. *variegata* (Host) P.W. Ball - Variegated Savory

*Satureja spinosa* L. – Dwarf or Pygmy Savory and Crete Mountain Savory

*Satureja taurica* Velen. - Crimean Savory

## *Micromeria*

### **Lemon Savory - *Micromeria biflora*** (Buch.-Ham. ex D.Don) Benth. (*Satureja biflora*, *Thymus biflorus*, and *Clinopodium biflorum*)

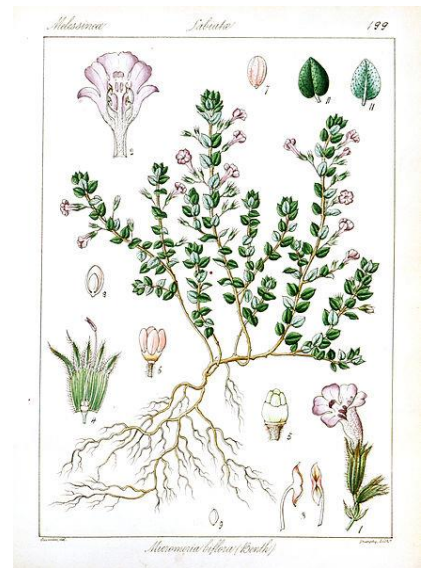
Lemon savory is a wonderful culinary plant that needs a lot more recognition. Its scent and flavor are bright and refreshing and it is a possible substitute for lemon verbena or lemon thyme in the kitchen.

Description: Lemon savory is a small, shrubby upright plant that is normally less than 1 foot in height. It is native from South Africa through eastern Africa, into the Middle East and further east into India and China.



**Hardiness:** It is a tender perennial and only hardy in tropical regions, thus it is treated as an annual in most regions of the U.S.

**Cultivation:** Lemon savory can easily be started from seeds and it is easy to propagate via stem cuttings if you have a plant on hand. In very warm, humid climates it may suffer and be short lived in the summer. In such conditions one may want to treat it like summer savory – grow it fast and harvest for drying. It is easy to cultivate as a container plant due to its small stature. Be sure to keep it close to the kitchen so that you can use it!



**"As any good HSA member with a Polish -good cooking mother-in-law - I have grown and used summer and winter savory. Ten years ago I discovered lemon savory - *Satureja biflora*. Oh, Divine! I have grown it in the ground but I think it is happier in a container. If you have room in your garden for only one savory, it should be lemon savory"**  
**- Carol Czechowski, Southern Michigan Unit**

### **Savory or Julian Savory- *Micromeria juliana* (L.) Benth. ex Rchb. (*Satureja juliana*)**

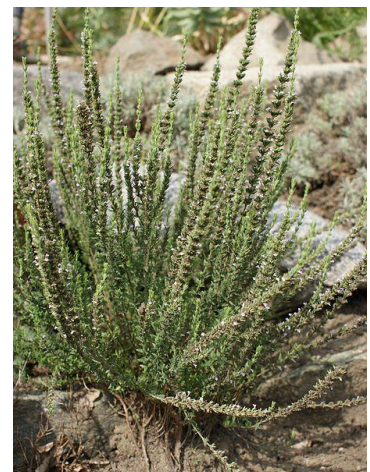
**Description:** A dwarf (10-40cm), shrubby plant indigenous to the Mediterranean. It grows wild in rugged, rocky and dry habitats.

- Leaves: Narrow and lanceolate to oblanceolate. Margins are entire and tend to curl under.
- Flowers: A soft purple and normally borne in late spring or early summer
- Propagation: By seed, plant division, or by semi-hardwood cuttings in summer or early fall.

**Hardiness:** USDA hardiness zone 7.

**Cultivation:** Needs a very sunny and warm location with very good drainage - prefers a poor, rocky soil.

This plant has traditionally been used for culinary purposes in a similar manner to that of summer savory. It has an oregano-like odor and taste due to its major essential oil being carvacrol (Small 1997). It has been cultivated in Europe since the 16th century and has at time been used medicinally, mainly as an infusion for treating sore throats and upset digestion (Small 1997).





# Clinopodium

## Georgia Savory or Georgia Calamint - *Clinopodium carolinianum* Mill. (*Satureja georgiana*, *Calamintha georgiana* and *Clinopodium georgianum*)

**Description:** Georgia savory is an upright semi-evergreen shrubby plant that grows to about one foot in height. It is native from Louisiana east into Florida and north into the Carolinas.

- Leaves are simple and ovate with slightly dentate margins and have a mild, minty aroma and can be used to make a mild herbal tea.
- Flowers are usually a soft pink and produced in the fall. The lower lip has quite noticeable spotting on the central lobe, continuing into the throat.
- Propagation is easily achieved by rooting semi-hardwood cuttings in the summer or fall or by sowing seed in the spring.



-photo by Henry Flowers

**Hardiness:** The editors could find no definitive data on this plant's hardiness, but we suspect that it is hardy in USDA hardiness zones 7-10. It may grow in zones further north, but it is not likely to remain evergreen and it may freeze back to its roots. It is such a nice plant that it would be worth the try.

**Cultivation:** Georgia savory grows in full sun or partial shade with good drainage. In its native habitat it tends to grow on the edge of pine forests where it receives light shade. It will do fine in lightly acidic to lightly alkaline soils and is tolerant of most soil types as long as it gets good drainage. It also makes a very nice container plant!



-photo by Henry Flowers

## Yerba Buena - *Clinopodium douglasii* (Benth.) Kuntze (*Satureja douglasii*, *S. chamissonis*, *Micromeria douglasii*, and *Micromeria chamissonis*)

Yerba buena was originally given the botanical name of *Satureja douglasii*. It was named in honor of David Douglas, a plant collector from Scotland who spent much time exploring the American West in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The common name of *yerba buena* (Spanish for "good herb") was adopted by the inhabitants of a Mexican village that became known as Yerba Buena and was later to become known in 1847 as San Francisco after it was seized by the United States in the Mexican-American War (Wood 2014).

Today many commuters daily drive through a tunnel on the Yerba Buena Island, which connects the spans of the San Francisco – Oakland Bay Bridge.



**Description:** Yerba buena is a low-growing (normally just a few inches high) evergreen plant native to the redwood forests of the Pacific Northwest and has traditionally been used by the

tribes native to that region. It is native from the Los Angeles area north along the Pacific coast all the way to the southeastern portion of Alaska and east into Washington State, Idaho, and Montana (USDA Plant Database - accessed 11-12-2014).

- Leaves of this plant are much more rounded than those of the genus *Satureja* and have a soft flesh.
- Flowers are bilabiate and generally small, are borne in the axils of the leaves, and are typically white, but can also be a purplish white. They often appear during the latter part of the spring and into summer.
- Propagation is most often by rooting cuttings or division of clumps to transplant naturally layered stems.

Hardiness: The literature is inconclusive as to the hardiness of yerba buena. One source says that it does not seem to be hardy above Zone 8b (Tucker and DeBaggio 2009), while another source says that it is hardy from zones 8 to 5 (Bown 2001). According to the USDA Plant Database its native region takes it from zone 10 in southern California to around zone 5 in the northern U.S. The editors' own experience in central Texas shows that it will survive our mild winters, but with the onset of high heat coupled with high humidity in the summer it is very difficult to keep it alive (even more so than French tarragon) and it will usually give up the ghost by August. It is possible that it may survive for us if given the best of conditions and drip irrigation. We'll keep trying.



-photo by Henry Flowers

Cultivation: Unlike most other savories, which like sunny sites on the dry side, this one prefers shade and a lightly moist soil that is loamy and acidic. The long, sprawling stems tend to lie very close to the ground and may put out roots at the nodes, making *yerba buena* a good candidate for a groundcover given the proper conditions. It is easily propagated by rooting cuttings, digging up rooted stem sections, division of large clumps, or by sowing seed. It is becoming easier to find in nurseries; both local and mail-order (see *Plant Sources*).

The most common use of yerba buena is to make a very refreshing herbal tea. Thus it is sometimes given the common name of Oregon tea. It is noted that there are at least five forms of yerba buena that have different aromas: a spearmint-scented form, two peppermint-scented forms, a pennyroyal-scented form, and a camphor-scented form. (Tucker and DeBaggio 2009) It can be used alone to make a tea or combined with other herbs. Yerba buena has no GRAS status (GRIN web site, accessed 11-12-2014).

Traditionally yerba buena tea was used medicinally to treat digestive ailments and to help reduce fevers. Externally its uses included treating skin problems such as rashes and prickly heat and also for helping to numb the pain of toothaches. (Bown 2001)

**Tea Hyssop or White-Leaved Savory –**  
***Clinopodium serpyllifolium* subsp. *fruticosum* (L.) Bräuchler**  
(*Micromeria fruticosa*)

Description: Tea hyssop is a short (less than one foot in height), evergreen shrubby plant endemic to Israel and the eastern Mediterranean. In Hebrew it is known as *zuta levana* and in Arabic as *ashab a-shai*.

- Leaves have a silvery coloration and a notable mint-like aroma. They are rounded and persistent.
- Flowers are small and white and borne in large clusters. They normally appear in spring or very early summer.
- Propagation is by seed or cuttings.



-photo by Henry Flowers

Hardiness: USDA hardiness zones 9-11 (in other words: it's tender)

Cultivation: Prefers full sun with very good drainage and a lean soil. Water very sparingly.

In Israel and close regions of the Middle East tea hyssop is one of the most popular tea herbs. When infused its leaves impart a sweet, minty flavor that is said to be very refreshing. In Turkey it is often mixed with olive oil and salt for dipping bread.

Note: This plant is known to contain pulegone and thus should not be consumed by women who are either pregnant or who are trying to become so.

**Thyme-Leaved Savory - *Clinopodium thymifolium* (Scop.) Kuntze**  
(*Micromeria thymifolia* and *Satureja thymifolia*)



Description: An upright plant of about 1-2 feet in height. Native from the Balkans into Hungary and west into northern Italy.

- Leaves: Evergreen, a medium green, and elliptical in shape. They are approximately 3/4 to 1 inch in length.
- Flowers: Tubular and white to violet in coloration. They are typically produced in summer.
- Propagation: By seed or semi-hardwood cuttings.

Hardiness: Hardy to around -10°F - USDA hardiness zone 6

Cultivation: Prefers a location with full sun or light shade and well-drained soil. It notably does not tolerate high winter moisture.

For culinary use it is mainly employed to make a tea and is sometimes used to flavor savory dishes.

