

Recipes



Bay Laurel, *Laurus nobilis*

Tips

- Fresh bay leaves are less aromatic than dried leaves.
- Dried bay leaf is what is meant in most recipes unless fresh is specified.
- Dried leaves should be muted green color, with a paler green on the bottom of the leaf.
- Dried leaves have a sharp and slightly floral flavor resembling thyme and oregano.
- To infuse flavor, use bay leaves whole or crushed at the beginning of the cooking time.
- Remove whole or crushed leaves before serving to avoid digestive distress. Place leaves in a muslin bag to make removal easy.
- Ground bay leaves are often added to herb blends and do not require removal before serving.
- The flavor of bay leaves is best infused in dishes with long cooking time, such as soups, stews, chilies, gravies pot roast, tomato sauces, marinades, and pickling brines.

Herbed Olives

2 cups un-pitted ripe or green olives
1 bay leaf
2 small hot dried chiles
2 Tbsp drained capers

2 cloves garlic
12 rosemary leaves
2 Tbsp finely chopped celery leaves
1 cup olive oil (or more as needed)

Press each olive between your fingers so the marinade can penetrate the olive.
Place olives in a glass jar with all ingredients except the olive oil. Pour enough olive oil to cover the olives. Cover jar and shake well.

Refrigerate for 3 or 4 days before using.
Remove garlic if olives are stored any longer than 4 days.

Marion Foster, HSA Tidewater Unit
The Herb Society of America's Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs

Gingered Butternut Squash Soup

2 tablespoons olive oil	2 whole bay leaves
2 tablespoons vegetable oil	4 teaspoons fresh thyme
1 medium onion, chopped	1 (2-inch) piece fresh gingerroot, grated
2 medium carrots, chopped	1 teaspoon salt
2 pounds butternut squash, peeled and cut in small chunks	2 tablespoons butter
6 cups vegetable stock	Toasted pumpkin seeds for garnish

Heat olive and vegetable oils in a heavy 3-quart saucepan. Add onions and carrots; cook until onions are translucent. Add squash, vegetable stock and bay leaves. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add grated ginger and continue cooking until squash is tender, about 15 minutes. Allow soup to cool slightly, then remove bay leaves.

Pour soup into a food processor and blend until smooth. Return to saucepan and add thyme and salt. Cook over low heat until hot but not boiling. Stir in butter. Garnish with toasted pumpkin seeds.

Katherine K. Schlosser, HSA North Carolina Unit
The Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs

Red Lentil Soup with Cilantro and Cumin

1 ½ cup red lentils, rinsed and stone removed	1 red onion, peeled and chopped
8 cup vegetable broth	1 teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon ground turmeric	2 tomatoes, seeded and chopped
3 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed	1 (1-inch) piece gingerroot, peeled and grated
2 bay leaves	4 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro (or parsley)
2 stalks celery, sliced thinly	Freshly ground black pepper and salt to taste
2 tablespoons olive oil	

Place lentils, vegetable broth, turmeric, potatoes, bay leaves, and celery in a large stainless steel pot. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for about 20 minutes or until lentils and potatoes are soft.

While the lentils are cooking, heat olive oil in a sauté pan, then add onions. Cook over medium heat until soft and well browned, about 10-15 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove from heat and stir in the cumin.

Add onions, chopped tomatoes, and grated ginger to the soup. Cook over low heat for 15 minutes.

Remove bay leaves and stir in cilantro (or parsley) just before serving. Season with freshly ground black pepper, salt, and a little chopped cilantro (or parsley)

Katherine K. Schlosser, HSA North Carolina Unit
The Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs

Zucchini “Crab” Cakes

1 medium zucchini, peeled and grated	¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan or pecorino cheese
1 egg, lightly beaten	1 teaspoon fresh thyme
2 tablespoons mayonnaise	1 teaspoon fresh Greek oregano, chopped
1 teaspoon crab seasoning (Old Bay or other)	1 teaspoon fresh basil, chopped
1 cup breadcrumbs, plus extra for coating	Vegetable oil for frying

Squeeze the excess moisture from the zucchini. Place in a large bowl and mix in all other ingredients except oil. Form into patties and coat with additional breadcrumbs.

Fry in vegetable oil until golden brown on each side. Turn only once and take care that they do not fall apart. Serve with a fresh salsa or cocktail sauce.

Ed Pierzynski, HSA South Jersey Unit
The Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs

Chocolate Pudding with Bay

2 cups half-and-half cream	¼ cup unsweetened cocoa
3 large fresh bay leaves or 2 dried bay leaves	½ cup milk
3 Tablespoon cornstarch	3 ounces bittersweet or semisweet chocolate, cut into small pieces
2/3 cup sugar	½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
2 pinches salt	

Heat the half-and-half cream with the bay leaves in a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat. When the cream starts to bubble around the edges of the pan, remove from heat and cover.

Let stand for 30 minutes. After the bay has infused in the cream for nearly 30 minutes, combine the cornstarch, sugar, salt, and cocoa in a bowl and add the milk, whisk the contents together. Pour the mixture into the warm cream and place over moderate heat.

Continue cooking and whisking as the pudding thickens. When the pudding begins to bubble and come to a boil, stir and boil for 1 minute. Remove the pan from heat and whisk in the chocolate pieces until they are melted.

Add the vanilla and stir well.

Carefully remove the bay leaves and pour the pudding into six ramekins or custard cups. Place the custard cups on a plate or pan and allow them to come to room temperature.

Refrigerate until chilled; at least 30 to 45 minutes. Serve at cool room temperature and garnish with whipped cream if desired. Makes 6 servings.

Susan Belsinger
Bay, An Herb Society of America Guide

Do you have any recipes featuring the bay laurel to share?

Contact educator@herbsociety.org