



Bulletin no. 5 Juillet 2020

Common Thyme, *Thymus vulgaris* L.

Botanical description

Thyme is a compact sub-shrub with narrow, whitish leaves underneath. In the axils of the upper leaves develop whorls of white or pink flowers. The whole plant is strongly aromatic and characteristic. Its flavour is bitter, refreshing and slightly pungent.

How to cultivate

Thyme is a perennial plant. However, in Quebec, it depends on the variety and the regions. It needs dry and poor soil, lots of sunshine and rocky, slightly calcareous soil. Thyme is easy to multiply by cutting herbaceous twigs cut in the spring or summer. Thyme is an excellent companion for cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower and other members of the same family. It also keeps white cabbage moth and other cabbage caterpillars away. In general, it promotes the growth of surrounding plants.

What parts to use

The leaves are used for cooking, the flowering tops and leaves are used in medicinal preparations.



Cosmetic uses. Thyme is used in deodorants and handmade soaps, (against the bacteria responsible for the smells of perspiration), for skin care, oily hair, in make-up removers and also in toothpastes and mouthwashes. Here is an example of use as a **scented exfoliant**:

Ingredients

- 2 ml thyme
- 2 ml of lavender
- 30 ml of clay
- 3 drops of lavender essential oil

Preparation

- Infuse the thyme and lavender in boiling water for fifteen minutes.
- Moisten the clay with this infusion to achieve a texture that will spread well over the face.
- Add the lavender essential oil and leave to rest for ten minutes then apply to the face with small circular movements.
- Rinse with fresh water.

Cooking with thyme

Thyme is another ingredient of *Herbes de Provence* along with rosemary, savory and marjoram. Along with bay leaf, parsley, rosemary and oregano, it is part of the *bouquet garni*, which is used in many recipes for meat in sauce. It is also one of the main ingredients of za'tar, a spice blend very popular in Lebanon and the Middle East. Its stems give off a pleasant smell when burned on a barbecue.

RECIPES

Sautéed pineapple and mango with thyme and rosemary, vanilla ice cream – fresh and tasty!

Ingredients

- Small cubes of fresh pineapple
- Small cubes of fresh mango
- Thyme and rosemary
- Vanilla ice cream
- Olive oil
- Fresh mint

Preparation

Olive oil with mint

Heat the oil over medium heat with the chopped mint leaves. When the leaves begin to release their fragrance, remove from the heat and let stand for at least an hour.



Preparing the fruit

Sauté the fruit in olive oil with thyme and rosemary. Keep one half or whole mango to prepare a thick coulis in a blender without adding any liquid.

Dressing the plate

Put the fruit in a circle on a plate with the ice cream. Decorate with the mango coulis and drizzle with mint oil.

Tzatziki with tomato and thyme – a summer delight !

Ingredients

- 1 l. plain Greek Yogurt
- 50 gr diced cucumber
- 50 gr leek, washed and chopped
- 1 ripe tomato, medium diced
- 2 cloves of garlic, very finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
- 3 teaspoons *fleur de sel*

Preparation

- Place the cucumber, leek, garlic, thyme, tomato and cucumber in a bowl.
- Add the salt to make them bleed for 30 minutes. - Drain the vegetables and incorporate them into the yogurt. - Refrigerate 6 to 8 hours.
- This cold dip is wonderful with kebabs (chicken, lamb, pork), grilled salmon or shrimps and grilled or stuffed vegetables!
- Keeps 7 days in the refrigerator in a hermetically sealed dish.



Medicinal uses

Thyme is attributed several phytotherapeutic qualities. Thyme contains an essential oil rich in thymol, known for its antiseptic properties. It is said to have soothing properties for the respiratory, digestive and urinary systems. It is believed to have antispasmodic properties. A sterile infusion of thyme could be useful to clean wounds, ulcers and abscesses. A foot bath in a thyme infusion could help in the treatment of boils, athlete's foot and fungal infections. Thyme may have expectorant and antispasmodic effects against coughs. Its active ingredients are believed to reinforce the resistance to viruses and bacteria.



Thyme infusion

Infuse 1.25 to 2.5 ml per 250 ml of boiling water. The action and taste of thyme is powerful. It is used more for its beneficial effects than for the simple pleasure of drinking an herbal tea.

The mythological origins of thyme

Greek legend has it that thyme was born from the tears of the beautiful Helen, wife of Menelaus, king of Sparta. With each tear that fell from her eyes on the ground, sprouts of thyme were born, which were perfumed by the gods. The kidnapping of Helen by Paris triggered the Trojan War, around the twelfth century BCE.

The information contained in these sheets are partly taken and adapted from the Herb Art notebooks published by the Herbothèque. herbothèque.com/