**Jamaican Mint - *Clinopodium vimineum* (L.) Kuntze**  
(*Satureja viminea*)

Jamaican Mint is a shrubby tender perennial tropical plant native to the West Indies and parts of Central America. It is also commonly known as Jamaican peppermint, Costa Rican mint bush and serpentine savory. It will thrive best if its environmental temperature in the winter does not dip below 50°F.



Description: Jamaican mint will grow to about 3 feet in height or larger if given the proper growing conditions.

- Leaves: Its leaves are a glossy bright green (lime green when young and darker when mature (Martin 1987) and have an aroma very similar to that of pennyroyal. They are approximately ½ inch in length and are obovate in form.
- Flowers: Appear in summer and are small, white, and tubular in form.
- Propagation: Seed or cuttings of tip growth during the growing season.

Hardiness: Being tropical it does not like temperatures below 45°F and it should be protected from cold in the winter.

Cultivation: It prefers a moist and rich, but well-drained soil and will do well in full sun or light shade. It is best in hot regions to give it some shade in the afternoon. Because it is quite tender it is often recommended for container culture in much of the U.S.

"One of the charming things about this plant is that the growth is very bushy and self-branching and needs very little pruning." (Martin 1987)

According to Joy Logee Martin its leaves are used in Costa Rica along with ginger as a remedy for colic and in Trinidad it is used to flavor meats (Martin 1987).

This plant merits more use as its aroma and flavor can rival many mints, but it does not display their aggressive growth habit and can easily be cultivated in a container.

**Wild Basil - *Clinopodium vulgare* L.**  
(*Satureja vulgaris* and *Calamintha vulgaris* (L.) Druce)

Description: Wild basil is native to a wide range of areas in both North America and Europe. In North America: from British Columbia in the northwest, Arizona and New Mexico in the southwest, and from Arkansas east to the Carolinas and north into Ontario and Newfoundland.

- Leaves: Ovate to elliptic with entire or mildly dentate margins and overall lightly ciliate. Leaves are traditionally used in salads and herbal teas and also have some medicinal uses.



- Flowers: Borne in clusters in summer and are a medium pink to lavender-pink in coloration.
- Propagation: Easy by seed, but can also be done by rooting stem cuttings.

Hardiness: USDA hardiness zones 6-9

Cultivation: Wild basil prefers a well-drained soil that is either sandy or loamy and acidic to slightly alkaline. It prefers not to get extremely dry and it will grow in either full to fairly shady conditions.

### **A few other notable members of the genus *Clinopodium*:**

*Clinopodium acinos* (L.) Kuntze - Basil Thyme

*Clinopodium ashei* (Weath.) Small – Ashe's Calamint

*Clinopodium glabellum* (Michx.) Kuntze – Ozark Calamint

*Clinopodium glabrum* (Nutt.) Kuntze - Arkansas Mint or Limestone Savory

*Clinopodium macrostemum* (Moc. & Sessé ex Benth.) Kuntze – Poleo or Yerba de Borracho

*Clinopodium menthifolium* (Host) Stace – Woodland Calamint

*Clinopodium mexicanum* (Benth.) Goaverts. - Orange-flowered Mexican Savory

*Clinopodium multiflorum* (Ruiz & Pav.) Kuntze - Multiflora Savory

*Clinopodium mimuloides* (Benth.) Kuntze - Monkeyflower Savory

*Clinopodium nepeta* (L.) Kuntze – Lesser Calamint



## Use

### Commercial Uses

Dried savory, particularly summer savory, is used in many commercial versions of *herbes de Provence* and sometimes *finest herbes* as well. Its oil is used in processed food products such as soup and gravy mixtures, confectionery, processed meat products [notably in sausages], condiments, and vegetables (van Wyk 2013). It is also used to some extent in the flavoring of soft cheeses made from sheep or goat's milk and herbal liqueurs such as vermouth and bitters. (van Wyk 2013) The oils of both summer and winter savory are used in cosmetics, perfumes, soaps, and detergents (van Wyk 2013).

Summer savory is grown as bee pasturage as it produces excellent honey (Mansfield 1986).

### Culinary Uses

First – a bit of history in cooking with savory.

This ancient herb has been used as a flavoring for many dishes for more than 2,000 years.

The Romans used it to flavor sauces and vinegar.

Traditionally, in southern Italy, it has been used with grilled fish and lamb. “Savory was also used to wash out wine barrels before refilling with the new season’s harvest. Bunches of winter savory were attached to each barrel to deter fruit flies from entering the barrels while the grapes fermented.” (McVicar 2011) In its more popular days, savory was used in place of less affordable pepper.

Winter savory (*Satureja montana*) and summer savory (*S. hortensis*) are not as widely known as other robust flavored herbs, but they should be. Both savories taste like a cross between thyme and oregano with winter savory being a bit stronger in flavor than summer savory. Summer savory has a milder flavor, much like a combination of marjoram and thyme together. Some say a hint of mint is present in summer savory. Winter savory has a stronger and more peppery taste; in other words a more robust flavor.

Winter savory is best when cooked in a dish for long period of time (e.g stews, roasts) . Summer savory can be added at the beginning or the end of cooking.

Both savories are the perfect accompaniment with bean dishes of all kinds. Savory is known as the “bean herb”. Any kind of beans – dried beans (all kinds), fresh shell beans, to tender green beans, taste good with it added. Chef Jerry Traunfeld states: “Savory is also good with other vegetables like cabbage, Brussels sprouts, onion, kale, summer squash, beets, and tomato and delicious on roasted potatoes or in potato salad. Add it to marinades and herb rubs for beef, lamb, pork, and chicken before they are grilled. And it is always a good addition to hearty braised dishes, especially those with red wine.” (Traunfeld 2000)

Both types of savories have been used as flavoring in sausages and stuffings, as well as vermouths and bitters.

Both winter and summer savory work well in a mixture with other herbs. They blend well with parsley, marjoram, oregano, basil, rosemary, and thyme. Although they are known to have a special affinity with beans, peas, and lentils, the savories are excellent with cabbage, meats of all kinds, corn, citrus, and apples. (See Recipes)

They also add flavor when used with tomatoes and potatoes too. (See Recipes)

The savories dry very well, holding much of their essential oils. Dry by hanging a bunch (several stems) upside down in a dry, dark place. Summer savory is best when the harvest is done just before the plant flowers. Winter savory can be cut back throughout the summer – I get about 3-4 harvests - and is best harvested just before flowering. Be sure to use the tips (top 2–3 inches) of winter savory as they are the most flavorful for cooking.

"In Roman times it was used to make a sauce similar to mint sauce. Because of the strong volatile oil it contains, which aids digestion, it is particularly recommended for flavoring foods that are difficult to digest such as pork and cucumber." (Philipps and Foy 1990)

“...instead of salt and pepper, a Bulgarian table will habitually display three condiments: salt, paprika, and savory, sometimes mixed together into *sharena sol* (“colorful salt”).” (Staub 2008)

## Medicinal Uses

Since the only two savories with GRAS status are summer and winter savory (GRIN 2014), we will here only refer to those two species.

In general the savories are not notable for their medicinal aspects. They tend to have antibacterial, antifungal and antioxidant effects (mainly due to the content of the phenols carvacrol and thymol) but none in particular are used as an herbal medicine today. Overall they do help to promote good digestion and can be of aid to respiratory ailments as they help to warm and decongest the chest.

Both winter and summer savory "were both formerly used in traditional European herbal medicines to ease gas pains, as an expectorant, and to stop diarrhea. Both contain essential oils that have antimicrobial and muscle-relaxing qualities." (Foster and Hobbs 2002)

According to van Wyk and Wink carvacrol has spasmolytic and carminative properties. It is a stomachic and carminative. "Carvacrol and the other monoterpenes are lipophilic and easily interact with biomembranes and membrane proteins. These properties plausibly explain the observed antispasmodic, diuretic, antimicrobial and secretomotoric effects." (van Wyk and Wink 2004)

"Winter savory is mainly used to treat stomach disorders, including indigestion, flatulence and colic. It is also used as an antiseptic to treat infections of the respiratory and urinary tracts, as well as fungal infections. The herb or the essential oil is used in much the same way as lavender, to treat wounds, burns and skin infections. In central Europe summer savory is used in much the same way as winter savory or thyme. Mixed with honey, it is taken as a tea to treat cough and asthma." (van Wyk and Wink 2004)

"A tea may be prepared from 2-4g of the dried herb in a cup of boiling water (taken two or three times per day). The essential oil or extracts are applied topically or added to the bath water." (van Wyk and Wink 2004)

Summer savory: "Internally for indigestion, nausea, colic, diarrhea, bronchial congestion, sore throat, and menstrual disorders. Contraindicated during pregnancy. Externally for sore throat and insect stings." (Bown 2001)

"Savory is carminative, expectorant, astringent, and stomachic. The carminative effects of savories make them the ideal condiment for cooking with beans and peas. A tea (standard brew) is a safe home remedy for intestinal disorders, and its astringent qualities recommend savory as a cure for diarrhea. The infusion may also be used as a gargle for sore throat." (Dawson 2000)

"Both the old authorities and modern gardeners agree that a sprig of either of the Savorys rubbed on wasp and bee stings gives instant relief." (Grieve 1931) In *Cooking with Herbs* (1984) Susan Belsinger and Carolyn Dille state that "we have tried the old remedy of rubbing a bruised sprig on a bee sting and found that it really does relieve the pain."

## Other Uses

Savories not only make good culinary plants, but many have ornamental use. Although they do not stand out significantly in the garden, they can occupy some interesting niches.

Winter savory makes a nice low hedge or edging plant that is great along the border of a garden, much like the shrubby forms of thyme. Creeping savory is a fantastic plant for a rock garden or spilling over a sunny retaining wall. If one has the proper climate to make a thyme border or lawn it can be added to that lawn to create a different texture and it extends the blooming season as thymes bloom mainly in the spring or summer and creeping savory will bloom in the fall.

Yerba buena makes a nice groundcover, but it can also be used in containers and is especially nice trailing out of a hanging basket or a mixed planter or window box. Jamaican mint is a nice specimen aromatic plant for those who have the ability to overwinter it successfully.

Since most savories are small in leaf and stature, they are not easily incorporated into standard flower arrangements, but they are fabulous additions to tussie-mussies, small wedding bouquets, and wreaths or swags made with fresh herbs.

In the language of flowers savory stands for "mental powers". (Laufer 1993)

Like other aromatic herbs, savory is useful as a moth repellent and can be added to sachets for the closet or drawers.

Thus savories can be a delight in the garden as well as in the kitchen.



Tussie-mussie with winter savory, rosemary, myrtle, and rose hips  
by Mary Reeves, Pioneer Unit

-photo by Henry Flowers

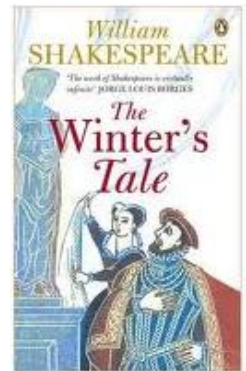


# Delight

## Savory in Literature

Following is an interesting array of savory mentioned in a variety of publications:

- "...the Summer kind is ... both hotter and drier than the Winter kind...It expels tough phlegm from the chest and lungs, quickens the dull spirits in the lethargy, if the juice be snuffed up the nose; dropped into the eyes it clears them of thin cold humours proceeding from the brain...the juice...dropped in the ears removes noise and singing and deafness..." and "...outwardly applied with wheat flour as a poultice, it eases sciatica and palsied members."  
- Nicholas Culpepper, *Culpepper's Complete Herbal*, 1652.
- "Mercury claims dominion over this herb. Keep it dry by you all the year, if you love yourself and your ease, and it is a hundred pounds to a penny if you do not."  
- Nicholas Culpepper, *Culpepper's Complete Herbal*, 1652.
- In his 1783 *Flora Dietetica* Charles Bryant says of savory "...good against crudities of the stomach."
- "matrons were especially warned to have nothing to do with [them], as the plant was supposed to have disastrous effects on those about to become mothers."  
-Richard Folkard, *Plant Lore, Legends, and Lyrics*, 1892.
- Perdita: "Here's flowers for you; hot lavender, mints, savoury, marjoram; The marigold that goes to bed wi' the sun and with him rises weeping: These are flowers of middle summer, and I think they are given to men of middle age. You're very welcome."  
-William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, Act IV, Scene IV



- Herb of the satyr and mountainside,  
(Savor the flavor of savory),  
Colonists carried it far and wide  
(Favorite winter savory.)  
Standard with beans, it becomes supreme  
Sprinkled on salmon and baked ice cream -  
That is a dish for a gourmet's dream!  
(Savory winter savory.)  
-Elisabeth W. Morss, *Herbs of a Rhyming Gardener*

■ XXXVIII. Savory

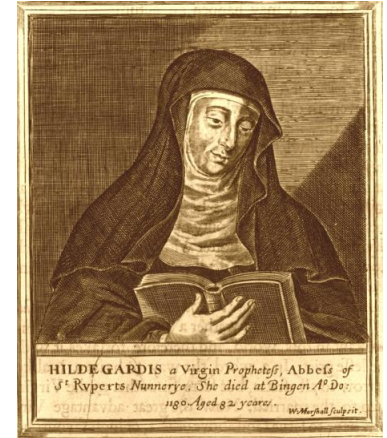
Savory (pefferkrut) is warm and moist. It has a moderate amount of moisture in it. It is good and useful for both the sick and healthy to eat. There is something sour, or bitter, in it which does not bite the inside, but makes the person healthy. Let whoever has a weak heart or a sick stomach eat it raw and it will strengthen the person. Also, a person who has a sad mind will be made happy if he or she eats savory. If eaten, it also heals and clears the eyes.

-Hildegard of Bingen, *Physica*

■ CLV. Summer Savory

Summer savory [satureia] is more warm than cold. Let a person who suffers from gout so that his or her limbs are always moving pulverize summer savory, add pulverized cumin, a little less of sage than the cumin, and mix these powders together in hydromel. Let the person drink this often, eating, and they will get better.

-Hildegard of Bingen, *Physica*



**Hildegard of Bingen**

Engraving by W. Marshall from *Fuller's Holy State*, published 1648.

## Myths and Folklore

Many savories of southern Europe have been associated with a mythological story of being eaten by satyrs so that they could obtain great sexual stamina. Some believe this to be the derivation of the genus name *Satureja*. According to Richard Folkard in his *Plant Lore, Legends, and Lyrics* of 1892 "matrons were especially warned to have nothing to do with [them], as the plant was supposed to have disastrous effects on those about to become mothers." Over time summer savory (*Satureja hortensis*) became associated with an ability to increase the libido, while winter savory (*S. montana*) became associated with a libido lessening effect.

The noted French herbalist Maurice Messegue claimed that savory was an essential ingredient in all love potions that he made for couples (Nolte 2014 ).



-photo by Henry Flowers

# Recipes

Abbreviations: C = cup  
Tbsp = tablespoon  
tsp = teaspoon  
lb = pound  
oz = ounce

## Savory Vinegar

For summer savory vinegar, fill jar  $\frac{3}{4}$  full of plant material. For winter savory vinegar, fill jar  $\frac{1}{3}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  full of plant material (winter savory is stronger in flavor). Add a clove or two of garlic if you wish. Fill jar with white wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar. If using a metal lid, place at least two layers of plastic wrap between jar and lid to prevent corrosion of the metal. Place in dark place for 10 days to 2 weeks, shaking occasionally. Taste frequently until desired flavor is obtained. -Sara Holland, Hill Country Unit

# Appetizers

## Crabmeat-Cheese and Lemon Savory Appetizer

1 6oz can crabmeat  
4oz Neufchatel cheese  
1/4 C Henri's Tas-tee Homestyle Dressing or 1/4 C Miracle Whip  
1/4 tsp celery seed  
1 Tbsp fresh lemon savory, finely chopped (or 2 tsp dried)

Mix all ingredients together and spoon into mini tart or phyllo shells.  
Bake at 350°F for 18-20 minutes.

**Carol Czechowski**, Southern Michigan Unit

## Cream Cheese with Herbes de Provence and Garlic

1 lb cream cheese at room temperature  
2 -3 Tbsp half-and-half or milk  
10 parsley sprigs, leaves minced  
4-5 savory sprigs, leaves minced  
4-5 marjoram sprigs, leaves minced  
4-5 fennel or dill sprigs, leaves minced  
About 2 tsp fresh lavender flowers  
2 garlic cloves, crushed  
1/4 tsp salt  
pinch of cayenne pepper  
1 tsp herb or white wine vinegar, optional

Cream the cheese, adding half-and-half if the cheese is dry. Add the herbs, garlic, 1/4 tsp salt, and a pinch of cayenne to the cream cheese. Blend the mixture well, cover tightly and refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving.

The cheese improves in flavor after a day and may be kept for 2 – 3 days tightly-covered and refrigerated.

**Susan Belsinger**, Potomac Unit

### Savory Phyllo Triangles

1/2 lb phyllo dough, about 18 sheets

3 Tbsp unsalted butter, melted

3 Tbsp olive oil

3 1/2 oz goat cheese, at room temperature

8 oz ricotta cheese

1 bunch scallions, sliced thin and including about 4" of green

1 Tbsp minced summer savory (12 sprigs), or about 3/4 Tbsp minced winter savory (8 sprigs)  
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste



Thaw phyllo and keep covered according to package instructions. Warm the melted butter with the olive oil. Thoroughly mix the goat cheese, ricotta, sliced scallions, and minced savory. (If the goat cheese is not soft enough at room temperature to mix with the ricotta, it can be grated and slicely warmed). Season the mixture to taste with salt and pepper.

Cut the phyllo into thirds along the length of dough, and work with one phyllo strip at a time on a baking sheet lightly brushed with the butter/oil mixture. Butter a 2 inch wide section at the end of the strip, and fold the buttered section onto the strip. Then brush the entire strip lightly with the butter/oil mixture. Place a heaping tsp of filling onto the folded section, then fold the phyllo over it to form a triangle. Brush lightly with butter/oil mixture and fold again to form another triangle. Repeat until triangle is complete. Brush the top and bottom lightly with butter/oil mixture and place on a baking sheet. Repeat until all triangles are formed. The recipe may be prepared ahead to this point.

Cover the finished triangles tightly with plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator or up to a day. To serve, preheat oven to 350°F. Bake triangles until light golden brown, about 15-20 minutes, changing the position of the baking sheets half way through the baking period. Serve hot on a warm platter.

**Carolyn Dille**, *The Herb Companion*, February/March 1991

### White Bean Dip with Red Caviar and Pink Savory

1 15 oz can white cannelloni beans

2 cloves garlic, finely minced

1 Tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice

1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1 tsp finely chopped fresh pink savory leaves

red pepper sauce to taste

1 four-ounce jar red lumpfish roe caviar

Strain the cannelloni beans, and reserve the liquid. In a medium mixing bowl, combine the beans and garlic. With the back of a large spoon, crush cannelloni beans against the sides of the bowl, mixing well with the garlic. Add the lemon juice, olive oil, pink savory, and the red pepper sauce. Combine well. Thin the mixture with some of the reserved bean liquid if a thinner consistency is desired. Gently fold in the caviar, taking care not to crush the caviar eggs. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour to allow the flavors to meld. When ready to serve, spoon mixture into a serving dish. Serve with crackers or leaves of Belgian endive.

**Carol Saville**, *Exotic Herbs*, 1997



# Breads

## Savory Cheese Biscuits

- ½ lb salted butter (2 sticks)
- 1 lb double Gloucester or sharp cheddar, grated and room temperature
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp chopped fresh chives
- 3 Tbsp chopped fresh savory
- 1 tsp cayenne powder
- 2 ½ C white flour
- 2 C walnut or pecan pieces (optional)

Blend butter and cheese together. (A food processor or hand mixer works well for this.) Add garlic, chives, savory, and pepper, mixing thoroughly. Slowly add the flour until you have a stiff dough.

Divide dough into portions, and roll out, one portion at a time, to ¼-inch thickness on a lightly floured board. Cut into rounds, or use decorative cookie cutter with a fork, make a criss-cross pattern in each. Place on baking sheet in preheated 375 degree F. oven for about 10 – 12 minutes until slightly golden. Cool: store in airtight container in refrigerator for several weeks, or freeze. Makes approximately 5 dozen biscuits.

**Lucinda Hutson**, *The Herb Garden Cookbook* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), 1987

## Savory Swiss Crackers

- 1 C unbleached white flour
- ¾ C whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 8 Tbsp unsalted butter, softened
- ½ C finely grated Gruyere or other Swiss cheese
- 3 Tbsp summer savory, finely minced or  
1 ½ tsp dried, crumbled savory
- 6 Tbsp ice water



Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Sift together the flours, baking powder and salt. Cut in the butter. Add the cheese and savory and stir together. Add the ice water, 1 Tbsp at a time, until the dough is medium stiff. Roll the dough about 3/16 inch thick on a floured surface and cut into 2-inch diamond shapes.

Prick the crackers lightly with a fork and place on baking sheets. Bake for 15 minutes or until the crackers are a medium golden brown. Cool on racks and store in a tightly covered tin.

Yields approximately 3 ½ dozen.

**Susan Belsinger and Carolyn Dille**, *Cooking with Herbs*, 1984

# Soups & Stews

## Black and White Bean Soup with Savory

1 lb small, dried black beans  
1 lb small, dried white beans  
2 medium garlic cloves  
10 – 12 summer savory sprigs, or 2 tsp crumbled, dried savory  
6 Tbsp red wine vinegar  
4 large, fresh (or canned) jalapeño peppers  
½ C olive oil  
salt to taste  
Garnish: 6 – 8 nasturtium flowers

Rinse beans and soak them overnight. Drain, rinse well, and pick over. Place in pot; cover with 2 – 3 inches of water and simmer about 1 ½ hours, or until tender.

Mince garlic and jalapeños and add to pot. Stem savory, mince it, and add to beans.

Add red wine vinegar and olive oil and simmer soup for about 10 minutes.

Puree soup in blender. Adjust seasoning. Ladle into soup bowl and garnish with nasturtium blossoms.

Serves 6 to 8

Adapted from *Cooking with Herbs*, 1984 - **Susan Belsinger and Carolyn Dille**

## Savory – Chickpea and Lentil Soup

2 Tbsp butter  
1 onion, chopped  
2 ribs celery, chopped  
1/2 tsp ground ginger  
¼ tsp turmeric  
1/8 tsp ground cinnamon  
1 tsp savory  
1 ¾ tsp salt  
1 ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper  
1 C lentils  
6 ½ C water  
1 ¾ C crushed tomatoes, or one 15 oz can  
1 2/3 C cooked chickpeas, or one 15oz can, drained and rinsed  
1/3 C chopped cilantro or parsley



In large pot, melt butter. Add onion and celery. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables start to soften, -10 minutes. Stir in ginger, turmeric, cinnamon, savory, salt, pepper, and lentils.

Add water and tomatoes to the pot. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, partially covered, stirring occasionally until lentils are tender, 25-30 minutes. Add chickpeas and simmer 5 minutes longer. Stir in cilantro or parsley. Serves 4.

Adaptation of a recipe from *foodandwine.com*, 2014

## Stifátho (Greek Beef Stew)

This hearty stew is a celebration in itself, filling the kitchen with the comforting aromas of cinnamon, spice and savory in a slightly sweet and tangy tomato sauce. I serve it on Christmas and other festive occasions. Richard Cilley, a scholarly bon vivant shared a version of this recipe with me for the first edition of *The Herb Garden Cookbook* when first published 28 years ago. He's now dancing somewhere with Zorba and I wish that he could sit at the table with me once again.

Richard served Stifátho over noodles garnished with crumbled feta and walnuts, while my dear friend Carol Barnwell's Greek grandmother Eleni Staliopoulos simmered the stew until the meat was fork tender in its "delicious gravy", then served it atop elbow macaroni layered with Myzithra, a salty Greek cheese. It's tasty over rice too, though I can just eat it by the bowlful!

Stifátho tastes even better made a day in advance; reheat it slowly on low heat, adding splashes of wine or water, as will have thickened quite a bit (great recipe for a slow cooker). For party fare, mound Stifátho (made day before) in shallow tapas dishes sprinkled with walnut halves along with a slab of feta, a lemon slice, and a few Greek olives and get ready for rave reviews! Serve with an appetizer fork....and a glass of robust Naoussa Boutari (dry Greek red wine.)

½ C best quality olive oil plus 2 tablespoons  
3 lbs lean chuck or rump roast, cut into ¾-1 inch cubes, seasoned with salt and pepper  
1 chopped white onion  
6 cloves garlic, chopped  
½ tsp crushed, dried cayenne (optional)  
2 C dry red wine  
1 14.5 ounce can of diced fire-roasted tomatoes  
1 6-ounce can tomato paste  
4 Tbsp Mediterranean Marinade Vinegar or Oregano Chile Garlic Vinegar or red wine vinegar  
[see chapter of herb vinegars in *Herb Garden Cookbook*]  
2 tsp brown sugar  
½ tsp whole allspice, freshly ground  
½ tsp pepper, freshly ground  
2 3-inch sticks cinnamon  
1 2-inch sprig rosemary  
1 tsp dried oregano  
4 bay leaves  
salt to taste  
2 lbs small boiling onions or pearl onions with papery skin peeled away  
2 Tbsp chopped fresh savory  
thick piece of peel from ½ orange

### Garnishes:

½ C walnut pieces (optional)  
8 ounces feta cheese cut into ½-inch cubes (optional)  
freshly chopped savory

In a large Dutch oven, heat ½ cup olive oil over medium–high heat. (This much oil is essential for flavor). In small batches (to prevent overcrowding), brown beef evenly on all sides. Remove with slotted spoon and set aside.

Discard remaining oil and wipe out pan. Add 1 Tblsp olive oil and cook onions over medium heat until translucent, adding garlic and cayenne towards the end. Stir in the red wine and the tomato paste and simmer for 5 minutes. Add tomato paste, vinegar, sugar, ground spices and cinnamon sticks along with the beef, savory, rosemary, oregano, and bay, and salt. Bring to a boil; immediately reduce heat. Cover and simmer for about 1½ hours, until meat is tender.

While stew simmers, heat remaining 1 Tblsp olive oil and 2 Tblsp butter in a large sauté pan. Season onions with salt and pepper and sprinkle with fresh savory and cayenne. Add onions to stew and simmer uncovered for another 30 minutes until meat is tender. Add orange zest the last 5 minutes of cooking. Garnish and serve. Serves 6–8

NOTES:

-Mexican oregano (*Poliomintha bustamanta*) or fresh thyme and oregano may be substituted for savory.

-If using fresh summer savory, add it just before serving.

**Lucinda Hutson**, HSA Member-at-Large

### Zucchini Saga Soup

1 ½ lbs zucchini  
3 slices bacon, cut into ¼ inch pieces  
1 onion, chopped  
3 ¼ C chicken broth  
1 tsp fresh thyme  
1 ½ tsp fresh summer savory  
4 oz Danish Saga blue cheese

In a large saucepan fry bacon until crisp. Discard fat. Add chopped zucchini, onion, 1 cup chicken broth, and herbs to pan with bacon and simmer until zucchini and onions are soft, about 15 minutes.

Add remaining chicken broth and cheese. Puree in blender in small batches. Return to pan and keep warm over low heat until ready to serve. Ladle into bowls, garnish with thyme sprigs, and serve.

*Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs, 2007*

## Salads and Salad Dressings

### Savory Three-Bean Salad

1 lb cooked green or yellow beans  
About 1 1/2 C cooked or 15-ounce can each kidney & garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed  
1/2 C chopped red onion  
1/2 C chopped celery  
Salt and freshly ground pepper



1/4 to 1/3 C olive oil with 2 to 3 cloves minced garlic  
2 tsp lemon juice  
2 tsp red or white wine vinegar  
2 tsp pure maple syrup or 1 Tbsp sweet pickle juice  
1 to 2 tsp Dijon-style mustard  
1 1/2 Tbsp fresh savory, minced  
1 Tbsp fresh marjoram, minced  
1 to 2 tsp fresh minced parsley

Drain beans, toss with onion & celery and season lightly with salt and freshly ground pepper. In a glass measuring cup or bowl, combine the olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, vinegar, maple syrup or pickle juice, mustard, and herbs and combine well with a fork. Pour the vinaigrette over the salad and toss well.

Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Taste for seasoning and adjust as necessary adding a little more vinegar, lemon juice, syrup or pickle juice or mustard. Serve or refrigerate; this salad is quite good made ahead. About 15 to 20 minutes before serving, remove from refrigerator, so it will be served at cool room temperature. Serves 8 to 10.

**Susan Belsinger**, Potomac Unit

### Savory Green Bean Salad

1 1/2 lbs fresh green beans, cut in half with ends trimmed  
1/4 C white wine vinegar  
3 Tbsp fresh lemon juice  
1 tsp dried mustard  
1/2 tsp brown sugar  
1 Tbsp minced red onion  
1 Tbsp finely chopped fresh savory  
1/4 tsp freshly ground white pepper  
salt to taste  
1/2 C best quality olive oil  
2 6oz jars marinated artichoke hearts, drained  
1/2 medium-size red onion, sliced into thin rings, plus 2 Tbsp minced red onion  
2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley  
2 Tbsp chopped fresh savory



Steam green beans with a few sprigs of savory until crisp-tender (do not overcook); immediately plunge into ice water. Drain and pat dry.

Mix vinegar, lemon juice, mustard, sugar, minced onion, chopped savory, salt, and pepper; slowly drizzle in the olive oil. Gently toss the green beans in the vinaigrette, adding the other ingredients. Sprinkle with freshly grated white pepper and salt if desired.

Serves 6

**Lucinda Hutson**, *The Herb Garden Cookbook* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), 1987

### Classic Herbal Dressing

1 C vegetable or olive oil  
1/4 C lemon juice or red wine vinegar  
1/4 C water  
1/3 C fresh parsley leaves and tender stems  
2 Tbsp fresh marjoram, chopped  
1 Tbsp fresh savory, chopped  
2 Tbsp fresh basil, chopped  
1/2 tsp celery seed  
1 clove garlic  
1 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp hot pepper sauce

Place all ingredients in a blender and mix at low speed until nearly smooth, then at high speed for about 30 seconds. Taste for salt. Use for salad greens or to marinate cooked or raw vegetables. Makes 1 1/2 cups.

**Madalene Hill and Gwen Barclay**, *Southern Herb Growing*, 1987

## Main Dishes

### Apple, Bacon and Gruyere Quiche

One 10-inch tart crust  
4 oz bacon cut into 1/4-inch strips  
2 Golden Delicious apples, peeled and cored, halved, and cut into 1/2" dice  
2 C coarsely grated Gruyere cheese  
1 Tbsp unbleached all-purpose flour  
1 1/2 C half and half  
3 large eggs  
1 1/2 tsp fresh winter savory, chopped fine  
1/4 tsp salt  
pinch ground white pepper

Set rack at lowest level in oven and preheat to 400°F.

Cook bacon slowly over medium heat until crisp. Lift from fat with slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Cool and spread in the tart crust.

Drain most of bacon fat from the pan and add the apples. Cook over medium heat, stirring often, until the apples are tender. Cool and scatter in the crust on the bacon.

Toss the cheese with the flour and evenly distribute it on the apples in the crust. Whisk the remaining ingredients together and pour over the cheese.

Set the tart in the oven and immediately lower the temperature to 375°F. Bake the tart until the crust is baked through and the filling is set, about 30 minutes.

Cool the tart in the pan on a rack for a few minutes before serving.

Serves 8

Adapted from *Pastry*, 2014- **Nick Malgieri**

### Company Casserole with Lemon Savory

- 2 cans artichoke hearts – drained
- 5 chicken breasts – cooked and chopped
- 1 can Cream of Mushroom Soup
- 1 can Cream of Chicken soup
- 1 C Hellman’s Mayonnaise
- ½ tsp curry powder
- 1 Tbsp Lemon juice
- 1 heaping Tbsp dried lemon savory
- 1 ½ C sharp cheddar cheese – shredded

Mix soups, mayo, curry powder, lemon juice and lemon savory together  
Layer artichokes, chicken, spread soup mixture over all. Sprinkle with shredded cheese. Cover with foil Bake 1 hour at 325°F.

- Topping: 1 C corn flakes – crushed  
4 Tbsp melted butter.

Mix together. Remove foil and add topping. Bake in oven for 10 minutes

**Carol Czechowski, Southern Michigan Unit**

### Savory Elegant Chicken

- 6 chicken breasts, cut into 1 ½” pieces
- 4 Tbsp butter, divided
- 2 Tbsp canola oil
- 1 medium onion, medium diced,
- 6 carrots, peeled and cut into coins
- 1 C chicken stock
- 1 C white wine
- 1/4C chopped winter savory
- 1 ½ tsp salt
- ¾ tsp black pepper
- ½ lb mushrooms
- 1 5oz can artichoke hearts
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 C skim milk
- 1/3 C flour



Heat oven to 375°F.

Cut chicken breasts and cook until browned in half the butter and all of the oil in a pan with a heavy bottom. Remove chicken pieces . Cook onion, carrots and savory in pan drippings until onions are translucent. Stir in salt, pepper, chicken broth and wine and bring to a boil. Add to chicken and place in oven. Cook for ½ hour.

After the chicken has been in oven about 20 minutes, cut the mushrooms in half and sauté in remaining butter. Add the mushrooms and artichoke hearts to the chicken mix. Cook about 20 minutes for flavors to blend.

Strain off the broth into the heavy bottomed pan. Whisk egg yolk, milk and flour and add to the broth to thicken it. Adjust seasonings and serve over noodles, rice, or a baked potato.

*Many More Good Thymes in the Kitchen*, The Thyme Garden Herb Co., 2013

### Savory Meat Cakes

½ lb ground beef  
¼ lb ground veal  
1/4lb ground pork  
1 small onion, finely diced  
2 tsp minced, fresh winter savory, or 1 scant tsp. crumbled, dried winter savory  
½ tsp freshly ground allspice  
¾ tsp salt  
1 egg  
½ C fine, dry bread crumbs  
1 garlic clove, minced  
2 Tblsp unsalted butter  
½ C dry white wine  
6 peppercorns  
2 whole cloves

Blend the meats, onion, savory, allspice, salt, egg, bread crumbs, and garlic together. Pat the mixture into 8 fat cakes, about 2 ½ inches in diameter. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Sauté the cakes 5 – 6 minutes on each side, until the meat is browned.

Add the wine, peppercorns, and cloves. Simmer over medium heat until the wine evaporates, about 7 minutes. Serve hot.

Serves 4.

**Susan Belsinger and Carolyn Dille**, *Cooking with Herbs*, 1984

### Savory Roast Chicken

1 broiler/fryer chicken (2 1/2 – 3 lbs.)  
2 Tblsp butter, melted  
3 Tblsp lemon juice  
1 Tblsp fresh savory, minced or 1 tsp dried savory

Place chicken, breast side up, on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Combine butter, lemon juice, and savory; brush over chicken. Bake, uncovered, at 375°F for 1 ½ hours or until juices run clear, basting occasionally with the pan drippings.

4 servings

**Connie Moore**, Medway, OH



### Savory Zucchini Cornbread Casserole

3 medium zucchini, cut into  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch cubes  
1 C butter or 1/2 C butter and 1/2 C olive oil  
4 carrots, peeled and diced  
1 large onion, chopped  
1 C sour cream  
1 can cream of mushroom soup  
2 Tbsp savory, chopped  
1 tsp salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp black pepper  
1 C prepared cornbread, crumbled



Preheat oven to 350°F.

Melt butter in large cast iron skillet. Sauté zucchini, carrots and onion until onions are translucent and zucchini and carrots are tender. Remove from heat.

Spray 9 x 13 pan.

In a large bowl mix sour cream, soup, savory, salt and pepper. Add in sautéed vegetables. Add the cornbread and mix evenly throughout. Pour into pan and bake 30 minutes (until bubbly).

Let stand for a few minutes and serve.

-Optional additions: 1/2 C sautéed mushrooms; 1 jalapeño, minced; 1/2 C whole kernel corn; 1/2 cup cubed cooked chicken.

**Sara Holland**, Hill Country Unit

### Thin Crust Yellow Squash and Asparagus Pizza

1 flatbread (I use multi-grain flatbread)  
1 medium roasted yellow squash, sliced thin  
6 asparagus spears, chopped  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  C shredded cheddar or parmesan cheese  
1 Tbsp fresh lemon savory, chopped

Preheat oven to 375°F. Place flatbread on a cookie sheet and bake 2 minutes. Remove from oven. Top flatbread with yellow squash, asparagus, herbs and cheese. Return to oven for 4 more minutes or until cheese melts.

**Carol Czsechowski**, Southern Michigan Unit

### Tourtière - Spiced Meat Pie

A stuffed meat pie that is seasoned with savory herbs and served traditionally around the holidays in Canada. Each family has their version of Tourtière. This is said to be the authentic version.

$\frac{3}{4}$  lb extra-lean ground beef  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  lb ground pork  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  C onion, finely dice  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp garlic, minced  
1 Tbsp olive oil  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  C potato, diced

1/4 C carrot, finely diced  
1/4 C celery, finely diced  
Approximately 1/2 C chicken stock  
1 Tblsp sage, dried and rubbed  
1/2 tsp dried winter savory, freshly ground  
1/2 tsp black pepper, freshly ground  
1/2 tsp white pepper, freshly ground  
1/2 tsp dried thyme, freshly ground  
1/2 tsp fine sea salt  
1/2 tsp dried rosemary, freshly ground  
1/4 tsp cloves, freshly ground  
Top and bottom crusts for a 9" pie (store bought or your favorite recipe)



Brown the ground meats together in a large skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Drain off any excess liquid, and set aside.

In a small skillet, cook the onion and garlic in the oil over medium heat, stirring, until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the potato, carrot, and celery and cook, stirring, until tender, adding stock as necessary to prevent scorching. Remove from the heat.

Grind the herbs and spices together in a coffee mill, and stir into the reserved meat. Add the vegetables and mix well. Allow the filling to cool completely.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 375°F. Line a 9-inch pie plate with the bottom crust, and spoon in the cooled filling. Cover with the top crust and crimp the edges to seal. Cut 2 or 3 steam vents in the top crust. Bake for 45 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown and the filling is piping hot. Serve, along with roasted vegetables spiced with the same savory herbs, to even the hungriest of hockey players.

Serves 4.

**Tony Hill**, *The Contemporary Encyclopedia of Herbs & Spices*, 2004

## Vegetables

### Broccoli-Cauliflower Casserole

16oz frozen broccoli or cauliflower flowerets (or half of each)  
10 oz can of cream of mushroom or celery soup  
4 oz. shredded cheddar cheese  
2 Tblsp diced fresh savory or 1 tsp dried  
¼ C mayonnaise

Mix all ingredients. Bake covered at 350°F for 30 minutes or until cooked.

**Edna McCallion**, Member at Large

### Corn Relish with Savory

1 ½ C roasted bell peppers, finely diced (mix of red and green is best)  
1 small jalapeño, finely diced (seed and remove placenta for less heat)  
3-4 large cloves of roasted garlic, mashed  
16 oz bag of frozen corn, thawed  
½ red onion, finely diced  
¾ C vinegar  
½ C sugar  
heaping ¼ tsp turmeric powder  
1 Tblsp savory, finely chopped or, if dry, crushed  
¼ tsp celery seed  
Salt to taste



In a large bowl mix the peppers, garlic, corn and onion.

In a saucepan mix the vinegar, sugar, turmeric, savory and celery seed. Bring to a boil.

Pour over the pepper and corn mixture and stir.

Serve warm or cold.

**Melissa Flowers, Brenham, Texas**

### Green Beans with Savory and Shallots

1 lb very tender green beans, ¼ inch thick and 3 – 4 inches long  
small red pepper  
¼ C imported, oil-cured olives  
2 medium shallots  
6-8 sprigs summer or winter savory  
About ¼ C extra virgin olive oil (use your best)  
1 ½ – 2 Tblsp red wine vinegar  
salt and pepper

Trim and clean the beans. Blanch them in lightly salted water until just tender, about 1 minute. Refresh under cold water and pat dry.

Clean and seed the red pepper. Cut lengthwise into 1/8 inch strips. Pit and halve the olives.

Dice the shallots very finely. Stem the savory and roughly chop the leaves.

Mix the olive oil with 1 ½ Tblsp. vinegar, shallots, and savory. Salt and pepper the vinaigrette lightly.

Toss the beans, red pepper, and olives with the vinaigrette. Cover and marinate 3 – 4 hours, or overnight, in the refrigerator. Bring salad to cool room temperature before serving.

Serves 4 to 6

**Susan Belsinger and Carolyn Dille, *Cooking with Herbs*, 1984**

### Harvest Vegetable Bake

2 medium zucchini, sliced  
2 yellow summer squash, sliced  
1 large onion, sliced  
3 large tomatoes, sliced  
2 Tblsp olive oil

4oz goat cheese  
1 tsp salt  
½ tsp black pepper  
1/3 C sliced black olives, drained  
3 Tbsp fresh thyme, chopped  
1 Tbsp fresh savory, chopped  
2 tsp fresh rosemary, minced  
¾ C freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Optional: ¾ lb. mild Italian sausage

Preheat oven to 375°F. If using sausage, crumble and fry in a sauté pan.

Brush olive oil across the bottom of a 9-by-13 inch baking dish. Line the pan with the sliced squash, half the tomatoes, and half the onions. Add the crumbled cheese and sausage, if using. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, half the thyme and half the rosemary. Spread olives across the dish.

Add another layer of tomatoes, onions, salt and pepper, thyme, savory, and rosemary. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese over all.

Bake, uncovered, for an hour or so, until vegetables are tender and bubbly. Watch closely the last 15 minutes ---if onions begin to burn, reduce heat and cover lightly.

*Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs, 2011*

### **Marinated Tomatoes with Lemon and Summer Savory**

3 tomatoes, cut into 6 wedges each  
1/4 C fresh lemon juice  
1 tsp sugar  
1 tsp olive oil  
1/2 tsp chopped fresh savory (or 1/4 tsp dried)  
1/4 tsp salt  
1/8 tsp ground red pepper  
1 garlic clove, minced

Place tomato wedges in a medium bowl.

Combine remaining ingredients in a separate bowl and whisk. Pour dressing over tomatoes; toss gently to coat. Let stand one hour, stirring occasionally. Serve with a slotted spoon.

**Sandra Granseth**, [www.myrecipes.com](http://www.myrecipes.com)

### **Savory Onions**

6 large Vidalia onions  
2 Tbsp butter  
1 Tbsp fresh savory leaves, chopped fine  
sea salt to taste

Preheat oven to 350°F. Wash the onions without peeling them. Place in a shallow baking dish and bake for 1 1/2 hours or until tender. Remove from oven, remove the skins and season with butter, savory and salt. Yields 6 servings.



To prepare dish in microwave, remove skins from onions and place in a microwave safe dish. Dot with butter and cook for 5 minutes on high. When done, remove from microwave and season with salt and fresh savory.

**Eleanor Davis**, Western Pennsylvania Unit

## *Desserts*

### **Baked Apples with Savory**

2/3 C water

1/3 C sugar

8 sprigs summer savory or 4 sprigs winter savory

5 Tbsp unsalted butter

1/3 C walnuts or pecans

6 medium sized apples (2 1/2 lbs) ('Gravenstein', 'Winesap', 'Empire', or 'McIntosh' are best)

Make a syrup by combining the water, sugar, and savory sprigs in a saucepan. Simmer about 10 minutes. Remove from heat.

Meanwhile preheat oven to 375°F.

Melt 4 Tbsp of the butter. Use the remaining Tbsp to butter a baking dish.

Chop the nuts coarsely.

Wash and core the apples, being careful not to pierce the blossom (bottom) ends. Cut out a little extra flesh from the apples as you remove the cores.

Remove the savory from the syrup, then mix the syrup and melted butter together.

Divide the chopped nuts among the apples, filling the hollows loosely.

Pour the syrup-butter mixture over the nuts.

Bake for 30 minutes or until apples are tender.

Allow to cool for 15 minutes before serving or serve at room temperature.

Garnish with savory sprigs and whipped cream if desired.

**Carolyn Dille**, *The Herb Companion*, February/March 1991

### **Savory & Lemon Slice and Bake Cookies**

2/3 C granulated sugar

4 Tbsp packed light brown sugar

1 tsp salt

3 Tbsp fresh summer savory leaves or 1 1/2 to 2 Tbsp fresh winter savory

Zest of 2 lemons

3 sticks unsalted butter, cut into pieces & softened

2 tsp vanilla extract

2 large egg yolks

3 C all-purpose flour

Process the two sugars, salt, savory, and lemon zest in a food processor until no lumps of brown sugar remain, about one minute. Add butter, vanilla, and egg yolks and process until smooth,

about 30 seconds. Scrape down the sides of the processor bowl, add the flour, and pulse until dough forms.

Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface, divide it into three equal parts, and roll into 3 10-inch logs. Wrap tightly in waxed paper or plastic wrap and refrigerate until firm, at least 2 hours or up to 3 days. It can also be kept frozen for many months if also wrapped in aluminum foil and placed in a large freezer bag - thaw a bit before slicing and baking or it may be brittle.

Heat oven to 350°F. Lightly butter baking sheets or cover with parchment paper. Slice dough into ¼ inch thick discs and place 1 inch apart on baking sheets. Bake until edges are just golden brown - about 15 minutes. Let cool on sheets for 10 minutes and transfer to cooling racks to cool completely. Repeat with remaining dough. Serve and enjoy!

**Henry Flowers, Pioneer Unit**

### Savory and Lemon Crumb Cake

1 ¼ C all-purpose flour  
2/3 C sugar  
1/8 tsp salt  
¼ C (1/2 stick) chilled butter, cut in small pieces  
1 Tblsp fresh savory, minced  
½ tsp baking powder  
¼ tsp baking soda  
1/3 C buttermilk  
2 Tblsp fresh lemon juice  
1 large egg  
2 tsp fine lemon zest  
¾ tsp water  
savory sprigs and lemon slices for garnish



Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease and flour an 8" round cake pan.

Combine flour, sugar, and salt in a bowl. Cut in the butter with a pastry cutter or two knives until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Reserve ½ cup of the mixture for topping and set aside. Combine the remaining flour mixture with the savory, baking powder, and baking soda. Add the buttermilk, lemon juice, and egg and combine with a mixer at medium speed until well blended. Spoon the batter into the cake pan. Add the lemon zest and water to the reserved ½ cup of flour mixture and blend with a fork. Sprinkle this crumb mixture over the cake batter and bake for 30 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean. Cool on a rack and garnish with savory sprigs and lemon slices.

**Henry Flowers, Pioneer Unit**

### Savory Pecan Crisps

3 Tblsp fresh summer savory or 2 Tblsp fresh winter savory  
2 C sugar  
2 C unsalted butter  
3 C flour  
2 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp cream of tartar  
½ tsp salt  
1 C pecans, toasted and chopped

4 C corn flakes

Process savory leaves with sugar in food processor until very fine.

In separate bowl cream butter with mixer until fluffy and add sugar and beat for another minute.

Mix dry ingredients together in a separate bowl. Slowly add dry ingredients to butter-sugar mixture just until well-combined. Gently fold in pecans and corn flakes.

Roll into 1 inch balls and bake at 350° for about 15 minutes or until lightly browned.

\* - can also substitute ¼ C rose geranium leaves, 6 tsp ground lavender, ½ C fresh lemon verbena leaves, or any other desired herb or spice in place of the savory. 2 Tbsp finely chopped rosemary is great too!

**Henry Flowers**, Pioneer Unit

## *Simple Ideas: Sauces, Blends and Extras*

### **Herb Butter with Savory**

1 lb butter, softened

4 tsp lemon juice

1 garlic clove, minced

1 tsp each: fresh oregano, chives, thyme, rosemary, tarragon and summer savory

Mix together all ingredients. Allow at least 1/2 hour for the flavors to blend. This may be frozen.

**Gloria Hartung**, Gardens at Gantz Farm, Grove City, OH

### **Homemade Soup Powder**

The Shakers were the first to advertise using herbs in homemade recipes such as this soup powder. From Miss Beecher, 1859, The Colonial Williamsburg Library.

"Dry and pound one ounce of lemon peel, basil, thyme, sweet marjoram, summer savory, a few celery seeds, and 2 ounces of parsley. Bottle tight. Use to season soup or sauces."

**Judith Griffin**, *Mother Nature's Herbal*, 2008

### **Mustard Marinade with Summer Savory**

2 Tbsp Dijon mustard

1 Tbsp red wine vinegar

¼ C olive oil

1 Tbsp dried summer savory, crumbled, or 3 Tbsp fresh summer savory, chopped fine

1 Tbsp water

In a bowl whisk together mustard, vinegar, oil, summer savory, water, and salt and pepper to taste. In a baking dish large enough to hold your meat of choice in one layer, coat meat with marinade and let stand, covered, at room temperature 15 minutes. Cook on a prepared grill until done.

Great on meats such as pork ribs, pork chops, beef steaks, or stronger-flavored fish.

-adapted from a recipe at [www.epicurious.com](http://www.epicurious.com)

## No Salt Seasoning

4 oz dried basil  
2 oz dried savory  
1 oz dried cumin  
2 oz dried sage  
2 oz celery seed  
1 oz dried thyme  
1 oz dried marjoram

Weigh all ingredients and mix together in large bowl. This recipe makes 12 oz, which is about 1 ½ C. Can be put in jelly jars and stored in freezer.

A great gift for those watching their sodium intake.

*Herbal Harvest Collection, 1995*

## Piquant Green Sauce for Meats

½ C extra virgin olive oil  
2 Tbsp white wine vinegar  
2 Tbsp water  
¼ tsp sugar  
½ tsp salt  
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper  
1 Tbsp each chopped fresh chives, sorrel, parsley, watercress or nasturtium leaves, savory, dill, tarragon, and chervil (if some seasonal herbs are not available, use more of the others)  
1 Tbsp finely chopped yellow onion  
1 Tbsp finely chopped leeks, white portion only  
2 hard-boiled eggs, finely chopped

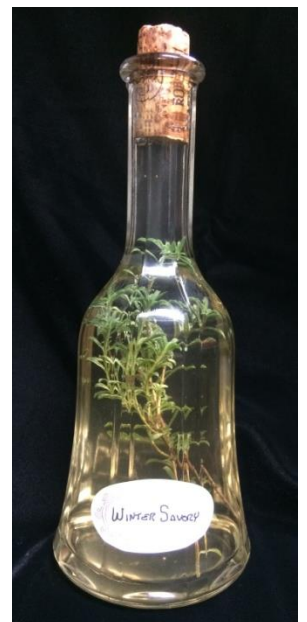
Using a wire whisk, combine olive oil and vinegar in a medium bowl to emulsify. Add sugar, salt, and pepper, mixing well. Fold in chopped herbs, onion, leeks, and eggs; taste for seasoning. Serve at once or within several hours to maintain texture of eggs. Serve with cold or hot meats and poultry. Also good with duck.

*The Herb Society of America's Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs, 2007*

## Savory Vinegar

For summer savory vinegar, fill jar ¾ full of plant material. For winter savory vinegar, fill jar 1/3 to ½ full of plant material (winter savory is stronger in flavor). Add a clove or two of garlic if you wish. Fill jar with white wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar. If using a metal lid, place at least two layers of plastic wrap between jar and lid to prevent corrosion of the metal. Place in dark place for 10 days to 2 weeks, shaking occasionally. Taste frequently until desired flavor is obtained.

**Sara Holland**, Hill Country Unit



-photo by Henry Flowers



## Winter Savory Ale

1 gallon water  
1 1/2 C unhopped malt extract  
1 C brown sugar  
2 oz winter savory, fresh or dried  
1 tsp yeast  
1 gallon glass jar  
1 clear plastic bag  
1 elastic band  
1 unbleached muslin tea bag

Boil the malt extract, sugar, and water for 30 minutes. Add 1oz winter savory in a muslin tea bag and boil 10 more minutes. Strain and cover the wort, let cool to 70°F, and pour into clean fermenter. Dissolve the yeast in 1/2 C water and add to the wort. Cover and leave until fully fermented, about a week. Bottle and store in a cool place. Ready to drink in 2 weeks. It improves with age. For a spicier brew, try dry hopping. Let the wort ferment a couple of days, then add another ounce of winter savory in a teabag. Finish fermenting, remove the herb, and funnel into clean bottles.

**Jillian VanNostrand and Christie V. Sarles - Alewife's Garden 2002**

## Plant Sources

We don't recommend any particular source, but list here mail-order sources for these plants that we are aware of (as of Fall, 2014).

- B & T World Seeds, Route des Marchandes, Pagnignan, 34120 Aigues-Vives, France ++33 (0) 4 68 91 29 63 [www.b-and-t-world-seeds.com](http://www.b-and-t-world-seeds.com)  
-Seeds of *Satureja hortensis*, *S. hortensis* varieties 'Midget', 'Shortie', and 'Saturn', *S. montana*, *S. montana* subsp. *citriodora*, *S. multiflora*, *S. spinosa*, *S. subspicata*, *S. thymbra*, *Clinopodium acinos*, *C. creticum*, *C. grandiflorum*, *C. nepeta*, *C. vulgare*, *Micromeria biflora*, *M. brownei*, *M. douglasii*, and *M. rupestris*.
- Goodwin Creek Herbs, PO Box 83, Williams, OR 97544 97544 (800) 846-7359 [www.goodwincreekgardens.com](http://www.goodwincreekgardens.com)  
-Plants of: *Satureja montana* and *Clinopodium douglasii*
- Horizon Herbs, P.O. Box 69, Williams, Oregon 97544 (541) 846-6704 [www.horizonherbs.com](http://www.horizonherbs.com)  
- Seeds of: *Satureja montana*, *S. spinosa*, *S. thymbra*, and *Clinopodium multiflorum*
- Jelitto Perennial Seeds, 29685 Schwarmstedt, Postfach 1264, Deutschland 0 50 71/ 98 29-0 [www.jelitto.com](http://www.jelitto.com)  
-Seeds of: *Satureja hortensis*, *S. montana*, *S. montana* ssp. *illyrica*, *S. montana* var. *citriodora*, *S. spicigera*, *Micromeria thymifolia*, and *Clinopodium vulgare*.
- John Scheeper's Kitchen Garden Seeds, 23 Tulip Drive, PO Box 638, Bantam, CT 06750 (860) 567-6086 [www.kitchengardenseeds.com](http://www.kitchengardenseeds.com)  
-Seeds of *Satureja hortensis* 'Aromata' and *S. montana*.

- Johnny's Select Seeds, 955 Benton Avenue, Winslow, Maine 04901-2601 (877) 564-6697 www.Johnyseeds.com  
-Seeds of *Satureja hortensis* and *S. montana*.
- Mountain Valley Growers, 38325 Pepperweed Rd., Squaw Valley, CA (559) 338-2775 www.mountainvalleygrowers.com  
-Plants of: *Satureja montana*, *S. montana* 'Illyrica', and *S. thymbra*
- Richter's Herb Farm, 357 Hwy. 47, Goodwood, ON LOC 1A0 Canada (800) 668-4372 www.richtersherbs.com  
-*Satureja spicigera* (plants), *Satureja montana* (seed and plants), *Satureja hortensis* and *S. hortensis* 'Midget' (seeds), *Satureja montana citriodora* (seeds), *Clinopodium douglasii* (plants), *C. serpyllifolium* subsp. *fruticosum* (aka: *M. fruticosa*) (plants), *C. vimineum* (plants), *C. vulgare* (seeds) and *Micromeria biflora*.
- Sandy Mush Herb Farm, 316 Surret Cove Rd., Leicester, NC 28748 (828) 683-2014 www.sandymushherbs.com  
- Plants of: *Satureja montana*, *Satureja montana* 'Adamovica', *S. montana* var. *prostrata*, *S. thymbra*, *S. vulgaris*, and *Clinopodium vargasii*
- The Thyme Garden Herb Company, 20546 Alsea Highway, Alsea, OR 97324 (541) 487-8671 www.thymegarden.com  
-Seeds of: *Satureja hortensis*, *S. montana*, and *Micromeria biflora*
- Well-Sweep Herb Farm, 205 Mount Bethel Rd., Port Murray, NJ 07865-4147 (908) 852-5390 www.wellsweep.com  
-Plants of: *Satureja hortensis*, *S. hortensis* 'Aromata', *S. montana*, *S. montana* 'Adamovica', *S. montana* 'Illyrica', *S. montana* var. *prostrata*, *S. thymbra*, *Clinopodium douglasii*, *C. carolinianum*, *C. vargasii*, and *Micromeria biflora*.

## Herb Society of America Savory Survey

In May of 2014 we sent out the following survey to all members of The Herb Society of America.

### **Survey of Cultivation and Use of Savory, Herb of the Year 2015** **For The Herb Society of America Essential Guide to Savory**

We are interested in your knowledge and experience with Savory (*Satureja* spp.), the upcoming Herb of the Year for 2015. As the editor of the Essential Guide to Savory – 2015, I would like to include the knowledge and experience of growing and using savories by members of The Herb Society of America across the country. The sharing of your information about savories will benefit all the members of HSA. Please take a few minutes to answer this survey and please include any recipes, folklore, anecdotes and additional information on this wonderful and underutilized genus of herbs.

Henry Flowers, HSA Pioneer Unit and HSA Essential Guide to Savory Editor

#### **Information About Yourself:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

USDA Hardiness Zone: \_\_\_\_\_

HSA Affiliation: \_\_\_ Unit (please list) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_ Member-at-Large

**Varieties Grown**

Which varieties of savory (genus *Satureja*) do you grow? (check all that apply)

- \_\_\_ Summer Savory (*Satureja hortensis*)
- \_\_\_ Winter Savory (*Satureja montana*)
- \_\_\_ Creeping Winter Savory (*Satureja spicigera*)
- \_\_\_ Purple Winter Savory (*Satureja montana* subsp. *illyrica* – now properly *Satureja subspicata*)
- \_\_\_ Lemon Savory (*Satureja biflora* – now properly *Micromeria biflora*)
- \_\_\_ Georgia Savory (*Satureja georgiana* – now properly *Clinopodium carolinianum*)
- \_\_\_ Za’atar Rumi (*Satureja thymbra*)
- \_\_\_ Yerba Buena / Oregon Tea (*Satureja douglasii* – now properly *Clinopodium douglasii*)
- \_\_\_ Costa Rican Mint Bush (*Satureja viminea* – now properly *Clinopodium vimineum*)
- \_\_\_ other(s) – please list

**Growing Conditions**

Under what conditions does your savory grow?

<b>Variety:</b>				
<u>Sun Exposure</u> (full, part, shade)				
<u>Soil Type</u> (type and pH) (note if container grown)				
<u>Irrigation</u> (none, occasional, regular)				
<u>Fertilization</u> (type and how often)				
<u>Pruning</u> (when and how often)				

What is the average rainfall in your area? \_\_\_\_\_ inches

**Propagation**

Do you propagate your own savory plants? If so, please list the varieties you grow and how and when you propagate them:

**Disease or Pest Problems**

If you’ve had problems with any diseases or pests in regard to savory plants that you grow, please make note of them:

## **Usage**

**What is your favorite savory for culinary use?** (If more than one, please list in order of preference)

**Do you use it fresh or dried?**

**In what kinds of dishes do you like to use it?** (please circle all that apply)

Soups/Stews	Salads	Beverages	
Red Meats	Salad Dressings	Sauces	
Poultry	Desserts	Butters/Cheeses	
Vegetables	Bean Dishes	Breads	Other:

**Do you use savory for other purposes?** (please circle all that apply)

Teas and Tisanes	Insect and/or Animal Deterrent	
Potpourri and Sachets	Pet Care	Cosmetics/Soap
Medicinal (salves, tinctures, and such)	Aromatherapy	Other:

**How long have you been growing savory?**

0-5 years      6-10 years      11-20 years      Over 20 years

**Do you have any objection to any of the information you've provided being published in The Herb Society of America Essential Guide to Savory?** (names will be kept confidential and none will be published unless you want yours published in conjunction with any supplied recipes)

Yes / No

**Please attach (or email to [henryf@festivalhill.org](mailto:henryf@festivalhill.org)) any recipes and or other information that you would like to share in regards to savory.**

We feel that including information from members of The Herb Society of America in this upcoming Essential Guide is very important and thank you for taking the time and effort to fill out this survey and provide us with as much information as you can.

Many thanks!

Henry Flowers and the Essential Guide to Savory Editorial Team



## Savory Questionnaire Results

We received 80 responses from HSA members providing information on their experience and use of several varieties of savory (genus *Satureja*). The most frequently mentioned ones were summer savory (*Satureja hortensis*) and winter savory (*Satureja montana*).

The following represent the general findings from the surveys collected:

- The most frequently grown varieties are winter savory and summer savory. Summer savory is grown in the Northeast and Central US (cooler climates). Winter savory is grown successfully in zones 5-9 of the U.S.
- Other varieties grown included: lemon savory, creeping savory, yerba buena, za'atar (pink savory), and Costa Rican (Jamaican) mint bush.
- Several respondents indicated they were not familiar with the herb and did not grow it, but were interested in learning about the herb.
- Growing conditions for the savories:
  - Sunlight** – Most grew their savories in full sun; a few said part sun.
  - Water** – About 1/3 provide water/drip on a regular basis; about 1/3 water as needed; and 1/3 do not provide supplemental water at all.
  - Soil** – Most use organics to amend garden soil; a few have sandy loam and do nothing to their soil.
  - Fertilization** -- Most use organic fertilizers and compost; many use nothing at all.
  - Pruning** – Summer savory is pruned as needed (and used) from spring through summer since it is an annual. Winter Savory is pruned at least 2 times a year. Pruning after flowering encourages new foliage and a bushy growth to the perennial.
- Average rainfall varied from 7” to 65” with most respondents falling in the 35” – 45” range.
- With regard to propagation, 90% indicated they do not propagate; they buy their plants at a nursery. 10% indicated they either plant summer savory from seed or take cuttings from winter savory.
- No one mentioned any disease or pest problems in growing the savories. One mention that the savories even deterred deer, rabbits, and gophers.
- Over 1/3 of the respondents have been growing one or more savories for over 20 years; 1/3 have been growing it for 6 – 20 years; and 1/3 have either not grown savory or have been growing it for less than 5 years.
- Most respondents used savories in bean dishes, with several mentions of use in stews or vegetables. A few people grow the plant(s) but do not use it other than in the landscape.

- Other uses for savory include: teas and tisanes, potpourri and sachets, tinctures, aromatherapy, insect deterrent, vinegar, and as an attractor for pollinators.
- Summer savory is most frequently used by those respondents living in the Northeast and Midwest where it grows readily; whereas winter savory is the most commonly used by those respondents living in the South and Southwest areas of the US .
- 80% of the respondents use the savories fresh and 20 % use it in dried form.

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The authors relied mainly on the following sources for information on botanical nomenclature throughout this Essential Guide:

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- GRIN Germplasm Resources Information Network (Internet). Available from <http://www.ars-grin.gov/> (site includes a list of plants with GRAS status)

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## Glossary

**Actinomorphic:** Characterized by radial symmetry.

**Antinociceptive:** Inhibiting nociception - the perception of pain.

**Bilabiate:** Having two lips; two-lipped.

**Calyx:** Outermost whorl of the floral envelope; composed of separate or united sepals.

**Carpel:** One of the individual female reproductive organs in a flower that collectively form the pistil. A carpel is normally composed of an ovary, a style, and a stigma.

**Carvacrol:** Carvacrol, or cymophenol, C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>3</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>, is a monoterpene phenol. It has a characteristic pungent, warm odor of oregano.

**Conduplicate:** Folded up like a taco shell.

**Corolla:** Inner series of floral petals.

**GRAS:** Abbreviation for "generally regarded as safe" - for a current listing of GRAS plants on the internet go to: <http://www.ars-grin.gov/duke/syllabus/gras.htm>

**Indehiscent:** Not opening at maturity as in some fruits and nuts.



**Monoterpene:** Phytochemical found in citrus fruits, eggplant, green vegetables, tomatoes, yams, and some herbs; acts as an antioxidant; helps protect the immune system.

**Petiolate:** Having a stalk or petiole.

**Revolute:** Rolled backward or underneath.

**Schizocarp:** A dry, compound fruit which splits into two or more parts and contains one-seeded indehiscent carpels.

**Thymol:** Thymol (also known as 2-isopropyl-5-methylphenol, IPMP) is a natural monoterpene phenol derivative of cymene,  $C_{10}H_{14}O$ , isomeric with carvacrol, found in oil of thyme, and extracted from *Thymus vulgaris* (common thyme) and various other kinds of plants as a white crystalline substance of a pleasant aromatic odor and strong antiseptic properties.

**Wort:** The liquid extracted from the mashing process during the brewing of beer or whisky.



Creeping Savory - *Satureja spicigera* in the National Herb Garden

Left: lush green growth in summer.

Right: in bloom in November.

-photos by Pat Kenny

## Essential Facts for Savory

Family: *Lamiaceae*

Latin Name: *Satureja*, *Micromeria*, and *Clinopodium* species

Growth: annual, perennial, or subshrub

Light: Full sun to partial shade

Soil: Well-drained for most

Water: Moderate

Pests: None of significance

Diseases: None of significance



-photo by Henry Flowers

### Taxonomy:

*Satureja* has been a genus of about 180 - 200 species. Recently a reevaluation has resulted in a division into three distinct genera: *Satureja*, *Micromeria*, and *Clinopodium*. Today *Satureja* contains about 52 species including well known species winter savory (*S. montana*), summer savory (*S. hortensis*), creeping savory (*S. spicigera*), purple winter savory (*S. subspicata*) and pink savory (*S. thymbra*). Lemon savory (*S. biflora*) is now *Micromeria biflora*, while Georgia savory (*S. georgiana*), yerba buena (*S. douglasii*) and Jamaican mint (*S. viminea*) are *Clinopodium carolinianum*, *Clinopodium douglasii* and *Clinopodium vimineum* respectively. This division is on the diagnostic characters of leaves, calyx and geographic distribution.

The genus *Satureja* is characterized as perennials to shrubs, with square stems and aromatic foliage bearing glandular hairs that secrete essential oils. The leaves tend to be conduplicate. The flowers are bilabiate and found in the axils of the leaves in small compact clusters. All are Old World species.

The genus *Micromeria* is characterized as perennials and subshrubs with a subequal or actinomorphic calyx. The leaves are revolute with short petioles. All are Old World species.

The genus *Clinopodium* is characterized as perennials and subshrubs, with glandular dots on all vegetative parts. The leaves have entire or crenate margins and are clearly petiolate. The floral calyx is clearly bilabiate, not actinomorphic. The species all have similar chromosome numbers. Most are New World species.

### History and Origins:

Most of the savories are native to the Mediterranean region. The sister genus, *Clinopodium*, is found mostly in North, Central and South America. Savory was a well known ancient Roman potherb and seasoning. Romans introduced savory to England where it was called “savorie” for its ability to enhance flavorings in food. The first plants were brought to America by English colonists. The rich peppery flavor made it extremely useful for enhancing many foods.

### **Myths and Folklore:**

The Latin name *Satureja* possibly means chosen plant of the Satyrs. As mythical satyrs were purported to be sexually insatiable and they spent most of their time in meadows of savory, the plant became regarded as an aphrodisiac. Summer savory was thought to enhance sexual desire, while winter savory worked to lessen sex drive and was thus considered an anaphrodisiac.

Summer savory in Germany is known as *bohnenkraut* - "bean herb" for it not only gave flavor but cut down on gas produced by beans.

In the Middle Ages both summer and winter savory were grown in most monastery gardens for use both as a seasoning and for the medicinal properties.

### **Medicinal Uses:**

Both summer and winter savory were used as a tea for stomach and intestinal disorders; as a gargle for sore throats, colds, asthma; also it suppressed menses, flatulence, colic and chest congestion.

Bruised stems and leaves can be rubbed on the skin to relieve the pain of bee and wasp stings.

### **Growth:**

Summer savory is an annual. Start seeds in early spring in light, well-drained loam, transplanting to the garden once frost is past and soil has warmed. Seeds can also be sown directly into the garden. Young plants need to be kept moist, but once established only moderate watering is necessary.

Winter savory is a perennial that can be managed like thyme.

## **Savory Tidbits**

- The original botanical name of most savories is *Satureja*. Many plants that were once in this genus, and which are still commonly called savories, now belong to the genera *Micromeria*, *Clinopodium*, and *Acinos*.
- The botanical name *Satureja* was given to the plant by Pliny and some say that it is a reference to the mythological link of its use by satyrs to increase their sexual stamina. Others say that it is a derivation of the ancient word *za'atar*, which is a name applied to many oregano/thyme scented plants of the eastern Mediterranean.
- Savory is known as the "bean herb" (*bohnenkraut* in German) because it both enhances the flavor of beans and also helps in their digestion, thus decreasing the flatulence often associated with these and other legumes.



- The two main culinary savories are summer and winter savory. Summer savory (*Satureja hortensis*) is an annual and is the most commonly used culinary savory. Winter savory (*Satureja montana*) is an evergreen perennial that is a good substitute for summer savory, but which is notably stronger in flavor.
- Summer savory's flavor is milder and is best added near the end of the cooking process. Winter savory's flavor is stronger and can stand up to longer cooking times.
- Both of these savories, and many others as well, prefer to grow in full sun with a loose, well-drained soil.
- Savory is an underutilized herb that could easily be used more often if one thinks about it as a possible substitute in recipes, especially for thyme, but also with other pungent herbs such as rosemary and oregano.
- Vinegar, flavored with savory and other aromatic herbs, was used by the Romans in the same manner as mint sauce is by us.” -Maude Grieve 1931
- Traditionally savory has been one of the five main herbs in the popular dried herbal blend known as Herbes de Provence. The other herbs are marjoram, rosemary, thyme, and oregano. Lavender is also added to some blends, but this is a relatively new trend.
- Savories, like other members of the mint family (Lamiaceae) are highly attractive to bees when in bloom and can be nice plants to put around fruit plants that bloom at the same time or as nectar plants around bee hives.
- In general the savories are not notable for their medicinal aspects. They tend to have anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and anti-oxidant effects (mainly due to the content of the phenols carvacrol and thymol) but none in particular are used as an herbal medicine.
- “Both the old authorities and modern gardeners agree that a sprig of either of the Savorys rubbed on wasp and bee stings gives instant relief.” -Maude Grieve 1931
- Savory, due to its perception as an aphrodisiac, has long been used in love potions.
- In the language of flowers savory stands for "mental powers".



Creeping savory in bloom.  
-photo by Alice Le Duc

## Membership in The Herb Society of America

The Herb Society of America is an educational organization devoted to the cultivation of herbs and the study of their history and uses, both past and present. The Society maintains an extensive library, produces educational programming, and publishes a quarterly newsletter and *The Herbarist*, an annual journal that blends scholarly and popular articles from authors who are experts on current herbal topics. The Society encourages and facilitates networking among its members, who include authors, lecturers, researchers, horticulturists, business owners, chefs and avid gardeners.

**The HSA Library:** Located in the national headquarters near Cleveland, Ohio, the library offers more than 2,500 volumes on herbs and related topics. The collection includes books, videos, periodicals, and slide programs. Materials can be loaned to HSA members and the library is open to the public for research. Professional librarians are able to assist in the research for information. For more on the library, visit [www.herbsociety.org](http://www.herbsociety.org).

**Educational Programs:** The Herb Society opens a world of learning opportunities through its educational programs. Visit the HSA web site to see HSA's guides to the Herb of the Year, Notable Native, herb fact sheets, profiles on promising herbal plants, and much more. The Society also sponsors district symposia and the annual Educational Conference, which feature tours, workshops and lectures at locations around the country.

### Environmental Statement

The Society is committed to protecting our global environment for the health and well-being of humankind and all growing things. We encourage gardeners to practice environmentally sound horticulture.

### Disclaimer

Information is provided as an educational service. Mention of commercial products does not indicate an endorsement by The Herb Society of America.

### International Herb Association

The International Herb Association has been selecting an Herb of the Year since 1995. The Herb Society of America is pleased to support this initiative by providing educational content for Savory - the 2015 Herb of the Year.

## Membership Benefits

- Library borrowing privileges
- Subscriptions to *The Herbarist* and the national and district newsletters
- Discounts on educational events, including district symposia and the National Educational Conference.
- Access to the Members Only section of the HSA web site
- Discounts on HSA logo items available from HSA headquarters, items from Richter's Herbs, and Grower's Exchange.
- Participation in the American Horticulture Society's Reciprocal Admissions Program, which allows free or discounted admission to participating gardens and arboreta.
- Discount on the American Botanical Council's *Clinical Guide to Herbs*.



# Learn, Explore, Grow.



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Winter Savory - *Satureja montana* in bloom  
-photo by Pat Kenny